

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, HELD ON TUESDAY JULY 15, 2003, IN THE COMMISSION MEETING ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE CHATHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE, LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING, 124 BULL STREET, SAVANNAH, GEORGIA.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m., Tuesday, July 15, 2003.

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II. INVOCATION

Commissioner Rayno gave the invocation.

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III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone in attendance gave the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

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Vice Chairman Thomas declared a recess in the proceedings at 6:12 p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 6:27 p.m.

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IV. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Dr. Priscilla D. Thomas, Vice Chairman, District 8
Jeffrey Rayno, District 1
Harris Odell Jr., District 5
David M. Gellatly, District 6
Dean Kicklighter, District 7(arrived approximately 6:26 p.m)

ABSENT: Dr. Billy B. Hair, Chairman
Frank G. Murray, Chairman Pro Tem, District 4
Joe Murray Rivers, District 2
John J. McMasters, District 3

IN ATTENDANCE: R. E. Abolt, County Manager
Sybil E. Tillman, County Clerk

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V. PUBLIC HEARING ON COUNTY’S 2003 MILLAGE LEVY

Vice Chairman Thomas said, this hearing is being held in compliance with State law. The Chatham County Board of Commissioners has announced publicly its intention to increase the property taxes it will levy this year by 3.26 percent over the rollback millage rate for General Maintenance and Operations taxes, and 1.49 percent over the rollback millage rate for Special Service District taxes, and 2.37 percent over the rollback millage rate for Chatham Area Transit Authority. The purpose of this hearing is to provide members of the public the opportunity to comment. The proposed millage rate for the General Fund is 10.367 mills, which is .327 mills greater than the calculated “rollback millage” of 10.04 mills. The proposed millage rate for the Special Service District Fund is 3.475 mills, which is .051 mills greater than the calculated “rollback millage” of 3.424 mills. The proposed rate for the Chatham Area Transit Authority is 0.82 mills, which is .019 mills greater than the calculated “rollback millage” of 0.801 mills.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, a list is provided at the front of the room for you to record your name and address, as well as the group or organization you represent, if there is anyone in the audience today. This will allow us to document that public input was solicited. We ask that you be brief and concise in your remarks since there may be a number of other people who wish to speak, and we would like to make sure that everyone has an equal chance to be heard. Is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak at this time?

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I'll state for the record since this is on our government channel, I just want to state for the record again that this is a State law that states —, that dictates certain things, and this is one of those things that I don't necessarily agree with. They make the County or whatever advertise that there's a tax increase if you're not rolling back the millage rate —, in other words, reducing the millage rate —, so to the public out there I just want you to know that we're not, in my opinion, we're not increasing taxes because we're not increasing the millage rate at all, and let you know that if you have a homestead exemption, the Stephens-Day Bill, no one will receive a property tax increase at all, the homeowners won't with the Stephens-Day exemption.

Commissioner Rayno said, with the exception of the School Board version and the City version if you happen to live there.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, right, but as far as we're concerned on a County level, Chatham County, what we're doing, if you have the Stephens-Day exemption, your taxes will not increase whatsoever on the County's part. That's all I have to say.

Vice Chairman Thomas asked, do we have any other comments from any of the other Commissioners present? Anyone else? [NOTE: No one responded.] Vice Chairman Thomas said, hearing none, what is your pleasure?

Commissioner Odell said, I move that the public hearing be closed. Commissioner Kicklighter said, second. Vice Chairman Thomas said, all in favor of said motion please vote. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rivers, McMasters and Murray were not present.] Vice Chairman Thomas said, the motion is carried.

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VI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I make a motion we adjourn. Commissioner Gellatly said, second. Vice Chairman Thomas said, all in favor. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rivers, McMasters and Murray were not present.]

Vice Chairman Thomas declared the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

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APPROVED: This _____ day of _____, 2003

Dr. Billy B. Hair, Chairman
Chatham County Commission

Sybil E. Tillman, County Clerk