

**CITY OF METTER
PUBLIC HEARING
2018 PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2018
5:30 P.M.**

A public hearing was held at City Hall on Wednesday, September 12, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Attending the meeting were the following officials:

Mayor Edwin O. Boyd
Councilwoman Amy Harrelson
Councilwoman Rashida Taylor
Councilman Paul MacGregor
City Manager Mandi Cody
City Clerk Angie Conner
Finance Manager Cindy Collins
Director of Tourism/Business Development Heidi Jeffers
Carvy Snell, Metter Advertiser

Councilwoman Chyrileen Kilcrease was absent from this hearing.

GUESTS

Alton Slater
Vina Faye Slater
Judy Johnson
Mary Summerlin
Gloria Johnson
Eugenia A. Tillman
Ollie B. Tillman
Harry Alvin
Lashlee Conley
Latrell Thomas
Joyce Cross

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Boyd called the hearing to order and welcomed everyone.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this hearing is to give citizens the opportunity to express their concerns on the proposed 2018 millage rate increase.

Called Meeting/Mediation, June 11, 2018

The city proposes to increase the 2018 property taxes it will levy by 22.2 percent over the rollback millage rate, from 9.983 a year ago to 11.983 this year.

City Manager, Mandi Cody explained that the tax increase has been recommended primarily because of a decline in the tax digest, to the tune of about \$5.5 million in eight years.

With no tax increase from 1999 to 2017, the tax rate has stayed stable since 1999, but what we have seen is a decrease in our tax values, as a result of the decline in the tax digest.

The primary reason we have seen depreciation in our tax base is we've seen very little growth in our actual digest. There is less digest to tax. When tax values are kept the same, you are collecting less money on the same property; but the expenses have gone up.

Ms. Cody said to balance the inequity of the tax digest verses the tax rate, council in the past has elected to take money from the city's fund balance.

In the past, the digest value showed depreciation while the millage rate stayed stable and expenses went up. The gap was filled with fund balance. Ms. Cody's recommendation to council is to protect the fund balance and not detract from it any further unless it is a true emergency.

A couple of citizens expressed their concerns on North Leroy Street. They were concerned about street lighting and drainage issues.

Another citizen has several rental houses and was concerned about the amount of money it will cost him in taxes.

Mayor Boyd highlighted some of the infrastructure improvement projects that are currently underway and that are being scheduled in the near future.

This was the first of the required three public hearings for public input regarding the proposed two-mill increase by the city, the second consecutive increase in two years. The next public hearings are scheduled for Wednesday, September 19, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

After no further discussion, Mayor Boyd closed the hearing at 6:50 p.m.

Angie Conner, City Clerk