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 - **In the Public Interest Award – Des Moines Parks and Recreation.**
 - **FOCUS: Iowa’s Tax System – a recap.**
 - **Funding Education in Iowa – (Zoom Town Hall 4:30 PM, Wednesday, March 9)**
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Civility



A step in the right direction:

“Let’s stop seeing each other as enemies and start seeing each other for who we really are: Fellow Americans.” ... Pres. Biden, 3/1/22 State of the Union Address



A step in the wrong direction:

Repeatedly interrupting and interjecting comments during the State of the Union address. ...Reps. Lauren Boebert, Colo., and Marjorie Taylor Greene, Ga.

In the Public Interest

Annually, the Association presents the **“In the Public Interest Award”** award to recognize cost-savings, innovation, collaboration, and creativity within public-sector organizations.

Why Des Moines Parks and Recreation deserved this year’s recognition:

- DMPR maintained services while facing a \$4,000,000 reduction in operating funds and experiencing a 400% increase in park utilization during the pandemic.
- Competitively bid new management contract at the three municipal golf courses: annual savings of \$600,000 and capital improvements of \$1,000,000 provided by contractor.
- Outsourced parkland mowing over a decade ago: Average savings realized: over \$1,000,000 annually.
- Over 10,000 volunteers donated more than 81,000 hours of service (valued at more than \$2,000,000) in the past three years



Accepting the award, presented at the Association's Annual Meeting:

Ben Page (DMPR Director)
Scott Sanders (City Manager)
Jenny Richmond (DMPR Asst..Director)
Frank Cownie. Mayor

Additional details may be found in the [complete nomination letter](#).

Focus: Iowa's Tax System – Challenges and Opportunities

The **Annual Membership Symposium**, held at the Botanical Garden Wednesday 2/23/2021, was a thoughtful and comprehensive discussion of Iowa's tax system, current proposals, and possible impact on local public-sector organizations.

Joe Gradyasz, Senior Staff Writer for the **Business Record**, posted on the **Friday AM Daily** (February 25, 2020):

“Takeaways from a civil discourse on Iowa's state tax-cut proposals.”



Kraig Paulsen Jared Walczak Mike Owen

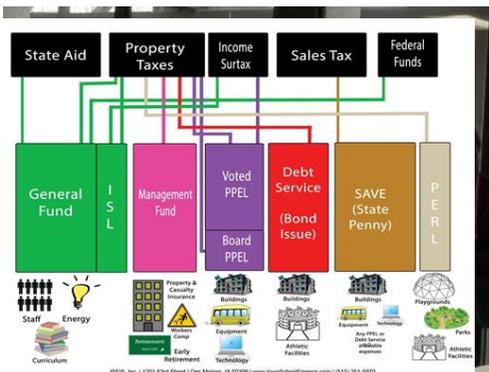
The Association sincerely thank **Kraig Paulsen**, Director, Iowa Department of Management, **Jared Walczak**, Vice President of State Projects, Tax Foundation, Washington DC, and **Mike Owen**, Associate Director, **Common Good Iowa** for their presentations and comments.

The **Business Record** post and the presentation decks may be found on the [Association website](#).

Funding Education in Iowa – an update

“Iowa Republicans boost school funding by 2.5%, Democrats say it isn't enough”

... Stephen Gruber-Miller, *Des Moines Register* (2/14/22)



The sources of PK-12 funding in Iowa are varied. Kraig Paulsen, Director, Iowa Department of Management shared the projected (FY 2032) PK-12 School funding for Iowa: state supplemental aid (46%), Property Taxes (37%), SAVE sales tax (7%), federal funding (3%), and other sources (6%). **In total \$8.055 billion, or \$16,587 per student.**

The next Town Hall, 4:30 PM, Wednesday, March 9 will provide the annual update on funding the education of Iowa's children.

Get the specific details on:

- Sources and uses of funds
- Current Enrollment trends
- "Charter Schools"
- "Scholarships."

The specific panelists and zoom details are being finalized, but it on your calendar NOW.

"... Partly Personal"

NOTE: Growing up, Paul Harvey's "News and Comment," and "The Rest of the Story" segments, were widely popular. Occasionally he would offer a segment prefaced by, "This is partly personal." With that acknowledgement, the next thoughts are, indeed, "partly personal;" those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Association.)

The issue: **"Tyranny of the Majority,"** a "fear expressed variously by Plato, Aristotle, Madison, Tocqueville, and J. S. Mill. **If the majority rules, what is to stop it from expropriating the minority, or from tyrannizing it in other ways by enforcing the majority's religion, language, or culture on the minority?"** ([*Oxford University Press*](#)).

The Democrats currently have the "trifecta" nationally, holding the Presidency, Senate and House. The Republicans have a "trifecta" in Iowa, holding the Governorship, Senate and House. Each may be deemed to be "tyrannizing" members of the other (minority) party. With such power, why listen to the concerns of minority?

Are the rallying cries of "the extremists" a result of the high stakes, "it's my way or the highway politics" in Washington, DC and in the states?

Is the binary choice between increasingly polarized parties going to bring this "democratic experiment" to its knees? Maybe the answer is that proposed by President Biden last night:

"Let's stop seeing each other as enemies and start seeing each other for who we really are: Fellow Americans."

The TACI In-Basket

Regarding the Tax Discussion:

"I want to commend you and the Taxpayers Assn. Board of Directors for making available the Wed AM presentation about the Tax conversation ... to non-members of your organization. ... I wish many other Des Moines and Polk county citizens could see such a presentation from experts in the field!"



Help still wanted: The Association is looking for part-time support. If you (or know someone) who has "social media" skills, please let it be known. We are also looking for an individual who may assist with research activities.

***Please forward this notice to your friends, colleagues and neighbors who share your interest in
"Vibrant, just, and safe Central Iowa communities."***



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