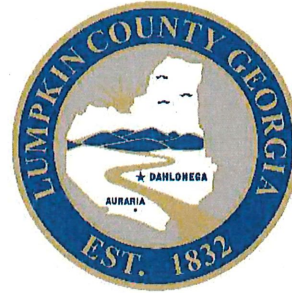


LUMPKIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
Public Hearing Agenda
Commissioners Boardroom
99 Courthouse Hill
Dahlonega, GA 30533

August 20, 2024
4:00 PM

- **Call to Order**
- **Public Comment on Property Tax Increase**
- **Adjournment**

LUMPKIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
Public Hearing Minutes
Commissioners Boardroom
99 Courthouse Hill
Dahlonega, GA 30533



August 20, 2024
4:00 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm. Present were Chairman Chris Dockery and Commissioners Tucker Greene, Bobby Mayfield, and Jeff Moran. Commissioner Rhett Stringer arrived at 4:04 pm.

Public Comment on Property Tax Increase

Citizen Ron Larson, 38 Cavender Run, came to comment on the insurance premium tax and why the millage rate is different for citizens in the City of Dahlonega. He said the Commissioners have several options on how to use these funds, and he said they could use it to equalize the millage rate between the unincorporated and incorporated parts of the County. Mr. Larson said he doesn't understand what the difference is and why the City residents are charged more. Over 90% of the cities and counties in Georgia have the same rate, he stated. The financial impact to the City citizens is about 2 mills, or about \$600,000.

Chairman Dockery said the insurance premium tax was put into place at the State level to reduce property taxes, and it goes to fire protection. The tax collected within the City goes to the City, and the tax collected within the unincorporated County goes to the County. The law is very specific in how we can apply the funds from the insurance premium tax, he explained. Since we do not have a "pure" Fire Department and it is blended with EMS, we legally cannot apply the funds for fire protection. Instead, it is used to roll back property taxes. It is not that the City residents are paying more, it is that they are not benefitting from the insurance premium tax. Chairman Dockery said he does not know what the City does with their funds from the tax.

Mr. Larson said there are other uses besides fire protection listed in O.C.G.A. 33- 8-8.3, and he listed out the possible uses. He said he finds it unusual that 90% of the cities and counties in Georgia have figured out a way to balance the millage rate equally. Chairman Dockery said the City could choose to use their funds to roll back taxes within the incorporated portion so it would match the County. He said he is not in favor of raising our millage rate to use that money for something else within the County, and he urged Mr. Larson to speak with the City Council about how they spend their portion.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

September 17, 2024
Date

[Signature]
Chris Dockery, Chairman
Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

[Signature]
Melissa Witcher
Clerk, Lumpkin County