

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 2008, 6:15 PM
COUNTY ANNEX MEETING ROOM
107 GROSS ROAD, KINGSLAND, GEORGIA**

A special called meeting of the Camden County Board of Commissioners was held at 6:15 pm on Monday, August 11, 2008 at the County Annex meeting room in Kingsland, Georgia.

Chairman Rhodes called the meeting to order at 6:18 p.m.

Chairman Rhodes delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll call indicated that Chair Preston Rhodes, Vice-Chair Katherine Nisi Zell, Commissioner David Rainer, Commissioner Stephen L. Berry, Commissioner Charlene Sears, County Administrator Steve L. Howard, County Attorney Brent Green and County Clerk Jodi Gregory were present.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA:

Vice-Chair Zell made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sears, to adopt the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

John Uhaus, St. Marys

Mr. Uhaus questioned if a 100% collection rate, as noted in the millage rate advertisement, ever actually achieved. Mr. Uhaus stated that he is unclear on the collection process.

Mr. Fender and County Attorney Brent Green both explained the collection process.

1. Consideration of the millage rate.

General Fund Countywide:

Mr. Fender advised that initially the millage rate was advertised at 11.7. Subsequently the Tax Assessor's office resolved some appeals which caused the digest to go down. Therefore, the millage rate had to be increased to 11.85, but the majority of homeowners will still see a reduction in their tax bills.

Mr. Howard stated that the current millage rate is 12 mills, so this is a roll back.

Commissioner Rainer stated that the millage rate was advertised at 11.7, and that he will not vote for any rate over that amount. He said with a half million dollars in contingency and approximately five million dollars in the fund balance, the additional funds could be taken from those accounts.

Commissioner Sears stated rather than increase the millage to 11.85, the budget should be revised and the fluff removed. She believes there are items in the budget that the County can live without.

Chairman Rhodes advised that it would be a roll back from 12 mills to 11.85 mills, and he asked Mr. Fender to explain again why it went from 11.7 to 11.85.

Mr. Fender stated the Tax Assessor's office resolved some appeals which caused a decrease in the digest. Therefore, to make up the difference, the millage rate went to 11.85.

Commissioner Sears made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rainer, to approve a millage rate of 11.7.

On discussion, Commissioner Berry advised that by rolling the millage back to 11.7, that the budget will have to be cut.

Mr. Fender stated the budget would need to be cut by approximately \$255,000.00.

Mr. Howard reminded the Commissioners if you take the money from contingency that only a balance of approximately \$250,000.00 would remain for any uncertainties and unknowns.

Commissioner Rainer suggested taking half from contingency and half from fund balance.

Mr. Fender advised the Commissioners that part of the \$500,000.00 in contingency was to go into the fund balance so that the County would not have to borrow money in the event tax bills could not be sent until later in the year.

Commissioner Sears made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rainer, adopt a millage rate of 11.7 mils and to reduce the contingency fund by the amount necessary to balance this years budget without exceeding the contingency fund balance.

The motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the Resolution adopting the millage rate is by this reference incorporated into these minutes.

School Board:

Commissioner Rainer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sears, to adopt the Camden County School Board millage rate of 14.75 mils.

Commissioner Berry said that he will not vote for this 80% increase in the School Board's millage rate over the past five years. Commissioner Berry advised that there are ways for the School Board to give money back to the taxpayers without losing its federal funding. He stated the School Board has done nothing to try to roll back its millage rate.

Commissioner Rainer stated can not cut anything due to federal regulation.

Commissioner Sears supports the School Board because it is providing a valuable service to our students.

Vice-Chair Zell stated she could not vote to send this back to the School Board. She state Camden High School is an excellent school. But, she believes the consequences of sending this back to the School Board far out weigh the good intentions.

So voted by raising of the right hand,

Chairman Rhodes	-	abstained
Vice-Chair Zell	-	yea
Commissioner Berry	-	nay
Commissioner Sears	-	yea
Commissioner Rainer	-	yea

The motion carried.

A copy of the Resolution adopting the millage rate is by this reference incorporated into these minutes.

Incorporated Service District:

Commissioner Sears made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Zell, to adopt the Incorporated Service District millage rate of .45 mils.

The motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the Resolution adopting the millage rate is by this reference incorporated into these minutes.

State of Georgia:

Commissioner Sears made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Zell, to adopt the State of Georgia millage rate of .25 mils.

So voted by raising of the right hand,

Chairman Rhodes	-	yea
Vice-Chair Zell	-	yea
Commissioner Berry	-	nay
Commissioner Sears	-	yea
Commissioner Rainer	-	yea

The motion carried.

A copy of the Resolution adopting the millage rate is by this reference incorporated into these minutes.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No additional public comments were offered.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chair Zell made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rainer, to adjourn the August 11, 2008 special called meeting. The vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Preston Rhodes, Chairman

Jodi Gregory, County Clerk