

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
August 11, 2020
Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday August 11, 2020, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Walker, Thomson, McMichael, and Robinson present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, and Director of Personnel Ken Carter.

County Attorney Tom Hall gave the Invocation.

Director of Administration Barry Holland led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Stalnaker announced that this was the third and final of the required public hearings held to inform the citizens that the Board of Commissioners will maintain the 2020 millage rate at 9.935 which funds the FY21 maintenance and operations of the general County government and the 2020 millage rate for Fire will remain at 1.177. The millage will be adopted with the approved tax levy resolutions tonight after the conclusion of the public hearing. He stressed that the proposed millage rate for 2020 remains the same as the 2019 millage rate. It is misleading to advertise this as a tax increase, but State law requires it. Since the millage is being maintained at last year's rate the only way you would actually see an increase on property taxes would be if your property had been reassessed at a higher value during the year due to construction of new improvements or additions to the property. The total increase in revenues for FY21 that the proposed millage rate will generate represents a 2.53% increase. This increase requires the three public hearings advising the public that the County could rollback the millage by 0.020 percent or slightly less than two hundredths of a mill. By not rolling back the millage to 9.915 mills the County will gain an additional \$82,604 to help fund the FY21 budget of \$61.1 million. This \$82,604 is projected income only since 100% of taxes would have to be collected to realize the additional revenue. He commended Tax Commissioner Mark Kushinka for maintaining a collection rate of 98% or more for not only this year but previous years as well. The millage in Houston County for the 2016 tax year was 9.95, for 2017, 2018 and 2019 it was 9.935, and it is proposed again for the 2020 tax year at 9.935. In 1990 the millage rate was 8.97 mills and 30 years later there has been less than a one mill increase. He reiterated that 9.935 is the proposed millage rate for the 2020 tax year for General Fund operations and 1.177 for Fire.

Chairman Stalnaker then closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened the Public Hearing.

As there were no comments, Chairman Stalnaker then closed the public hearing and reopened the meeting.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker signing resolutions setting the Houston County tax levy for 2020 at 23.232 mills in the incorporated areas and 24.409 mills in the unincorporated areas as hereby specified:

Incorporated
9.935 mills General County Purposes

Unincorporated
9.935 mills General County Purposes

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13.297 mills Educational Purposes
0.000 mills State Levy
23.232 mills

13.297 mills Educational Purposes
0.000 mills State Levy
1.177 mills Fire Levy
24.409 mills

Chairman Stalnaker clarified that the millage rate of 9.935 that is being set tonight does not include 13.297 mills that was set by the Board of Education earlier today. The total millage in the incorporated areas of the County adds the 9.935 and 13.297 together for a total of 23.232 mills. In the unincorporated areas, the fire levy of 1.177 mills is added to that for a total of 24.409 mills.

Mr. McMichael asked if the Board of Commissioners had the authority to raise the fire levy if it so desired.

Chairman Stalnaker thought that it would require a referendum to do so and asked the County Attorney Hall to research the question.

Chairman Stalnaker announced that the next regularly scheduled Board meeting would be held at 6:00 p.m. at the County Annex building in Warner Robins on August 18th.

Motion to Adjourn by Mr. Walker second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all, meeting adjourned.

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner