## Memo

To: Mayor and City Council
From: ChaQuias Thornton, City Manager

Date: May 28, 2024 (REVISED)
Re: $\quad$ Ad Valorem Tax/Millage Rate 2024 - Tentative Millage Rate Adoption for Advertising Purposes Only

New Business Item - 05/28/2024 Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council
NOTE: ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION shown on page 5.
On May 24, 2024, Dekalb County Tax Assessors Office released preliminary Consolidation and Revaluation Reports to the DeKalb cities as of 05/23/2024 and 05/19/2024 respectively. Based on computation of the millage rate using relative digest data, the Administration makes the following presentation:

The Revaluation Report submitted by the County as of 05/19/2024 represents a $0.46 \%$ increase in real property value and a $2.90 \%$ decrease in personal property value for 2024. These percentages represent a change in real property tax digest of $\$ 206,050$, from $\$ 44,935,050$ in 2023 to $\$ 45,159,130$ in 2024, and a change in personal property digest of -\$12,743, from \$439,455 in 2023 to $\$ 426,712$ in 2024. $\$ 206,050$ represents the amount of value change of existing real property based on the reassessment (revaluation) of that property.

In 2023 Pine Lake adopted a mil rate of 16.481. The mil rate that will render the same amount of "as billed" revenue in 2024 as billed in 2023, based on current year's valuation of property, is calculated at $\mathbf{1 6 . 4 9 2}$ mils. This rate is known as the roll back rate. Please note that this rate is higher than the most recently adopted rate of 16.481 . The following table shown on page 2 provides the estimated revenue versus budget scenario based on the 05/19/2024 consolidated values at:

- the current mil of 16.481,
- the roll back rate of 16.492 ,
- a rate of 17.336 to meet budget estimate at the average collection rate of $91.5 \%$, and
- a rate of 18.200 to meet current needs not previously included in budget estimates, and
- a rate of 19.400 as suggested by Council to meet current needs not previously budgeted and to reduce expected shortfalls in the collection of tax revenue based on 2023 collections.


## The scenario also considers a 1\% appeals differential values in the amount of $\$ 451,591$ which reduces the real property digest from $\$ 45,159,130$ to $\$ 44,707,539$. [SEE NEXT PAGE]

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| Description | 5/23/2024 |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Taxable Real Property | 45,159,130 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exempt Veterans | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exempt Widows of Veterans | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exempt Seniors | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Appeals Differential Value | $(451,591.30)$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| Real Property Digest | 44,707,539 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Taxable Public Utility | 400,056 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Taxable Motor Vehicle | 83,620 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Taxable Personal Property Value | 426,712 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Estimated Adjustments | - |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adjusted Value | 426,712 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | CURREN | RATE | ROLLBA | K RATE |  |
|  |  | Rev As Billed | Revenue | Rev As Billed | Revenue | Adopted |
|  | Taxable Digest | 16.481 | at Collection Rate | 16.492 mils | at Collection Rate | Budget |
| Estimated Taxable RE Digest | 44,707,539 | 736,825 | 674,195 | 737,317 | 674,645 | 687,186 |
| Taxable Public Utility | 400,056 | 6,593 | 3,000 | 6,598 | 3,000 | 8,000 |
| Taxable Motor Vehicle | 83,620 | 1,378 | 1,378 | 1,379 | 1,379 | 2,000 |
| Taxable PP Value | 426,712 | 7,033 | 6,947 | 7,037 | 6,951 | 7,000 |
| Estimated Adjustments | $(1,025,795)$ | $(16,906)$ | $(18,466)$ | $(16,917)$ | $(16,693)$ |  |
| Adjusted Value - Gross Digest | 44,592,132 | 734,923 | 667,054 | 735,414 | 669,282 | 704,186 |
| RE Property Rev over/under Budget |  | 30,737 | $(37,132)$ | 31,228 | $(34,904)$ |  |

During adoption of the 2024 budget, total tax revenue for ad valorem style taxes (current year) was budgeted at $\$ 704,186$. Estimated collection of revenue as billed at the current mil assessment of 16.481 is 734,923 ( $\$ 30,737$ more than budgeted). Estimated collection of revenue as billed at the roll back rate of 16.492 mils is $\$ 735,414$ ( $\$ 31,228$ more than budgeted). Note: These calculations are "as billed" expectations and do not represent the percentage of billed revenue that, on average, remains uncollected at year-end.

Estimated revenue at the collection rate of $91.5 \%$ at the current mil assessment of 16.481 is $\$ 667,054$ ( $\$ 37,132$ less than budgeted). Estimated revenue at the collection rate of $91.5 \%$ as billed at the roll back rate of 16.492 mils is $\$ 669,282$ ( $\$ 34,904$ less than budgeted).

As shown in the table below, a mil rate of 17.336 is needed to maintain approximate current year ad valorem tax revenue as budgeted, and at the average collection rate of $91.5 \%$.

|  |  | meet budget at | vg. collection rate |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Rev As Billed | Revenue | Adopted |
|  |  | 17.336 | at Collection Rate | Budget |
| Estimated Taxable RE Digest | 44,707,539 | 775,050 | 709,171 | 687,186 |
| Taxable Public Utility | 400,056 | 6,935 | 3,000 | 8,000 |
| Taxable Motor Vehicle | 83,620 | 1,450 | 1,450 | 2,000 |
| Taxable PP Value | 426,712 | 7,394 | 7,304 | 7,000 |
| Estimated Adj. - Exemptions M\&O | $(1,025,795)$ | $(17,776)$ | $(16,532)$ |  |
| Adjusted Value - Gross Digest | 44,592,132 | 773,053 | 704,393 | 704,186 |
| RE Property Rev over/under Budget |  | 68,867 | 207 |  |

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Please be reminded that current budget only accounts for revenues, expenditures and special projects considered at budget adoption. The budget does not include contingencies for shortfalls in revenue, unplanned increase in expenditures, or unexpected projects. With the absence of contingencies, any necessary changes over budget allocations rely upon subsidy from the City's General Fund Balance (Fund Reserves) - which is where any overage in original budget has been assigned year-to-date.

It is important to note that due to current assessment of public works operations and maintenance, there is anticipated current year cost of necessary maintenance that was not available during FY2024 budget discussion and is therefore not presently included in current year budget appropriations. Currently, the Administration and Special Projects Manager are working together to assess needs, associated needs, and funding options. Additionally, there are capital asset needs within the City's Police Department that are being assessed. Capital assets can be funded via lease purchase options at favorable rates through such programs as Georgia Municipal Associations Governmental Finance Department. However, these purchases do necessitate annually incurred expense for the City through the life of the lease. At present, the total cost of needs (O\&M and capital) is not available but is anticipated by June 14 ${ }^{\text {th }}, 2024$ - ahead of final millage adoption date. Therefore, below I have provided for you a millage rate scenario (at 18.200 mils) that accounts for an estimated $\$ 35,441$ in General fund contingency that can be used to manage unplanned increase in expenditures or unexpected projects like costs associated with maintenance assessments.

|  |  | meet current est | ated maintenance | s not budgeted |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Rev As Billed | Revenue | Adopted |
|  |  | 18.2 | at Collection Rate | Budget |
| Estimated Taxable RE Digest | 44,707,539 | 813,677 | 744,515 | 687,186 |
| Taxable Public Utility | 425,474 | 7,744 | 3,000 | 8,000 |
| Taxable Motor Vehicle | 89,640 | 1,631 | 1,631 | 2,000 |
| Taxable PP Value | 439,455 | 7,998 | 7,901 | 7,000 |
| Estimated Adj. - Exemptions M\&O | $(1,025,795)$ | $(18,669)$ | $(17,363)$ | 35,441 |
| Adjusted Value - Gross Digest | 44,636,313 | 812,381 | 739,684 | 739,627 |
| RE Property Rev over/under Budget |  | 72,754 | 57 |  |

Contingency is calculated based on a percentage cost of budgeted general expenditures (minus expenditures for salaries and benefits and capital expenses).

| FY2024 General Fund Expenditures |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Contingencies Calculation |  |  |  |
| GF - Total | GF - Total | GF - Total |  |
| Dept Expenditures | Salaries/Benefits | Capital Expenditures |  |
| 1,057,070 | $(614,057)$ | - | 443,013 |
|  |  |  | 443,013 |
| Avg. percent contingency |  |  | 8\% |
|  |  |  | 35,441 |

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An incomplete list of maintenance and asset needs is shown below.
Public works vehicle (new or used)
New value - TBD (anticipated report by 05/31/2024)
Estimated lease value - current year - TBD
Maintenance and inventory of current public works vehicles/equipment
Estimated maintenance value under review (anticipated report by 06/14/2024)
Surplus estimate is identified at $\$ 10,000$ (which can offset cost of remaining vehicles/equipment)

Police vehicle (new or used) - with associated equipment
New value - \$44,000
Estimated lease value - current year - \$3,600
Maintenance and inventory of current public safety vehicles/equipment
Estimated maintenance value under review (anticipated report by 06/14/2024)
Current vehicle maintenance has been identified which exceeds the annual budgeted appropriation.

## Unit \# 641 / 2018 Dodge Charger (PL 2018)

Needs an engine.
Hood Damage - (This is the vehicle that was damaged in the PW yard)
**Vehicle continued to overheat. Dealership advised the vehicle would need a new engine as the head gaskets were "gone".

## Unit \# 642 / 2017 Dodge Charger

Emergency equipment fail (due to battery being drained Vehicle battery continues to drain (does not stay charged). Vehicle overheats.

Unit \# 644 / 2014 / Dodge Charger (SP Vehicle)
AC Service/ Actuator (Vehicle blows hot air)
Upon assessment - total suggested repairs - \$7,465
May be up soon for struts (Good Condition)

## ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Millage Rate Advertising - Tentative Rate

Any rate advertised at an amount more than the roll back rate of 16.492 mils must be advertised as a tax increase. Percentage increase for the roll back rate scenario shown on page 2 is depicted on the attached Computation of Millage Rate Rollback and Percentage Increase in Property Tax form.

The Administration is requesting Council consideration of the rate at which the City will advertise as its tentative (preliminary) mil rate for the 2024 tax year. The final rate is not set to be adopted until June $25^{\text {th }}, \mathbf{2 0 2 4}$. NOTE: The final rate adopted cannot exceed the rate advertised.

The Administration recommends tentative adoption of a rate of no less than 18.200 mils. Again, this rate is NOT the final adopted rate. This rate is adopted for initial advertising purposes only. The suggested rate provides for the following:

- Continued review of property tax data presented by the DeKalb County Assessors and Tax Commissioners Offices
- Questions are raised about percentage growth, decreases in personal property and public utility values and appeals values.
- Consideration of current needs of the City not included in the FY2024 budget as adopted.
- Increased number of required public hearings (3 hearings required) to give official and public opportunity for Council to receive stakeholder input.
- At minimum, if the tentative rate is ultimately adopted as the final rate, it will provide for an average percentage of contingencies for General Fund expenditures to cover unplanned and unexpected expenses such as costs associated with maintenance assessment/evaluation - without further presenting burden to the City's general fund reserves.

The Administration presented the following findings, as relative to 2023 property tax collections through February29th, 2024:

2023 PROPERTY TAX COLLECTIONS ANALYSIS

|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { FY2023 } \\ & \text { BUDGET } \end{aligned}$ | COLLECTED <br> by $12 / 31 / 2024$ |  | COLLECTED by 02/29/2024 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| CURRENT YEAR TAXES - $2023$ | 671,948.00 |  | 588,901.00 |  |
| UTILITIES - CURRENT - 2023 ADVAL PRIOR RESIDENTIAL | 3000 |  |  | 15644.8 |
| UTILITIES - PRIOR YEAR |  |  |  | 2460.83 |
| MOTOR VEHICLE TAX PERSONAL PROPERTY - | 14,000.00 |  | 13,452.74 |  |
| CURRENT-2023 <br> PERSONAL PROPERTY - PRIOR | 7,000.00 |  | 6839.62 |  |
| YEAR <br> PENALTY \& INTEREST |  |  |  | 215.38 |
| DELINQUENT TAX |  |  |  | 1375.45 |
|  | 695,948.00 |  | 609,193.36 | 19,696.46 |


| 2023 Collections | 609,193.36 |
| :---: | :---: |
| Collected 60 days after 2023 year-end | 19,696.46 |


| Total collections | $628,889.82$ |
| ---: | ---: |
| FY2023 Budgeted Revenue | $695,948.00$ |
|  | $-67,058.18$ |
| Loss | $74,758.32$ |
| Unaudited Tax Rollback Refund to DeKalb County | Rever over/under Budget 2023 |

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In consideration of such findings, the City Council requested millage rate scenario that would both consider the shortfall in ad valorem tax revenue based on 2023 collections. The millage rate determination was 19.400 mils.

To meet current needs not budgeted and minimize shortfall based on 2023 collections


## SCHEDULE OF ADVERTISING AND HEARINGS

Please see the tentative timeline for adoption of the 2024 millage rate attached. Timeline is shown for two scenarios - 1) Property Tax Increase with 3 Public Hearings Required.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have questions or concerns regarding the information that is provided within this memorandum.

Thank you,
CMThornton






Timeline for the Proposed Millage Rate Adoption 2024-3 Hearings (If a tentative millage rate is set at a value higher than the rollback rate)

## Tuesday:

May 28 ${ }^{\text {th }}$ Tentative Adoption of Millage Rate

## Thursday:

May $\mathbf{3 0}^{\text {th }} \quad$ Submit ads to Champion for publication June $6^{\text {th }}$ edition:

1) Notice of Property Tax Increase - Includes one public hearing date w/2 hearing times Tuesday, June 18th, 2024 at 11:00am and 6:00pm and one public hearing date Tuesday, June $\mathbf{2 5}^{\text {th }}, 2024$ at 7:00pm
2) 5-year History - Must run 7 days prior to adoption of final millage rate
(Notice of Property Tax Increase and 5-year History can run as one ad)
3) Press Release - Issued the Media - Notice of Property Tax Increase

Thursday: June $6^{\text {th }}$

Thursday:
June $6^{\text {th }}$ 1) Notice of Property Tax Increase $w /$ Notice of $1^{\text {st }}$ and $2^{\text {nd }}$ Public Hearings - Publish on Website
2) 5-Year History - Publish on Website

Tuesday:
June 18 ${ }^{\text {th }} \quad 1^{\text {st }}$ and $2^{\text {nd }}$ Public Hearings Held @ 11:00am and 6:00pm
(TWO OF THE THREE HEARINGS MUST BE HELD AT LEAST FIVE DAYS APART)

## Tuesday:

June 25 ${ }^{\text {th }} \quad 3^{\text {rd }}$ Public Hearing Held @ 7pm
Tuesday:
June 25 ${ }^{\text {th }} \quad$ Adoption of Millage Rate - Regular Council Meeting following Public Hearing (Please note that the deadline for municipal adoption of the rate is July 1)

## NOTICE OF PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The City Council of the City of Pine Lake, GA has tentatively adopted a millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes of $17.63 \%$ for fiscal year 2024.

All concerned citizens are invited to the public hearings on this tax increase to be held inperson at 459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, Georgia 30072 on Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Time and place of an additional public hearing on this tax increase is at 459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, Georgia 30072 on June 25, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. This tentative increase will result in a millage rate of 19.400 mills, an increase of 2.908 mills over the rollback millage rate. Without this tentative tax increase, the millage rate will be no more than 16.492 mils. The proposed tax increase for a home with a fair market value of $\$ 300,000$ is approximately $\$ 363.50$ and the proposed tax increase for a nonhomestead property with a fair market value of $\$ 175,000$ is approximately $\$ 145.40$.

## NOTICE

The City of Pine Lake does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the Courthouse 459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA on June 25, 2024 at 7:00pm and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years

## CURRENT 2024 PROPERTY TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY



