

**Baldwin County Commissioners**  
**Public Hearing on Proposed Property Tax Increase**  
**August 26, 2014**  
**6:00 p.m.**

A Public Hearing on the proposed property tax increase was held Tuesday, August 26, 2014 at 6:00 p.m., Baldwin County Courthouse, Suite 319, 121 North Wilkinson Street, Milledgeville, Georgia with Chair Sammy Hall presiding.

Members Present: Emily C. Davis  
Tommy French  
Sammy Hall  
Henry Craig  
Johnny Westmoreland

Also Present: David McRee  
Ralph McMullen  
Dawn Hudson  
Cindy Cunningham

Call to Order

Chair Sammy Hall called the Public Hearing to order at 6:00 p.m. He stated the County has advertised a proposed increase in the millage rate from 8.84 to 9.84; therefore, three public hearings must be held to solicit public comment regarding the proposed property tax increase. He stated all legal notices have been published for the three hearings. This hearing is the third and final hearing on the proposed millage rate. The County has advertised that the millage rate will be set at the called meeting tonight at 7:00 p.m.

Proposed Property Tax Increase

Finance Director Dawn Hudson presented information regarding property tax collections, history of M & O digest since 2009, declines in all sources of revenue and the resulting budget cuts, increase in costs of services detailing mandated services, functions or offices, discretionary services and services provided by the County to qualify as a certified government. Ms. Hudson explained what this means to the County – deferred maintenance of County buildings, roads and bridges, no upgrades in technology, outdated aerial photography and mapping, no vehicle / equipment replacement program, deferred replacement of aviation fuel tanks, lack of funds to provide additional firefighters which would improve the ISO rating and inability to provide additional staff for animal control.

Finance Director Hudson discussed the proposed tax levy for 2014. She stated Administrative and Financial staff request the County millage rate be set at 9.84.

Public Comments

Chair Hall opened the floor for public comments from citizens who have signed in to address the Board.

The following people addressed the Board regarding the proposed increase.

Irvin Griffin – presented handout to Board stating reasons he is opposed to increase.

Sheriff Bill Masee – in favor of millage rate increase so that County can continue to provide much needed services. He stated the County has not given employee raises in a number of years, and he is losing employees since he cannot compete with the salaries of other area law enforcement agencies. Requests raises for much deserving County employees.

Harvey Palmer – opposed to increase. Feels previous Boards should have raised millage rate in small increments rather than a large amount at once.

John Weaver – opposed to increase. Propose to cut any discretionary services.

Hal Reid – stated his opposition to proposed increase. Recommended that if increase is being considered - one quarter mill increase be implemented effective for one year only. Review accomplishments after one year.

Melissa Schubert – opposed. Citizens currently have to pay for services such as garbage pickup.

### Adjournment

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sammy Hall  
Chair

Cynthia K. Cunningham  
County Clerk