

A Public Hearing Meeting was held by Ringgold, Georgia City Council on Monday, August 18, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at Ringgold City Hall with City Manager, Mark Vaughn presiding..

- ① At 6:00 p.m. Nick Millwood, Mayor called the meeting to order for the Public Hearing.

Adopt Millage Rate:

City Manager, Mark Vaughn, stated the proposed millage rate is 2.445 the rollback millage rate is 2.330 that is a 4.97% increase. The current millage rate that was adopted last year is 2.364. The reason the Mayor and Council have proposed the 4.97% increase is because using 2022's cost of services expenses, 2023 saw an 11% increase, that is \$349,000 approximately. In 2024 there was another 8% increase on top of that which was \$281,000.00, that is over a \$600,000 increase from a property tax standpoint has not been provided from an organic growth standpoint. You are looking at around \$150,000.00 organic growth in those two years.

Councilmember Rhonda Swaney stated that a business commented to her, regarding the raising of taxes, "again". However, this is the first time since 2021 that the city has raised taxes. She stated that the city is very cognizant of their budget and spending. She stated that the council and Mayor don't go into this lightly.

City Manager, Mark Vaughn, stated that the directors of the departments are very good stewards of the budget that is adopted by the council and mayor. The city doesn't try to be 100% on the budget, at closing sometimes it can be close to 50%.

Mark Higgs, 192 Ridge Street, Ringgold, GA spoke. He said when the person said "again" a lot of people misinterpret the tax rate being raised with their value of their property going up, which makes your taxes more. He feels a lot of people confuse these two things. He said if you are going to buy a house, you want it to increase in value, one of the negatives is you are going to pay more taxes.

City Manager, Mark Vaughn added that there is actually three taxing entities if you live in the city limits. So, every three years you are likely to have one or two entities go for a tax increase. Unfortunately, last year we had large assessments which was another entity that raised those taxes.

Steve Wofford, 340 Depot Street, Ringgold, GA stated that school taxes just went up 31%, they are wanting another 15%. They turned around and gave the school superintendent a \$50,000.00 raise off this tax, and there is the possibility of the county tax going up and the assessment going up and in turn the city taxes go up. He said he has no problem with the city taxes.

City Manager, Mark Vaughn stated that he believed the county and the school is doing a rollback.

There being no further comments, City Manager, Mark Vaughn, stated there would be another meeting on August 25 at 7:00 at the regular council meeting, and that is when adoption can take place. Mayor Nick Millwood, closed the Public Hearing meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Nick Millwood, Mayor

Kelly Bomar, Mayor Pro-Tem

Jake Haynes, Councilmember

Earl Henderson, Councilmember

Rhonda Swaney, Councilmember

Sara Clark, Councilmember

Mark Vaughn, City Manager

Nicki Lundeen, City Clerk