

County Sales Tax Revenue Sees Slight Increase

2/26/16

Sales tax revenues in Shelby County totaled \$6.6 million in 2015, which represented a slight increase of \$175,000 over 2014. While it is a step in the right direction, it's not like the big increases of the half million dollars per year that we saw in 2012, 2013, and 2014 as we made our way out of the lean recession years. At our current sales tax levels we find ourselves in a position to keep county offices running properly and also to save back some funds in case a future slow economy causes our revenue to fall below the amount of our expenses. With this goal in mind, the Auditor's office as well as other county offices have appropriated conservatively for 2016.

The County's General Fund, which funds normal operations for the County, increased in 2015 by \$787,220 over 2014, for a total of \$12,362,033. (For perspective, \$787,000 would cover about 7 weeks of payroll for all County employees).

Some large maintenance projects were able to be accomplished in the jail and courthouse in 2015 which had been delayed during the lean years of 2009-2012. Many cuts, including payroll, were made in the county during those years, and there were no extra funds for capital improvements. We now continue to operate with less staff, providing the same services with a few less office hours than were customary before the crunch in 2009.

Casino revenue that was paid to Shelby County in 2015 was \$22,000 lower than in 2014, coming in at \$568,239. Revenues were expected to be about double that amount when voters approved casinos in Ohio, but the State allowed Racinos to be built soon after, which created competition. Racino revenue is treated like lottery money and goes to the State of Ohio, while Casino revenue is earmarked for schools and local governments.

On the Real Estate side of our office, property fact sheets have been mailed to each property owner requesting updated information and corrections to the county's data. This is in preparation for the 2017 revaluation of all properties in the county. The information is used to make sure that our records are accurate and taxpayers are being charged properly on their annual property tax bills. As part of that process, photographers have been out photographing each side of every structure in the county. The photos generated from this project will be analyzed, along with aerial photos, by professional mass appraisers. This project is state-mandated and happens every six years.

If you have not checked out our website, you may be interested in reviewing your property's record as well as other handy information such as details regarding the Homestead Tax Reduction; How your property is assessed during a Revaluation; Board of Revision explanations; Dog License info; Unclaimed Funds; Forms used by this office; and more. The staff of the Shelby County Auditor's Office is always happy to assist you with website questions as well as any other questions you may have. Feel free to stop in or call at any time. We are here to serve you! –Amy Berning, Shelby County Auditor