



# County of Hamilton

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Correcting a false charge from Indian Hill

In his recent "Indian Hill Journal" column about the Indian Hill School tax settlement, Mr. Fred Sanborn has charged that the Auditor's Office "erased computer files on which the refunds were based". Nothing could be further from the truth. The Auditor's Office is responsible for assigning values to properties. The historical value of a parcel is a permanent record and available for public viewing on the Auditor's website. There was no "erasure" of any Auditor files.

The Auditor's Office also maintains a file with detailed information on each parcel. One of the fields contains the total taxes that were billed for that parcel in a given year. It does not contain the detailed split that appears on the tax bills sent by the County Treasurer. The alleged "erasing of files" simply did not occur. And if by chance something had been lost there are back-up systems to restore Auditor files.

The Auditor's office follows state law and Mr. Sanborn's assertion to the contrary is deeply resented. There are penalties for not maintaining and releasing public information when requested. The County Treasurer, who is responsible for the billing and collection of taxes, is held to the same standard.

As a member of the Budget Commission, I voted against the action that the Indian Hill Schools initiated to move the inside millage. It resulted in an unvoted tax increase which I opposed then and continue to oppose.

The Auditor's Office has diligently worked with all parties involved with the lawsuit when information has been requested. This included Mr. Sanborn's citizen group along with the various attorneys. Our office also worked with the Department of Taxation so that future tax bills would be reset and the tax increase would be reversed out. All sides understood the complications involved in calculating the refunds and we responded promptly to each request to assist in the settlement.

I can't ignore the irony of Mr. Sanborn's gratuitous accusation given that I was his lone supporter in rejecting the original tax take and our office has spent years and untold hours assisting the paid consultants and attorneys in returning the tax increase that never should have been taken in the first place.

It seems with Mr. Sanborn, no good deed goes unpunished.

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