

Houston County Commissioners Meeting
July 17, 2019
Warner Robins, Georgia

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met for a special called Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 17, 2019, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Thomson, Walker, Robinson and McMichael present. Also present were Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar and Director of Personnel Ken Carter.

County Attorney Tom Hall led the audience in the Invocation.

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

Chairman Stalnaker announced that this was the first of three required public hearings held to inform the citizens that the Board of Commissioners will maintain the 2019 millage rate at 9.935 which funds the FY20 maintenance and operations of the general County government. He stressed that the proposed millage rate for 2019 remains the same as the 2018 millage rate. The total increase in revenues for FY20 that the proposed millage rate will generate represents a 5.1% increase. This increase requires the three public hearings advising the public that the County could rollback the millage by 0.196 percent or slightly less than two tenths of a mill. By not rolling back the millage to 9.739 mills the County will gain an additional \$242,000 over the FY20 budget of \$1.7 million estimated new revenue to help fund the FY20 General Fund budget of \$59.2 million. This \$242,000 is anticipated income only since 100% of taxes would have to be collected to realize the additional revenue. The millage in Houston County for the 2016 tax year was 9.95, for 2017 it was 9.935, for 2018 it was 9.935, and it is proposed again for the 2019 tax year at 9.935. In 1990 the millage rate was 8.97 mills and 29 years later there has been less than a one mill increase. This is exceptional considering that the County has also operated under a tax cap since the early 1980's. He explained that to exceed the tax cap would require voter approval. The tax cap limit for 2019 is 10.7912 mills and since the proposed 2019 millage is 9.935 there is 0.8562 mills left under the tax cap. He reiterated that 9.935 is the proposed millage rate for the 2019 tax year for General Fund operations. 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. In closing he thanked the commissioners, elected officials and employees for their sound financial management of their respective budgets which has helped the County to contain the millage rate.

There were no public comments.

Ms. Robinson asked the Chairman to clarify what the tax cap millage would be at the maximum.

Chairman Stalnaker stated that the cap would be 10.7912 mills.

Mr. Walker thanked the other commissioners, the Chairman, Mr. Holland and each of the County's department heads and employees for their efforts.

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Mr. Thomson remarked that Houston is certainly a progressive county given that no one has attended this public hearing and therefore the citizens appear to be satisfied with the proposed rate.

Mr. McMichael remarked that there is strong potential for positive growth in the coming year's digest as well.

Chairman Stalnaker announced that the second public hearing required by law would be held Thursday, July 18, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. at the Commissioners Board Room of the County Annex Building in Warner Robins and that the third public hearing would be held Friday, July 26, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. after which the Board will hold a special-called meeting at 11:30 a.m. to vote on the adoption of the 2019 millage rate.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all. Meeting adjourned.

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner