

No Standing News

Since we have no standing, we stand with those left standing

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HOTEL/MOTEL TAX

By Dame

Voters in Springfield, Missouri approved a 2-1/2¢ hotel/motel room tax increase on February 4th of this year. A new downtown Civic Park will receive 1-1/2¢ of the tax. One-half cent will go toward the American National Fish & Wildlife Living Museum and Aquarium; 1/4¢ for two ice skating rinks; and 1/4¢ for matching funds for the Discovery Center, the Landers and Gillioz Theaters, and the Dickerson Park Zoo.

Springfield voters gave their approval by a three-to-one margin. A quarter-cent capital improvement sales tax renewal shared the ballot, and voters approved it for the fourth time. Voters cited three reasons for supporting the hotel/motel tax:

- 1) Other people are paying for it.
- 2) The hotel/motel tax doesn't come out of my taxes.
- 3) It's a chance to bring revenue into the city.

Rolla voters approved a 3% hotel/motel sales tax on April 6, 1993. By contract, the city of Rolla retains 10% of the total proceeds from the tax for administration and management of the tax, and to enhance local tourism.

The Rolla Area Chamber of Commerce receives the remaining 90% of the tax. Of the 90%, one-third is used for debt service on the construction of the Visitors' Center, and for improvements to the

center, including present or future capital improvements to the Center or property. One-third is appropriated for administrative expenses necessary to the operation of the Visitors' Center. The remaining third is for the creation and purchase of materials, and for activities that will directly promote the Rolla area and the Visitors Center.

The Rolla City Council approved the contract with the Chamber of Commerce on April 5, 1993: ONE DAY BEFORE THE ROLLA VOTERS EVEN APPROVED THE HOTEL/MOTEL TAX! The Chamber will receive this tax until the year 2018. In 1997, the Chamber received \$156,637 from the tax. Chambers elsewhere operate primarily from membership dues and fundraising.

The Rolla Area Chamber of Commerce is NOT a branch of the Rolla city government. It does not have elected officials. It is a private organization whose sole purpose is to represent the business sector and their profits. Any chamber is considered a PRIVATE LOBBY ORGANIZATION AND IN NO WAY A PART OF CITY GOVERNMENT.

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