

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing on Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. at the Brooks County Administration Building in the Commissioners Chambers, located at 610 South Highland Road; Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mrs. Myra Exum, Chair, Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Mr. Patrick Folsom; and Mr. Lee Larko. Mr. Cody was not present. Others present were Mr. Buddy Johnson, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams; County Clerk; Ms. Janice Jarvis, Finance Director; and various residents.

1. CALL TO ORDER – Madam Chair called the meeting to order at 11:02 am.

A. Prayer/Pledge – Mr. Folsom led all in attendance in prayer and the pledge of allegiance.

II. Public Hearing – Proposed Property Tax Increase – The purpose of the hearing was to allow citizen input and questions on the tentative adopted millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes by 1.59 percent for the unincorporated area and 13.75 percent for the incorporated area. The tentative increase will result in a millage rate of 14.079 mills; an increase of .220 mills for unincorporated areas. The proposed millage rate for both unincorporated and incorporated areas is 14.079, which is unchanged from the previous year. The rollback was discussed as being 13.859.

A. Public Comments

Mr. Todd Key, resident, inquired as to whether the proposed rate represented an increase in property taxes. It was explained and clarified that the millage rate itself is not increasing. Property taxes may still change if a property's assessed or taxable value changes. Mr. Key was informed that the separate fire protection fee that appeared on prior tax bills will not be charged this year. For some homeowners, particularly those with homestead exemption, this could result in a reduction in the total tax bill.

County Administrator explained that homestead exemption changes may cap a property's taxable value at the prior year's level, even if the market value increased. As a result, taxes could remain stable or decrease slightly, depending on the individual property. The question was asked if nearby fire departments affect insurance costs. It was explained that proximity to a fire department can improve the property's ISO rating and may reduce insurance premiums. Residents should review their tax bills for changes in assessed value, homestead treatment, and the removal of the fire protection fee.

With no further comments regarding the millage rate, a motion was made by Mr. Maxwell, and seconded by Mr. Folsom, to adjourn the public hearing at 11:16am.

Mrs. Myra Exum, Chair

Mr. James (Buddy) Johnson, County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk