

## Sea Isle Budget, Taxes Up Almost 8%

By JOE HART

SEA ISLE CITY — The tax rate here increased from 26.4 cents per \$100 of assessed value in 2006 to 28.5 cents this year.

Property assessed at \$100,000 last year was taxed \$264. This year the taxes for that same property would be \$285, an increase of 7.9 percent. For higher assessments, the tax would be more.

Commissioners introduced a \$16.2 million budget March 13, which is up over \$1.1 million or 7.5 percent from last year.

The amount to be raised by taxes for 2007 is up over 10.5 percent to \$10.3 million, \$983,149 more than last year.

Ratables in the city climbed from

around \$3.5 billion to over \$3.6 billion.

Tom Henry, of the Sea Isle City Taxpayer's Association, said costs associated with employee benefits, particularly the continued 50-cent prescription price, were a burden for taxpayers.

"The state average for benefit packages is around \$10,000," he said. "Sea Isle's is closer to \$25,000."

He said his organization will be looking at the numbers more diligently in the coming weeks and will issue a report of their findings.

"We haven't completed an in depth analysis of the budget," he said. "But it doesn't take a genius to see there's a spending problem."

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