

## Investigating Local Issues

Program Name Middletown ABLE

Staff Responsible for Lesson Jennifer Edwards

Technology	Study / Life skills	EL-Civics	Career Pathways	Police	Paramedic	Fire Rescue	Medical Asst.	EKG / Cardio	Phlebotomy	Practical Nursing	Healthcare	Admin	Pharmacy Tech	IMT	AMT	HVAC	Welding	Other:	
		<b>X</b>																	
Date(s) Used				11-2-10															
Civics Category				I. Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship															
Civics Objective				8. Government and Law - Law Identify the voting process including rights and responsibilities and the political process in the U.S.															
Time Frame to Complete Lesson				1.5 hours															
EFL(s)				5-6															
Standard(s)/Components of Performance				Read with Understanding															
Benchmark(s)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ R.6.1. Read authentic materials to gain knowledge</li> <li>○ R.5.3. Use strategies to monitor comprehension of information on familiar topics with unfamiliar vocabulary (e.g. recall, explain the content of the text, use simple examples).</li> <li>○ R.5.5. - R.6.5. Draw conclusions.</li> </ul>															
Materials				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Campaign flyers or articles/editorials from the local paper about issues on the ballot. I used:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MetroParks levy will be on November ballot (<a href="http://www.oxfordpress.com/news/oxford-news/metroparks-levy-will-be-on-november-ballot-777914.html">http://www.oxfordpress.com/news/oxford-news/metroparks-levy-will-be-on-november-ballot-777914.html</a>)</li> <li>○ 'Yes' on elderly services levy (<a href="http://www.middletownjournal.com/opinion/editorials/yes-on-elderly-services-tax-levy-">http://www.middletownjournal.com/opinion/editorials/yes-on-elderly-services-tax-levy-</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>															

## Investigating Local Issues

	<p style="text-align: center;">941742.html?showComments=true)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Issue 15 enhances fire, EMS services for city (<a href="http://www.oxfordpress.com/news/oxford-news/issue-15-enhances-fire-ems-services-for-city-957158.html">http://www.oxfordpress.com/news/oxford-news/issue-15-enhances-fire-ems-services-for-city-957158.html</a>)</li> <li>○ Teacher created worksheet: Investigating the Issues</li> <li>○ Teacher created ballot</li> </ul>
Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review Election Day with the students. Discuss how our election process is similar to/different from the selection of leaders in their native countries: Who votes? What type/s of leaders are elected? How long do the officials serve?</li> <li>2. Explain to students that American citizens also vote on issues such as taxes and changes to local laws, in addition to electing officials.</li> <li>3. Divide the class into groups, and provide a newspaper article/editorial or campaign flyer about an issue on the current ballot.</li> <li>4. With their groups, students read the article and complete the <i>Investigating the Issues</i> worksheet (summarizing the issue and listing pros/cons).</li> <li>5. Students explain their issue to the class (purpose, costs) and identify the benefits or concerns.</li> <li>6. After each group has presented, the teacher can answer additional questions about the issues as necessary. Then, each student will receive a teacher-created ballot for each issue.</li> <li>7. Students vote, and the results are tabulated to determine whether each issue "passes" or "fails" in our mock election. Next week, we can compare our results to the actual election results.</li> </ol>
Assessment/ Evidence	<p>Students will be able to describe one local issue on the ballot, including its purpose, cost(s), and benefits.</p>
Reflection	<p>The elderly services (Issue 6) editorial and the Issue 15 editorial proved to be too difficult for the time allotted. If I were to do this assignment again, I would focus on the shorter "Parks" article. After all, students can still</p>

## Investigating Local Issues

	learn about voting for issues through one example rather than three.
--	--

## Investigating Local Issues

In groups, read about one of the current issues that Butler County residents are voting on this Election Day.

- Issue 4 – Tax Levy for Metro Parks
- Issue 6 – Tax Levy for Senior Services
- Issue 15 – Tax Increase for Fire and Emergency Medical Services

With your group, determine how much the tax would cost taxpayers and what the money raised would provide.

Cost –

Provides -

What are the “pros” (benefits) and “cons” (problems or concerns) of the levy?

Pros

Cons

Share this information with the class.

## Investigating Local Issues

Issue 4 – Tax levy to provide funding for the MetroParks. A property worth \$100,000 would be taxed \$15 per year from 2011-2017.

Yes. I vote for the levy.

No. I vote against the levy.

Issue 15 – Tax increase to provide funding for Oxford Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services. The additional tax on a \$50,000 annual income is \$125. This is a permanent tax.

Yes. I vote for the income tax.

No. I vote against the income tax.

Issue 6 – Tax levy to provide funding for services for senior citizens (adults over age 65). These services include medical transportation, Meals on Wheels, protective services, and other types of assistance that can help disabled elderly people continue to live in their homes. A property worth \$100,000 would be taxed \$13 per year from 2010-2015.

Yes. I vote for the levy.

No. I vote against the levy.

# *The Oxford Press*

## **MetroParks levy will be on November ballot**

By Kelsey Cano, Staff Writer

Updated 3:17 AM Wednesday, June 23, 2010

WEST CHESTER TWP. — Facing staff cuts and the closure of more parks, MetroParks of Butler County passed a resolution Tuesday, June 22, to place a levy on the Nov. 2 ballot.

“I trust that residents will give us the opportunity to operate the park system they told us they wanted,” said Jonathan Granville, MetroParks executive director, who said the allocation of funds was based on market research of county residents. “The quality and ownership of the park’s system is in the hands of the people.”

If passed, the 0.5-mill, six-year levy would cost Butler County property owners \$15 for every \$100,000 in home value. The board of trustees decided to proceed with a levy after funding cuts from the state and county.

A revised draft of park district’s 2011 preliminary budget estimates \$208,000 in state and federal funding — less than half of the \$470,000 received in 2009 and less than one-quarter of the \$900,000 given in 2008.

“If we don’t pass a levy, more parks will be closed, and in the not-too-far future all of the parks will be closed,” said park Commissioner Greg Amend in a statement released Tuesday.

Four parks were closed in November 2009, through there are no current plans to close additional venues.

Levy passage would mean reopening the closed parks and restoring educational programs, according to parks officials. Funds also would be used to acquire land for two new parks and to improve park amenities. Projects range from replacing or adding restrooms and play equipment to trails and shelters.

Contact this reporter at (513) 483-5237 or [kcano@coxohio.com](mailto:kcano@coxohio.com).

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.oxfordpress.com/news/oxford-news/metroparks-levy-will-be-on-november-ballot-777914.html>

[Print this page](#) [Close](#)

# MIDDLETOWN JOURNAL

## **‘Yes’ on elderly services tax levy**

1:10 PM Friday, September 24, 2010

There are 4,000 reasons to vote for Butler County’s elderly services levy, Issue 6.

That is the number of your elderly friends and neighbors who are helped and provided with home-delivered meals, transportation, home safety repairs and other vital services — thanks to revenue generated by this important tax levy.

Most importantly, these services allow many clients to stay in their homes longer than what might have been possible, rather than be forced into costly nursing homes. The services also ease the burden on family members who may be trying to work, to manage their own households, and to care for an elderly parent.

According to the Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio, their average age is 80 and 71 percent of the clients are female. Fifty-three percent live alone, and 92 percent have disabilities of some sort. And 33 percent share in the cost of their care.

Butler County voters have been approving this levy since 1996, and the proposed levy on the Nov. 2 ballot will continue the same services that are administered by the Council on Aging and overseen by Butler County commissioners and a community advisory board.

The 1.3-mill issue would run for the next five years and raise just over \$10 million each year. If voters approve it, property tax owners would see no increase in taxes. In fact, the new levy represents a decrease from the last 2-mill levy approved in 2005. If approved, the owner of a \$100,000 home would continue to pay \$37.23 a year in property taxes for Issue 6.

If you’ll recall, a number of miscalculations led to the 2005 levy generating more revenue than was actually needed for the county’s eligible elderly population. Although that gaffe was an embarrassment for the county, commissioners and the Council on Aging acted responsibly, reducing collections on the levy in 2009 and 2010, and taking good care of a \$14 million carryover that had amassed.

## Investigating Local Issues

Thus, the commission has lowered the amount of this year's levy and the \$14 million carryover from the 2005 levy will be added to Issue 6 revenue and enable services to continue uninterrupted, assuming the new levy is passed by voters. If Issue 6 fails, Council on Aging officials say the \$14 million carryover would be spent down and then services would be discontinued for Butler County's elderly.

