



2017 Municipal Services Special Levy

FACT SHEET

1. Do we really need more officers?

Belgrade currently has 15 police officers. This includes 12 patrol officers/sergeants, 2 detectives and 1 chief. If an officer works 40 regular hours per week, it takes about 5 officers in order to have 1 officer on duty at all times. Belgrade currently has 12 officers available to work patrol, that is, active law enforcement in real time. That means that, on average, we have 2.4 officers available at any given time. That does not include handling one or more of the nearly 12,000 calls for service that we respond to each year, or when our officers are meeting ongoing training requirements or performing administrative duties. That is why, after careful consideration, we are asking Belgrade taxpayers to fund 3 more officers.

2. What exactly will the money pay for?

The levy will fund a total of 6 police officers. 3 of the positions are currently funded by the expiring 2007 Municipal Services Special Levy, and 3 positions would be new. It is anticipated that 2 of the new positions will be patrol officers and 1 will be a detective. The levy will also pay for equipment and training that will benefit the entire department, as well as partially fund City contributions to the Montana Police Officers Retirement System for the entire department.

3. How much will this cost?

For a homeowner with a home tax value of \$100,000 the net impact will be about \$3.83 per month. The total cost will be about \$7.65 per month. Note that this is based on the *tax value*, not the much higher market value. Since the 2017 Municipal Services Special Levy (68 mills) replaces the 2007 levy (34 mills), the net impact to taxpayers is only one half of the total, or \$3.83 per \$100,000 of tax value, per month.

4. What will happen if this levy passes?

The 3 police officers that we hired after the passage of the 2007 levy will remain as part of the department, and 3 new officers will be hired over the next 2 years, bringing the total to 18.

5. What will happen if this levy does NOT pass?

The 2007 levy will expire. There is currently no revenue to replace it. The City will likely need to reduce the total number of police officers from 15 down to 12.

6. How many officers do we need?

According to statistics provided by the FBI, the average number of police officers in cities under 10,000 of population in the northwestern region of the United States is 4.3 per 1,000 residents. Belgrade has about 8,400 residents in the City limits. So, to fit the statistical average, we would need about 36 police officers. We think we can provide an appropriate level of service with 18 police officers, keeping Belgrade a safe and affordable place to live. We strongly believe that this figure represents a firm minimum.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Please call or email us! We would be happy to discuss this with you.

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Ballots will be mailed out on April 17th and are due back on May 2nd. Ballots may be mailed back, or deposited in the ballot boxes at the Gallatin County Courthouse, or at the Belgrade City Hall.

Please Vote!