

**NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**1124 Clark Street  
Covington, Georgia  
August 28, 2023  
6:00 p.m.**

**PUBLIC HEARING  
MINUTES**

Present: Chairman Marcello Banes, Commissioner's Stan Edwards, Demond Mason, Ronnie Cowan, County Manager Harold Cooper, County Clerk Jackie Smith.

Absent: Commissioner Alana Sanders, Commissioner J.C. Henderson

Staff: Brittany White, Finance Director

Others Present: Small group of citizens

Chairman Banes called the public hearing to order and extended a welcome to all in attendance. Commissioner Mason gave the invocation and Commissioner Cowan led the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.

Chairman Banes recognized County Manager Harold Cooper who yielded his time to Finance Director Brittany White to expound on why we are here tonight. Ms. White noted this was our third and final public hearing. She noted that we previously held public hearings regarding the millage rate in July, however the public hearing held (2pm) on July 18<sup>th</sup> was not in compliance with state requirements.

Director White read the following tax increase statement into the record.

Newton County has tentatively adopted a millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes by 6.71 percent. This tentative increase will result in a millage rate of 8.439 mills, an increase of .531 mills. Without this tentative tax increase, the millage rate will be no more than 7.908 mills.

The proposed tax increase for a home with a fair market value of \$300,000 is approximately \$61.60 and the proposed tax increase for a nonhomestead property with a fair market value of \$275,000 is approximately \$58.41.

Three (3) Public Hearings are required.

The first hearing was held on August 21<sup>st</sup> at 11 a.m. The second hearing was held on August 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. This is the third and final public hearing.

Chairman Banes opened the public hearing for citizen comments at 6:04 p.m.  
Comment Time: 3 minutes for each citizen.

James Peterson

- Concerned that their quality of life has decreased.

- Too many high density subdivisions.
- Drag-racing takes place within community.
- Drag cars do not have tags on them.
- Denny Dobbs Park vandalized.
- Against tax increase mainly because of the decrease in quality of life.

Chairman Banes closed the public hearing @ 6:07p.m.

On a motion by Commissioner Edwards, and a second by Commissioner Mason, the work session adjourned @ 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jackie B. Smith, County Clerk

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Marcello Banes, Chairman