

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing on Monday, August 8, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. at the Brooks County Administration Building in the Commissioners Meeting Room, located at 610 South Highland Road; Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Ms. Myra Exum; and Mr. Lee Larko. Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman and Mr. Willie Cody were not present. Others present were: Ms. Jessica J. McKinney, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams; County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels; Human Resources; and various residents.

Public Hearing – Vice Chairman called public hearing to order; and led all in attendance in prayer and the pledge of allegiance.

The purpose of the hearing was to allow citizen input on the tentative adopted millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes by 14.56 percent for the unincorporated area and 18.40 percent for the incorporated area. The tentative increase will result in a millage rate of 14.153 mills; an increase of 1.799 mill for unincorporated area; and 16.107 mills, an increase of 2.503 mill for incorporated area. A sign-in sheet was provided for those in attendance who wish to speak.

Jack Harrell commented on his tax increase concerns and what he feels is a lack of understanding regarding the Development Authority and Economic Development; and the Board has no interest to understand. He has addressed this with Stephanie Williams, Director of the Development Authority. He expressed concerns regarding the NextEra solar fields and the expected tremendous return on Brooks County funds. The decrease in the millage by the Commissioners the county provides to the Development Authority cannot provide what is needed, he stated.

Kenny Marshall stated the digest is up 42% and 32% last year; and is not a reasonable result for property tax increase.

Jason Crosby stated he feels the same as others that have spoken against the tax increase.

Peggy Howard commented that during the budget work session there were two options mentioned, but neither option 1 nor option 2 was mentioned; the Board chose to go with the fully funded amount. There were two Commissioners against it. She emphasized and encouraged citizens to attend the next public hearing on August 17th to get their point across. She asked the Board to revisit using the reserve funds instead of increasing taxes.

Vice Chairman closed the public hearing at 2:17 p.m.

Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Jessica J. McKinney, Administrator
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk