

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Lee Hearn, Chairman
Edward Gibbons, Vice Chairman
Eric K. Maxwell
Charles W. Oddo
Charles D. Rousseau



FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Steve Rapson, County Administrator
Dennis A. Davenport, County Attorney
Tameca P. Smith, County Clerk
Marlena Edwards, Chief Deputy County Clerk

140 Stonewall Avenue West
Public Meeting Room
Fayetteville, GA 30214

MINUTES 1st Public Hearing

September 7, 2023
10:00 a.m.

Welcome to the meeting of your Fayette County Board of Commissioners. Your participation in County government is appreciated. All regularly scheduled Board meetings are open to the public and are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Chairman Lee Hearn called the First Public Hearing to discuss the 2023 Property Tax Millage Rate to order at 10:00 a.m. All members of the Board were present.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Hearn offered the Invocation and pledge.

Acceptance of Agenda

Commissioner Charles Oddo moved to accept the agenda as written. Vice Chairman Edward Gibbons seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. First Public Hearing to discuss the 2023 Property Tax Millage Rate.

Chief Finance Officer Sheryl Weinmann made a presentation to the Board. This hearing was advertised on Wednesday, August 30 and Wednesday, September 6, per state requirement.

Ms. Weinmann stated that the 2022 Digest was \$8.367 billion and the Growth in real property was \$226 million, personal property had the highest percentage increase at 14.64% for \$85,956,841. The motor vehicle had an increase for the first time at 0.12% due to the increase of the price of vehicles. There was also an increase in the "other" category. The total Growth increase was \$313,539,324.

There was an increase in the Exemptions, which decreased the digest and was reflected in red to show that the increase meant a decrease to the digest. Ms. Weinmann stated that Reassessments (Real Property) were increased by \$794,247,449, which showed a positive change in the digest of \$1.27 million or 12.28%. The 2023 Digest totaled \$9,394,779,107. She continued the presentation showing the change in taxable digest. She stated that it had increased by almost 114% since 2014.

The proposed 2023 millage rate was 4.034, which was the same from 2022. Fire Services (3.070), Emergency Medical Services (0.500), and 911 Services (0.210) also remained the same. Although there was no change, state law required that the millage rate be advertised as an increase because the county was not rolling back the millage rate.

Ms. Weinmann offered examples of a residential tax bill for a \$450,000 home value for unincorporated Fayette County, Town of Brooks, Peachtree City, City of Fayetteville and Town of Tyrone showing the distribution of each to Board of Education, County M&O, Fire District, EMS District and 911 District appropriately.

The millage rate in 2014 was 5.714, if the rate had remained the same, the county would have collected another \$81.5 million at this point. Instead, this was a savings to the citizens of \$81.5 million.

Ms. Weinmann concluded the presentation. This was the first hearing of the millage rate. The second hearing will be held later today at 6:00 p.m. and the final hearing on September 14 at 5:00 p.m. where the Board will be asked to adopt the resolution to levy the County property tax.

Commissioner Charles Rousseau stated that he fielded a lot of phone calls, emails and inquiries from the public and he would like tonight's presentation and subsequent hearings to start by explaining why the dates changed. He stated that traditionally there was a comparative analysis of some surrounding jurisdictions, not just the municipalities, and he would like that to be added to the presentation.

Ms. Weinmann stated that she would have that added.

No one spoke in favor or opposition.

Thelma Kelly stated that there was no increase, but it had to be announced that there was increase. She wanted to know if there was going to be an increase to the millage or not.

Ms. Weinmann made comments. (inaudible) She stated that if the county decided to not collect the reassessment money, then the millage rate would rollback to the 3...

Vice Chairman Gibbons interjected to explain that the reassessment meant the value of homes went up.

Ms. Weinmann stated that there were two parts, growth and reassessment.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that the value of his home went up and so that meant that he would pay more property tax. Ms. Weinmann stated that was correct. She stated that in order to take advantage of the increase in the value, we would have to not rollback the millage rate.

There was no vote of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Eric Maxwell stated that he would not be at the 6:00 p.m. 2nd Public Hearing. He wanted to ensure a quorum would be present. The Board confirmed that a quorum would be present.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to adjourn the 1st Public Hearing. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

Tameca P. Smith, County Clerk

Lee Hearn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 14th day of September 2023. Attachments are available upon request at the County Clerk's Office.