

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
July 30, 2020
Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday July 30, 2020, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Walker, Thomson, and Robinson present. Commissioner McMichael was absent due to personal reasons. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Mark Byrd, and Chris Thomson

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 first of three 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. 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. 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. 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. Houston County has also operated under a tax cap since the early 1980's and for the County to exceed the tax cap it would require voter approval. He reiterated that 9.935 is the proposed millage rate for the 2020 tax year for General Fund operations and 1.177 for Fire. 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 conclusion Chairman Stalnaker stated that he was pleased to be able to keep the millage rate the same as last year. All of the appropriate ads and notices have run in the Houston Home Journal and online at the County's website.

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

There being no comments Chairman Stalnaker closed Public Comments and returned to the regular portion of the meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker then closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Commissioners Comments.

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Mr. Walker remarked that the Chairman did a great job presenting the information on the digest.

Mr. Thomson agreed that the Chairman presented the digest information well.

Chairman Stalnaker announced that the second public hearing required by law would be held Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. in the Jury Assembly Room at the Courthouse in Perry after the conclusion of the regularly scheduled Board meeting which begins at 9:00 a.m. The third public hearing will be Tuesday, August 11, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's Board Room at the County Annex building in Warner Robins after which the Board will vote on the adoption of the 2020 millage rate. The next step would be to provide Mr. Kushinka the proper documentation so that he can transmit the digest package to the Department of Revenue in Atlanta.

Chairman Stalnaker asked everyone to keep Mr. McMichael and his wife Dianne in their thoughts and prayers as she continues to recover from her illness.

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

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

As Mr. McMichael was not at
the meeting he does not sign
Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner