

Not fooled by sewer bill

Water is a precious commodity especially in Clifton. My sewer bill rose 77 percent to \$1,336 thanks to the four Council members who knowingly voted for this increase.

The city's own sewer rate study showed this vote would result in significantly higher sewer charges for over 70 percent of the residential homes (not including apartments and condos). In fact, it stated over 40 percent of residential properties would see between a 15 to 25 percent rise in their sewer charges and another 30 percent would see their bills go up over 25 percent.

This is totally outrageous.

In the same breath, these four council members tell us they helped taxpayers with a zero percent tax increase. They must think the Clifton homeowner and taxpayer is pretty stupid to believe this nonsense.

It is outrageous that not only the sewer service charge doubled in my case (\$160 from \$80) but the per cubic feet usage charge rose 75 percent to \$3.36. Even if you were a senior citizen with very low water usage your service fee went up 63 percent and your per usage charge went up 45 percent to \$2.78. Prior to this increase the sewer service charge was a flat \$80 for everyone and the per cubic feet usage charge was \$1.92 for everyone.

Remember the lies we were told back in 2009 when this sewer fee was first enacted? We were told that we would pay less by taking it out of our tax bills. Of course, this never happened and we all paid significantly more (and we no longer had the tax deduction since it was not part of our tax bill nor could seniors freeze this part of their charges). The reason why municipalities like Clifton enacted a sewer fee was to get around the 2 percent cap - plain and simple and not to "help us". When this sewer fee was enacted it was designed to just pay

the bill from Passaic Valley Sewage Commission and nothing else.

One of our previous city manager's parting gifts to the taxpayers of Clifton was his idea to create a "Sewer Utility" which the council voted for (I was the only no vote). In essence, the creation of the sewer utility allowed this council to remove more costs out of the general budget - a "loophole" to once again get around the 2 percent cap and include more costs in the sewer fee other than just the PVSC bill.

When will our elected officials realize they represent us the taxpayers of Clifton?

This is what I plan to do to show my opposition to this outrageous increase. Since the city would put a lien on our properties if we didn't pay this bill, I will mail my sewer payment directly to Tax Collector, Clifton City Hall, 900 Clifton Ave (not the PO BOX in Newark) and I will enclose a tea bag with my payment. I call it "Clifton's Version of the Boston Tea Party Revolt." Show your displeasure with this sewer bill by doing the same - enclose a tea bag with your payments.

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7/10/15

Clifton Journal

7/10/15