



**Public Hearing Minutes  
Dodge County Board of Commissioners  
Thursday, August 31, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**

**Commissioners Present:**

Dan McCranie, Chairman  
Sharon Cobb Flanagan, District 1  
Kelly Belflower, District 2  
Brian Watkins, District 3  
Vice-Chair Karen Cheek, District 4

**Also Present:**

Conner Bearden, County Manager  
Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

**Business: Discuss 2023 Millage Rate**

Chairman Dan McCranie called the Public Hearing to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Next, he gave the invocation.

County Manager Bearden gave a presentation (as attached) regarding the proposed millage rate, which will result in a millage of 12.00, an increase of .79 mills above the roll-back millage rate of 11.211. He presented a graph indicating that county expenditures will likely begin exceeding revenues over the next year due to increasing costs. He stated the county has a reserve fund of only 30 days. He stated the millage rate would be set at a called meeting on September 11 at 6:30 p.m.

**Public Comments:**

- An attendee inquired how much money would the county have to borrow since the governor allowed \$18,000 for homestead exemption. The county manager stated that the county would be reimbursed by the government at the request of the tax commissioner.
- Someone asked if the state regulates how the school taxes are collected. Manager Bearden discussed ESPLOST and other SPLOST revenues.
- Someone asked if we began working on an OSPLOST now, how long would it take to implement. The manager stated 2025.
- Someone asked what plans are in the works to consolidate voting precincts for cost savings. The manager stated an elections committee is working on that project.
- An attendee asked if the county would consider anything less than .79 increase or if that was the absolute necessary amount needed. (This number referenced would be the rate of increase above the rollback rate.) The manager stated the increase would equate to \$350,000 of which \$100,000 is already spent on increased insurances, etc. He felt that number would be sufficient to meet the county's needs.
- An attendee asked if fines are in line with other counties or do they need to be increased. Manager Bearden stated fines are up from prior years.
- Commissioner Watkins stated fines are not going to be much of a revenue source when considering the Sheriff's budget is \$3.5 million. Chairman McCranie stated some of the fines revenue is mandated for state use.
- Commissioner Watkins stated a potential public service fee based on homes could be a much fairer way to offset property taxes.

In closing, Commissioner Watkins stated by next year the county should be collecting exactly what they're spending. And he felt the increase to 12 mills wasn't necessary yet, but if warranted next year, an election year wouldn't hinder his vote in the matter.

Commissioner Flanagan stated there may be some rollbacks for the school tax for seniors.



Commissioner Belflower stated he wanted to be responsible with the county's funds while providing necessary services. He stated some of the services in the past may have suffered due to lack of funding, and he didn't want to see the county going backward.

Commissioner Cheek stated she wanted to be proactive, not reactive. And the county's on the right track.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cheek and seconded by Commissioner Flanagan to adjourn at 6:59 p.m. All voted in favor, and the public hearing adjourned.

Attested:

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Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Approved:

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Dan McCranie, Chairman