



You Are Why We Are Here

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MILLAGE RATE
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
August 22, 2019
7:00 p.m.**

BOC: Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin
District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson
District 3 Commissioner Ryan Swails
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

Media: Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen

Staff: County Manager Beth Thomas
County Clerk Elaine Evans

Chairman Bridges called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. and announced there is a survey on the County's website from GMRC concerning the future growth and needs of Franklin County. He asked for citizen input for this survey.

Phoebe Chapman stated she wanted an understanding of the tax break down and what they are used for. Chairman Bridges said the school system gets the largest portion of taxes which is approximately 70%. He then asked Mrs. Thomas to give further clarification.

Mrs. Thomas told Ms. Chapman because she lives within the city limits of Lavonia there are three components to her taxes. Part is paid to the City of Lavonia for police and fire protection. Another part goes to the school system and the rest is paid to the County. Mrs. Thomas said county governments are an extension of State government and there are certain services that are required. Over half of what is paid to the County goes to public safety which is Sheriff, E911 and EMS. Part of County taxes also go toward the upkeep of roads. Provision for the judicial system is also required by local governments. Mrs. Thomas said the County operates on about a 13-million-dollar budget.

Ms. Chapman asked why 70% of the taxes went to the school system when they receive state and federal funding. Ila Allen asked why she has to pay so much school tax at her age of 84. Mary Chapman said she paid school tax when she was young. She said now that she is older, she thinks she shouldn't have to pay it. Mrs. Thomas referred everyone to the Board of Education for answers to these questions.

Blythe Rucker came forward and stated she is born and raised in Franklin



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County and is a 1982 graduate. Her concern is for the senior citizens. It is not that they do not want to help but they may not be able to if the taxes keep going up. If there is not a cap on the taxes what is going to happen to the senior citizens. Chairman Bridges said all counties are mandated to re-evaluate property but there is a process in place to appeal and this can be done at the Tax Assessors Office.

Commissioner Franklin asked for the time frame on appeals to be given. Tax Commissioner Bobby Martin said the appeals period opens on January 1 and the return period opens on January 1 and ends on April 1. There is a 45-day period to appeal after the change of assessment notice is received. Commissioner Franklin told those in attendance to be aware of the appeal times.

Terry Payne asked for clarification on where to go to talk about school taxes. Chairman Bridges said the School Board sets their own millage rate. Mr. Martin said he attended the School Board meeting prior to coming to this one and there was no one in attendance from the general public.

Chairman Bridges paused the meeting at 7:17 p.m. The meeting was closed at 7:30 p.m. with no additional comments.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2019

Chairman J. Thomas Bridges

Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner

Ryan Swails, District 3 Commissioner

Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk