# Minutes

# Special Called Meeting

Board of Commissioners
August 18, 2011
7:00 P.M.

**Notice:** A complete audio recording of this meeting can be heard by accessing Fayette County's Website at www.fayettecountyga.gov. Click on "Board of Commissioners", then "County Commission Meetings", and follow the instructions. The entire meeting or a single topic can be heard.

The Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, met in a Special Called Meeting on Thursday, August 18, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

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| **Commissioners Present:** | Herb Frady, Chairman<br>Robert Horgan, Vice Chairman<br>Steve Brown<br>Lee Hearn<br>Allen McCarty |
| **Staff Present:** | Jack Krakeel, County Administrator<br>Scott Bennett, County Attorney<br>Carol Chandler, Executive Assistant<br>Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk |

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Chairman Frady called the meeting to order.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**1. Public Hearing on proposed 2011 Millage Rates for the newly created E-911 Special Tax District and the County Fire District.**

Chief Finance Officer Mary Holland presented this item to the Board for discussion. A copy of the request and backup, identified as "Attachment No. 1", follows these minutes and are made an official part hereof. Ms. Holland remarked that this was the second public hearing in a series of three hearings in regard to the proposed 2011 Millage Rates for the newly created E-911 Special Tax District and the County Fire District. She said in the General Fund Maintenance and Operations the proposed rate is 5.645 which is an increase of .245 mill rates that equates to the roll up. She said the recommendation for the Fire Fund was an increase of 0.509 and that rate would be 2.500 versus the 1.991 from 2010. She remarked that there would be a decrease in the millage rate in the Emergency Medical Services Fund of -0.098 and the new rate would be 0.450 as opposed to 0.548 in 2010. She commented on the new tax district for E-911 and the proposed millage rate for that was 0.207. She said these rates were the ones being considered at the Board's final

public hearing during the regularly scheduled Board of Commissioners' meeting. She said staff would present a Resolution to the Board for consideration of adoption.

Ms. Holland further remarked on the question raised by Commissioner Brown during the Board's August 11th meeting in regard to the number of parcels where there was a difference in the assessments. She said she had spoken with the Chief Tax Assessor Joel Benton and he had reminded her of the State's moratorium for the last three years where no values can actually be increased. She said this would be the last year for the moratorium and everyone is waiting to see what the State does beyond 2011. She provided the Board with a detailed report showing the overall number of parcels by the type of property within the County and by the different tax districts in the County as well. A copy of the report, identified as "Attachment No. 2", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof. Commissioner Brown thanked her for this information and said this information answered his question.

Chairman Frady asked Ms. Holland to give the approximate cost on a $250,000 home and Ms. Holland replied that for the residents in the unincorporated County as well as Brooks and Tyrone, the additional cost would be $81.99. She said for a resident in the City of Fayetteville the cost would be an additional $33.64 and for a resident in the City of Peachtree City there would be an additional cost of $42.95. She noted that Peachtree City has its own Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services and Fayetteville has its own Fire Department and this resulted in the difference in those tax districts.

Chairman Frady announced that this was a Public Hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of this item. Hearing none, he asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

**Tim Powers:** Tim Powers expressed opposition to any kind of tax increase in Fayette County. He said it was imperative upon this Board as leaders to lead this County. He said at this juncture it was the Board's responsibility as elected officials to come forth and find ways to cut and save money and make Fayette County a substantially stable government. He said there was no reason for this Board to come to the citizens with a tax increase.

**Victor Remeneski:** Victor Remeneski said he was adamantly opposed to any tax increase for any reason from any source in this County, in the State and in the Federal Government. He felt the government was not cutting pay, not cutting back on expenses but asking the taxpayers for money. He commented on the employees at Delta Airlines a few years ago who took a huge pay cut as a result of the financial state of Delta. He said a lot of people were also laid off and took early retirements. He said it was only until last October that these employees were back to the salary level that they had in 2002. He pointed out that these employees were working for approximately eight years with a substantial pay cut. He felt the government workers should also share in the pain of this economy.

**Gordon Furr:** Gordon Furr felt this Board was responsible for wasteful spending. He commented on the money that had been spent on the West Fayetteville Bypass as well as the fire station located in Tyrone at the corner of Ellison Road and Sandy Creek Road that is owned by the County. He noted that all of the County's fire stations are on septic tanks except for one station. He remarked that the property value for the station on Ellison Road was $40,000 and he understood that the County had also paid $400,000 to build a station on Jenkins Road. He said he had driven from the Jenkins Road property over to the Ellison Road property and from SR 74 to Ellison Road it was .8 mile. He said over to Ellison Road to the corner was only .2 mile. He questioned why the County would pay $400,000 for the property on Jenkins Road where it was hard to get in and out daily. He said he did not understand this decision. He urged the Board to reign in the wasteful spending especially for the West Fayetteville Bypass.

**Randy Ognio:** Randy Ognio said he agreed with the comments here tonight regarding the state of the economy. He said these are Fayette County citizens trying to hold onto their homes. He remarked that any tax increase might push some of these citizens over the edge. He said this Board makes it seem like $82 was not a lot of money, but it might be for somebody who was having financial problems. He said if these citizens were pushed over the edge, then their homes would go into foreclosure and property values go down. He said this Board had the ability to let the citizens vote to use SPLOST funds to prevent this increase but he felt this Board did not really care about the citizens. He said all this Board cared about was getting enough money to spend it however it liked.

Chairman Frady asked if there were any other public comments. Hearing none, he asked if there were any remarks by the Board.

Commissioner Steve Brown cited a newspaper article out of the Atlanta Journal and Constitution on August 18, 2011 in the Business Section under the Economy heading. He said the headline read *"Georgia's Distress Level Hits 5th in U.S.— Situation Deepens as the State's Housing Crisis, Jobless Problems Linger."* He remarked that Georgia was the 5th worst in the United States of America. He said when there is a situation where the expenditures outweigh revenues, something has to start being done. He said he had tried to use some Legislative tools that were given to the County that could ease that pain but were lost on 3-2 votes. He said this was not the time to be pumping up some things and if the economy did not get better and the outlook for 2012 was not good, the County would hit a wall sooner or later. He noted that maintenance and vehicle and equipment purchases could only be held off for so long. He said reserve funds could only be spent for so long and when those funds run out, something would have to be done.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Hearn made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. Commissioner Horgan seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

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Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk Herbert E. Frady, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 7th day of September, 2011.

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Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk