

# Bob Mollette

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward Councilman

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February 23, 2009

Honorable Council Members  
Jim Kalb, Mayor  
Michael Jones, Solicitor  
Trent Williams, Auditor  
728 Second Street  
Portsmouth, Ohio 45662

### **Re: Proposed Requirement for Petitions prior to Tax Levies on the Ballot**

I am seeking discussion and support to establish new requirements prior to placing a tax levy on the ballot for the voters.

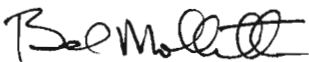
A similar idea is currently being discussed by the Lawrence County Commissioners to establish requirements for various groups prior to placing levies on the ballot. It was reported as being considered to better educate the community; give the levy supporters an idea whether the levy would pass; and potentially save the taxpayers money by preventing some levies from being placed on the ballot. This requirement would designate a percentage of voters to sign petitions to show support for the levy prior to being placed on the ballot.

I believe the petition requirement would encourage communication, transparent government, and gain support for needed tax levies. It would also discourage requests for levies unless an overall plan was developed.

I am suggesting that any proposed tax levy for the City would require petitions which, to be sufficient, shall be signed by electors of the City equal in number to at least ten per centum (10%) of those who voted at the last regular municipal election. All petition papers circulated with respect to a proposed ordinance shall be uniform in character and shall contain the proposed ordinance in full.

Please consider this information enclosed and contact me if you should have any comments or questions.

Respectfully,



Bob Mollette, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward Advocate and Representative on City Council

rwm

cc: Jo Ann Aeh, Clerk (Record)

# Levy petitions make sense

By [Tribune Editorial Board](#) | The Tribune

Published Wednesday, February 18, 2009

County leaders have the chance to send a message: Make sure you are sure before you ask the taxpayers for more money.

That is what the Lawrence County Commissioners can implement if they approve a proposal by Doug Malone that would require groups seeking to put a tax levy on the ballot to get petitions signed with a designated percentage of voters.

This could go a long way toward educating some in the community about what they could be asked to vote on, give levy supporters an idea whether or not something would pass and also potentially save taxpayers money because it could prevent some levies from ever making the ballot.

Several years ago, county voters were asked to support a variety of levies and issues. Almost all were defeated soundly as voters simply said "no" right down the list, even voting not to reduce the Ironton mayor's salary.

We support this plan by the commissioners and hope to see it passed unanimously.

Officeholders and agencies seeking levies must realize that the people of Lawrence County have sent a clear message that they don't want to pay more taxes.

So if we are going to ask them to do so, we must make certain that it is only in the most extreme of cases and that all other avenues have been exhausted.

Voters don't take spending more of their hard earned dollars lightly. It only makes sense that the county commission puts the requests for those dollars under that same level of scrutiny.

## Comments

Posted by [MasterChef \(anonymous\)](#) on February 18, 2009 at 5:40 p.m. ([Suggest removal](#))

I think its a good idea! Its about time government offices show their requests are viable on a ballot. When everybody and their brother has their hand out at the ballot box voters are SURE to reject EVERYthing on principle. I also think voters need to demand proof that the "windfall" agency has already tightened their belt until it hurts. Just saying "we need it" isn't going to work anymore. I'm talking about even recycling paper clips and bringing back payphones for personal calls.