That's an unacceptable scenario, in our opinion. The Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University says that Butler County will experience a 75 percent increase in its older population between now and 2030, mirroring a national trend, as aging baby boomers enter their silver years.

Like more than 70 other Ohio counties with similar levies, Butler County residents have seen the quality-of-life and financial benefits of providing services that allow senior citizens to stay in their homes as long as possible. County officials have taken steps to rightsize the levy request, so there's no reason voters should hesitate to approve it.

As our population continues to age, there will be few families who will not be helped in some manner by services made possible by the elderly services levy. We urge a "yes" vote on Issue 6.

'Yes' on elderly services tax levy

<http://www.middletownjournal.com/opinion/editorials/yes-on-el...>

2 of 2 **Find this article at:**

<http://www.middletownjournal.com/opinion/editorials/yes-on-elderly-services-tax-levy-941742.html>

[Print this page](#) [Close](#)



[Print this page](#) [Close](#)

# *The Oxford Press*

## **Issue 15 enhances fire, EMS services for city**

2:16 PM Friday, October 1, 2010

On Nov. 2, Oxford voters are being asked to approve a 0.25 percent increase in the city's income tax to fund enhanced fire and EMS services implemented over the past two years.

Changes include a minimum of three firefighter/EMTs on-duty at the station 24 hours per day, seven days per week; implementation of paramedic level emergency medical service (EMS) in place of basic service; and dramatically reduced response times.

I spent 34 years with the Oxford Fire Department, 30 as assistant chief. Over the years people have continually asked me "Doesn't Oxford need a full-time fire department?" My response was always that: We don't have that many fires, we have a great crew of volunteers who always turnout, and the city doesn't have the tax base to pay for a full-time fire department.

But things have changed. In 2009 there were 2,419 fire and EMS runs, an average of almost seven per day, too many to be handled by an all-volunteer department.

Due to this volume, employers can no longer afford to let volunteers leave work to answer emergencies. Long-serving dedicated volunteers are aging and retiring, and due to the time commitment required, new volunteers are not coming forward. On multiple occasions over the past several years, not enough firefighters responded to fight an actual fire, or not enough EMTs responded to staff the second ambulance, or no one responded for a fire alarm dispatch. The only thing that hasn't changed: The city still can't afford a full-time fire department.

We survived with a volunteer fire department a lot longer than most communities of our size, but until we added the overnight on-duty crew this year we were one of the last

## Investigating Local Issues

areas of Butler and Hamilton counties still providing only basic EMS service instead of paramedic service, and certainly the largest population.

We are, without question, the busiest department in the county without a full-time fire department, and none of the remaining volunteer organizations run anywhere close to our call volume.

In fact, two townships in Butler County make less runs per year than Oxford, but one has three stations with 18 fire and EMS personnel on duty at all times and the other two stations with 12 fire and EMS personnel on duty.

\While we will need a solid corps of volunteers for a long, long time to handle actual fires and multiple emergencies, we badly need a minimum of five fire and EMS personnel on duty. This would give us the ability to provide initial fire attack, or make two simultaneous EMS runs, something that happens all the time. Unfortunately, until the economy picks up, we will be unlikely to meet this goal, even with the earnings tax increase.

I have been asked why city council didn't take this issue to the voters before they approved putting fire and EMS personnel on station when they knew this change could not be sustained without additional income. Speaking for the last council, I can say that we simply felt we had no choice if we were going to ensure even a basic level of protection to our citizens.

The city is not extravagant. Our departments are moderately staffed, and the majority of employees did not receive pay raises last year.

Over the years we have maintained our infrastructure and paid cash for most of our capital improvements. Our municipal offices and police facilities are woefully inadequate, but we keep patching up and getting by because we can't afford new facilities. We need better living facilities for our on-duty firefighter/EMTs at Central Station, and need a fire station west of the tracks.

Without this earnings tax increase, cuts will have to be made to balance the city's budget. Eliminating the overnight on-duty fire and EMS crews, staff reductions in other departments, program eliminations, and certainly significant reductions or elimination of maintenance work and capital improvements will all be on the table, all of which will have a negative impact on Oxford's quality of life.

Please, the city needs your "yes" vote on Issue 15.

## Investigating Local Issues

For more information, including an in-depth question and answer sheet about Issue 15, visit [www.cityofoxford.org](http://www.cityofoxford.org), and click on the Issue 15 box.