

Editor, Yuma Sun:

Recently an editorial in the Yuma Sun solicited responses from readers as to exactly where they would make changes or cuts in the city of Yuma's budget in order to make up for a presumed loss of \$247,000. Presumed, because one would first have to accept the premise of the city and the Sun that the initial budget lowered the property tax rate and that the city then decided to again lower the rate even further than it initially proposed (Yuma Sun editorial, May 15, 2017).

Contrary to the false notion of the lower rate that was being hyped, at a budget worksession it was made clear by councilman Jacob Miller (to his everlasting credit) that rather than lowering the rate, the budget actually included a real property tax rate increase of 2%. The particulars of that unmasking (to borrow popular parlance of late) appeared in an ad titled, "Lack of Transparency About Tax Increases In The City Of Yuma Budget." In inquiring of the Yuma Sun's administration as to the identity of the ad's sponsor(s), this lowly writer was assured that the ad was thoroughly fact-checked prior to publication. Yet, Yuma Sun editorials still prop-up the debunked narrative that the property tax rate was lowered not once, but twice.

As to the "challenge" of what one would change or cut to offset the so-called \$247,000 shortfall, yet another premise (advanced with every budget) must be blindly accepted; the notion that the budget (like all government budgets) is bare bones, no fat, just skimming by. It is blindly accepted because zero expenditure information is provided for the various departments' operating expenses. Let that soak in. In approving a budget of more than \$200 million there is no line item expense detail provided by which changes and cuts can be put forward.

So, while the One City Plaza handwringers fret over an alleged \$247,000 shortfall, like the discredited Brian Williams of NBC fame, they most conveniently "misremember" all of their failed wheeler-dealer misadventures frittering away the taxpayers money that will never be recovered; which if left in the public treasury makes \$247,000 look like chicken feed (with apologies to the chickens).

Phil Clark