

Mistretta, Susan

From: Diane Weir <diane@dianeweir.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2020 1:12 PM
To: City Council - All
Subject: Please do not approve a tax increase this year

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*If you could, **please do not read my letter in open session**, I would appreciate it, as it includes some personal information.*

Hello,

I appreciate the work you, the city council, and the school committee has done to revise the budget.

But when I heard that the current budget is still an increase of over 3%, I felt I needed to respond.

I still have a job, but I've taken a 12.5% pay cut that's going to continue until the end of they year, assuming I don't get laid off before then.

I consider myself one of the lucky ones. I'm healthy.

And it could be worse financially:

I could be on unemployment. Or worse yet, I could be one of the many who have yet to have their claims paid, or who own a business that has been forced to close.

This financial hit is not only hurting us now, every day as we look for ways to make the money stretch. But, it's going to continue well after the economy is reopened, as we try to recoup the losses (if that's even possible) and rebuild our savings.

I am asking you to please take another look at the budget so that, at the very least, no one in Dover faces a tax increase this year.

A zero increase budget from last year, probably won't be enough of a cut.

We must prepare for the state to be unable to contribute as much as they have in the past. We should be preparing for the reduced revenues from tax abatement programs and empty buildings and closed businesses and bankruptcies. And the loss of revenue from parking tickets and fees for services that none of us can use.

The current tax cap may seem like a "cut", but it is an extravagance that many of us cannot afford. The median household income in Dover is only around \$67,000. That's the *combined salaries of everyone in the household*. I know we have many *individual* city salaries that are near or exceed that amount. Well deserved though they are, I need to call that out so that you can better understand the uneven burden on residents compared to our government.

We can't say we're in this "together" when you're asking those of us who have taken pay cuts to pay for raises and new positions. It gives me no joy to say that, but I feel this needs to be stated very plainly.

I will look forward to trying to fund all of the great ideas that have been presented by the departments after we've all gotten through this.

But for now, I ask for your compassion.

Sincerely,
Diane Weir
106 Court St