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WMC REPORTS ALMOST 50 PER CENT DROP IN PROPERTY TAX COLLECTION 1

WMC reports almost 50 per cent drop in property tax collection

CHAIRMAN of the Westmoreland Municipal Corporation (WMC), Bertel Moore is reporting that the parish recorded a roughly 50 per cent decline in property tax collection during the last financial year, when compared to the previous year.

According to Moore, who is also the mayor of Savanna-la-Mar, during the 2018-2019 financial year the parish raked in some \$117 million in property taxes.

He added, however, that at the end of the last financial year the amount collected fell to roughly \$57 million.

He cited the coronavirus pandemic as the main reason for the sharp decline.

“Because of COVID[-19] many persons chose to save their income for food as they were uncertain of where their finances were coming from,” he told the Jamaica Observer West.

Moore noted that the decline is having an adverse effect on the operations of the corporation, noting that drain cleaning and bushing are negatively impacted “as it is property taxes that fund these activities”.

“Finding funds to conduct operations have proven difficult. When I say funding is hard, funding is hard,” the veteran politician stressed.

He argued that “during this time of COVID[-19] where health is of greatest concern, the corporation will have to cut cost”.

Property tax is charged to property owners to provide revenue for funding public amenities or services that are provided by the local government body.

On April 1 each year, residential and commercial properties are subject to property tax, which pays for street lights, garbage collection, minor water supplies, beautification and road maintenance.

International Property Tax Institute

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