



**MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY, July 29, 2019 – 6:00 PM
CITY HALL**

**PRESENT: Jerry D. Roseberry, Mayor; Council members: George Holt; Jim Windham; Jeff Wearing, Sarah Davis.
Not present: Mike Ready and David Eady.**

OTHERS PRESENT: Matt Pepper, City Manager and Connie Middlebrooks, City Clerk. Art and Laurie Vinson

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by the Hon. Jerry D. Roseberry, Mayor.

Mayor Roseberry announced the purpose of the public hearing is to review the proposed change in property taxes. Council intends to adopt a millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes by 9.36%. Mayor Roseberry explained that the city is not increasing the millage rate; however, if the homeowner's property value has increased, they will pay more in property taxes. He also informed Council that a few years ago legislation was passed allowing homeowners to not only file homestead exemption with the county, but also with the city if they live in the city limits. As a result, the taxes collected by the city are relatively low. This tentative increase will result in a millage rate of 6.622 mills, an increase of 0.607 mills. Council is considering a modest increase because the revenue from the city's property taxes and electric utilities make up exactly 7% and 30% of the general fund respectively. The electric industry is changing, and the city will start to see a decline in that 30% of revenue. The city should consider alternatives to ensure that a shortage does not occur.

Mayor Roseberry informed attendees that a copy of the Five-Year History was available and asked if there were any questions. Councilmember Holt wanted to clarify that the city will not be increasing the tax rate, but that if property value has increased those homeowners would pay more in taxes. Mayor Roseberry reiterated that the millage rate will not go up, it will stay at 6.622 mills. If the city wanted to keep taxes from increasing, Council would have to accept the rollback rate, which would be 6.015 mills.

Art Vinson (903 Asbury Street) asked for clarification of what is a rollback rate. City Manager Matt Pepper explained that accepting the rollback rate essentially aides the city in maintaining the same level of revenue collected if no re-assessments have been done. Georgia Law requires each city calculate a millage rate and a rollback rate that will prevent any increase in property tax. Then, Council is required to adopt either the rollback or the millage rate. Mayor Roseberry further explained that a rollback rate is based on a city not an individual citizen.

In closing, Mayor Roseberry explained that property tax is not a big revenue producer for the city primarily because our biggest property owners (Emory / Oxford College, local churches) are tax exempt.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Roseberry adjourned the public hearing at 6:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted;

Connie Middlebrooks

City Clerk