

CITY OF STATHAM

MINUTES

Statham City Hall

327 Jefferson Street, Statham, GA 30666



PUBLIC HEARING – August 15, 2023

6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Piper called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Mayor Piper and Councilmembers Patterson, Thrasher, and Venable.

Also Present: City Attorney Jody Campbell, Rachel Bembry (JAT Consulting), City Clerk Ashya Fambrough, and PD Personnel.

Councilmember Krause arrived at 6:11 p.m.

Absent: Councilmember Penn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE- Mayor Piper led the Pledge of Allegiance and thanked the Veterans and their families.

At 6:02 p.m., Councilmember Venable made a motion to enter into Public Hearing. Councilmember Patterson seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Tax Year 2023 Millage Rate: The City of Statham has tentatively adopted a millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes for the 2023 tax year. The City of Statham anticipates the property tax levies will be set at 4.06 mills, an increase of 0.057 over the 2022 millage rate and an increase of 0.795 over the rollback rate. Without this tentative tax increase, the millage rate would be no more than 3.265 mills. The proposed tax increase for a home with a fair market value of \$225,000 is approximately \$5.13 and the approximate tax increase for a non-homestead property with a fair market value of \$300,000 is \$6.84.

CITIZEN INPUT

- Cheryl Venable spoke in favor of the increase. The police department is full-time and provides 24/7 security. The increase equates to around 2 dimes per day. What services would the citizens be willing to give up? Some groceries have increased 300% in price. Government has to pay for what is provided and it costs to run a government.

Rachel Bembry noted that the budget is flat if the millage rate is approved as budgeted. If not, there will need to be \$100,000.00 cut out of the budget. Cheryl Venable asked what the cost-of-living increase was? It is 8.47% per Rachel Bembry. Councilmember Venable noted that it is difficult to increase taxes and fees, but the city is at that point due to inflationary costs and the

increase is as fair as possible without having to cut services. Also, the bulk of the increase in the tax bills is due to the increase assessed home values which comes from the county. The city's portion is minor. Councilmember Krause stated that she hates to increase taxes, but she understands the necessity. She has had discussions with citizens concerning the increase.

At 6:13 p.m., Councilmember Patterson made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Councilmember Thrasher seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Piper reviewed the Public Works Department Report that was provided by Jordan McDaniel. Mayor Piper requested that citizens call in their leaf and limb pick up requests. Cheryl Venable stated that she is grateful for the citizens and Public Works Staff Jordan McDaniel and Jimmy Jenkins for their assistance with the clean up after the storm. She noted that the Council did not know that Mayor Piper was out of town. The Vice Mayor and the Public Works Staff could have been on high alert if they had that information. Preparation and planning are necessary. She also thanked the police department and councilmembers for their assistance with the cleanup. Mayor Piper gave an update on the flagpole outside City Hall. It was damaged by a lightning strike.

ADJOURN

At 6:20 p.m., Mayor Piper asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Venable made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Krause seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.