

The Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia met in a Special Called Meeting on Thursday, September 20, 2001, at 7:00 p.m. in the public meeting room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Greg Dunn, Chairman  
Linda Wells, Vice Chair  
Herb Frady  
A.G. VanLandingham

COMMISSIONER ABSENT: Peter Pfeifer

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris W. Cofty, County Administrator  
Carol Chandler, Executive Assistant  
Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk

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**DISCUSSION OF AD VALOREM TAX MILLAGE RATES FOR 2001:**

Finance Director Mark Pullium remarked that in the development of the budget this year it was planned that the millage rate would remain the same. He said the proposed millage rate that he was proposing to the Commission tonight started out at 9.84 as the gross millage before rollbacks. He said this was exactly the same rate as last year. He said from that number the sales tax collections would be rolled back in the amount of 2.255 mills in the unincorporated as well as in the incorporated areas of the county. He said an insurance premium of .945 mills would be rolled back to the unincorporated area. He said the net mill rate for the unincorporated area was proposed at 6.640 and for the incorporated area it was 7.585. He said in addition it was being proposed to keep the fire tax millage rate at 3.778. He said this was consistent with the prior year millage rate. He said this would generate a net tax levy of \$29.4 million. He said it was required that a notice of a property tax increase be posted in the local newspapers. He said this was because the rate exceeded the rollback millage rate by 6.1%. He said the one important thing that he would like to add was that even though the gross millage rate was the same because of the increased assessed evaluation of real property this was the way the law read in the State of Georgia. He said there had to be public hearings and notification to the public according to Georgia law that there was a proposed tax increase under the meaning of the Statutes. He asked the Board if there were any questions.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the School Board millage rate being down slightly from where it was last year. He asked Mr. Pullium if he had those figures.

Mr. Pullium replied that he did not have those figures at this time.

Commissioner Frady interjected that the City of Fayetteville's millage rate might have dropped slightly as well.

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Mr. Pullium remarked that he would get that information and provide it to the Board.

Chairman Dunn interjected that 73¢ on the dollar goes to the schools. He said there would be a slight reduction in that portion of the budget and the County's portion would remain about the same millage rate wise.

Chairman Dunn said this was a public hearing which was required by State law. He asked if anyone had any comments to make on the proposed millage rates for the county. Hearing none, he asked if the Board members had any questions or comments.

Commissioner Frady said he felt compelled to make a comment because he did not want to wait until the last public hearing to say that he could not support the reassessment portion of the increase. He felt the Board should rollback the reassessment portion of the increase. He said it was being suggested that this building complex be paid off which was in the amount of \$3.9 million. He said the total revenue for this coming year would be approximately \$3 million. He said he would not mind putting off that payment until another time because of the state of the economy at this time. He said the county would have many issues facing it and it was not known how these would be faced right now. He said there would be issues coming down the pike including water, air, GRTA and many other things. He said he had just learned today that the airlines had laid off 40,000 people from yesterday to today. He said he had also seen the figure of 121,000 total people laid off by the airlines. He remarked that Fayette County was a strong airline community and there were a lot of citizens working for the airlines. He said there were more than few houses for sale now than there were several months ago. He felt the economy was in such a down turn that he would like to see the paying off of this building be postponed for right now. He said he knew the county was in good shape and financially sound but there were so many uncertainties at this time that he would like to wait until the Board went through its retreat. He said the Board could outline things that were necessary and then determine if it was reasonable to pay off this building. He said the building could be paid off this year or next year without penalty. He asked that the Board take this into consideration. He said he could not support the increase in the assessment.

Commissioner VanLandingham said he had done a lot of searching and had a lot of concern. He said he had not yet decided exactly what he would like to see. He said he was leaning toward a rollback. He said when the Board adopted the budget there was no way the Board could foretell what happened on September 11<sup>th</sup>. He said no one knows how far this was going to reach into the stability of our economy. He felt the Board needed to be very careful. He felt the jobs that were going to be lost would affect Fayette County. He said the rollback would amount to approximately \$28 per household but if someone did not have a job then \$28 would be a lot of money. He felt it was his responsibility to look at this very closely and he would promise to do that. He said he had not made any conclusions yet but this was the only area that he was looking at making a change from the recommendation made by staff. He said it seemed to him that it needed to be understood that the citizens could face a lot of

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hardship and the county needed to do all it could to help them. He said these were the considerations that he would be going over in the next week.

Chairman Dunn said there would be no final decision made tonight. He said there would be two more public hearings on this matter and the public would be allowed to speak at those as well.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Dunn adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

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Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk

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Gregory M. Dunn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 27th day of September, 2001.

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Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk