

**LUMPKIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Notice of Property Tax Increase

Public Hearing Agenda

Lumpkin County Park & Recreation Community Center

Heritage Room

365 Riley Road

Dahlonega, Georgia

July 12, 2010

9:00 A.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Raber

II. PUBLIC HEARING

- Notice of Property Tax Increase
 - The Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners has tentatively adopted a millage rate, which will increase property taxes by **4.74 percent** in Unincorporated Lumpkin County, **4.04 percent** in Incorporated Lumpkin County, **14.58 percent** in Unincorporated Lumpkin County Reservoir and **-76.16 percent** in Unincorporated Lumpkin County Planning.
 - All concerned citizens are invited to the three public hearings on this tax increase. The public hearings will be held **July 8, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.**, **July 12, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.** and **July 15, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.** in the Heritage Room located in the Park & Recreation Community Center, 365 Riley Road, Dahlonega, Georgia.

IV. ADJOURN

Chairman Raber

**LUMPKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
NOTICE OF PROPERTY TAX INCREASE
PUBLIC HEARING NOTES**

July 12, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Raber called the public hearing to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Park & Recreation Community Center Heritage Room. Clarence Grindle was not present.

The invocation was led by Clarence Stowers which was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by John Raber.

PUBLIC HEARING

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The Chairman Raber said we would begin today with a PowerPoint presentation by Tax Commissioner Rachel Pruitt and GIS Coordinator Marc Koopman to explain the impact of a 0.331 millage rate increase.

Budget Analyst Mark French pointed out during the PowerPoint presentation how the county has adapted as best it could to the changing revenues coming into the county. He said that each year the department heads are asked to present a requested budget which is frequently reduced by the county manager.

The Chairman then explained the protocol of the meeting saying each person would be permitted to go to the podium one time.

Candidate Frank Gilkeson said he wants to do everything possible to prevent a tax increase. He talked about his web site and what is available to view there. He said he has paged through the 48-page budget and has identified a number of cuts. He questions expenses in the following categories: Administrative Support, the Sheriff's Courthouse Services budget, Roads & Bridges, General Government Building, and various other Sheriff's Departments budgets.

Citizen Emily Lewy said she thinks the board should have sat in on the department budget hearings with the county manager. She also questioned if county government should be doing all that they are doing. For example, she said many people are very concerned about public safety issues and want that service to continue. She said it will be difficult to cut in roads but we should ask the hard questions there.

Commissioner Stowers said he wants to respond to some comments made by Frank Gilkeson. The commissioner said that he speaks to elected officials and department heads every day. He pointed out that expenses of two extra buildings such as heating/cooling and a new phone system caused increases. He also spoke about the continuing costs of state mandates. He explained that everything having to do with millage comes from what a mill is worth which varies. He explained we have cut and cut all the department budgets already.

Former Sole Commissioner Gooch asked what the actual dollar difference is between what is anticipated revenue in 2011 versus 2010.

The Chairman said that the way the legislation for the board is written that the county manager runs the day-by-day operations of the county and that the board members are part-time.

Citizen Jack Thompson asked about forecasted revenue in the next several years. It was explained that we can only project out one year. Commissioner Stowers said this reduction in the digest may be a trend and is something we have to deal with annually.

Citizen Laurelanne Hackinson said she thinks, based on what had been said, that we are going to have a deficit again next year and that furloughs should take place right away. She thinks jobs need to be cut. Commissioner Stowers said he does not like to start with furloughs because, in the event that revenues do not meet expectations, it is the only place to cut expenses quickly. She said we can cut services and the public could pick that up, if they were interested. Commissioner Stowers asked for an example of what she thought should be cut. She said to cut the county contribution to the employee 401(a).

Tax Commissioner Pruitt said she appears to be the only elected official present at the meeting. She said she wants to defend her department budget and her staff. She explained cuts that she has made and pointed out that staff had not received a pay raise in four years.

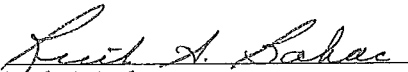
Former Commissioner and State Senate candidate Steve Gooch announced that newly elected Representative Tom Graves will shortly be at Park & Recreation and wants to meet with people. He invited all to attend.

Commissioner Bowden said that he hopes the board will not raise the millage rate. Commissioner Scott said we are not looking to the future and that we can't slice things to nothing this year then what are we going to do next year?

Citizen Jim Meal said he is opposed to an increase. He said he would urge the board to meet this budget but that a tax increase is a worse case scenario.

ADJOURN

Chairman Raber ended the public hearing at 10:05 am.


Ruth A. Bohac
Clerk, Lumpkin County