

**Hamilton County Commissioner's Court**

**1<sup>st</sup> Public Hearing on Proposed Tax Rate & Regular Session**

**Tuesday, September 10, 2019**

**9:00 A.M.**

**Hamilton County Commissioner's Court met for the 1<sup>st</sup> public hearing on the proposed budget and regular session on Tuesday, September 10, 2019 at 9:00 A.M. with the following members present: County Judge Mark Tynes, Commissioners Johnny Wagner, Keith Allen Curry, Lloyd Huggins and Dickie Clary.**

**Tynes called the meeting to order and a quorum was established.**

**Tynes led the invocation and followed with the pledges.**

**There were no open comments.**

**The court then moved on to the public hearing on the proposed tax rate.**

**Damon Chumney stood and thanked the court for the opportunity to speak. He wanted the court to know that he was in opposition to the tax increase this year. He said that the pay raises were at the top of the list of his opposition. He thinks that raising the taxes is unnecessary. He said there were a lot of reappraisals this year and he thinks that if we do a property tax rate increase that it only needed to include the new property on the payroll. He said that again he opposes the proposed pay raises. Saying that everyone knew what they were going to make when they ran for office. He said that he believed that John Kennedy said ask not what your country can do, but what you can do for your country. He said that he also thinks that applies to Commissioner's Court. He thinks that there are some members of the court that have the philosophy of ask not what I can do for my county, but what my county can do for me. He said he sees some of that reflected in this year's proposed budget. He said conservatives speak about cutting taxes and cutting spending and he has heard nothing from this court in those regards. He said it's all about new items in the budget, increasing taxes and increasing spending. He then thanked the court for their time and the opportunity to speak.**

**Richard Layne then stood and thanked the court for the opportunity to speak to them. He said there was a large amount of funds that this court has had made available to them from new appraisals and new property that is a fairly large amount and he would like to see at least a small portion of this turned back to the taxpayer. He said the court does have an obligation to manage this county as they see fit and they**

**had done a good job of it. He reiterated that he would like to see at least some portion go back to the taxpayer. He thanked the court for the opportunity to speak.**

**There were no other comments on the proposed tax rate.**

**Tynes closed the hearing on the proposed tax rate at 9:10 A.M.**

**A motion was made by Huggins and seconded by Curry to approve the line item transfer submitted. The motion carried unanimously. (Recorded in Commissioner's Court Papers Book 64 Page 270)**

**A motion was made by Clary and seconded by Huggins to approve the following consent agenda:**

- A. Minutes of the 8-27-2019 Commissioner's Court meeting – not submitted**
- B. Minutes of the 8-30-2019 Commissioner's Court meeting – not submitted**
- C. Approve departmental reports submitted**
- D. Approve bills submitted \$52,620.97 and payroll \$62,261.17**
- E. Certificates of continuing education – none submitted**
- F. Application(s) for culvert installation – none submitted**

**The motion carried unanimously. (Recorded in Commissioner's Court Papers Book 64 Page 271)**

**Hamilton County Personnel Update:**

**There is currently a job opening at the Sheriff's Office and Hamilton County Commissioner Precinct 1 for a road hand.**

**The court acknowledged the order from the District Judge establishing a budget for the office of the County Auditor for Hamilton County and the order of re-appointment with a 3% salary increase for the employees working a Juvenile Probation Officers for the 220<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Juvenile Probation Department. (Recorded in Commissioner's Court Papers Book 64 Page 311)**

**A motion was made by Huggins and seconded by Tynes to approve Huggins' proposal to "Vest" in the longevity pay program for long-service employees. The motion carried unanimously. (Recorded in Commissioner's Court Papers Book 64 Page 314)**

**The court then went into the review of the proposed budget.**

**Hamilton County Chief Deputy Sheriff Keith Madison offered a handout pertaining to the newly requested deputy position from the Sheriff's Office. County Clerk did not receive a copy. It pertained to what the position was going alleviate for**

*the current deputies. He said that it was administrative spot that will consist of baliffing, civil processes and helping the jail administrator with the transporting of inmates.*

*Huggins asked didn't we fund a position a year or two ago that was supposed to alleviate this situation?*

*Madison replied that he did not know because he wasn't hear at the time.*

*Hamilton County Sheriff Justin Caraway said that yes you did, but as time goes on our responsibilities have increased. He said on some court days it requires the attention of three deputies. He also wants to ensure the safety of the community as well and that can't be done when we have only three deputies on duty. He said it will also eliminate the creation of comp time that has been a problem in the past.*

*Huggins asked Caraway if he anticipated an easing of that burden with the new deputy that just graduated the police academy?*

*Caraway said not if you want 24-hour coverage.*

*Clary asked if the court does not approve of this position will that create some kind of catastrophic impact on your department for the next year, or is it just going to not be as good as it could be if you had it?*

*Caraway replied that it will make it rough on us.*

*Madison said that the position would make it easier for everybody. In the long run everybody is going to benefit from it.*

*Tynes thanked Caraway and Madison for coming to speak to the court on this subject.*

*The court then spoke about the reserves and keeping it at a healthy level, raising taxes, possibility of purchasing new software for the county, setting money aside for the facilities, wage increases for elected officials, unemployment compensation, workers compensation, general repairs and maintenance on the courthouse, the annex elevator, the preservation of the courthouse windows and the communications department. No decisions were made at this time.*

*Tynes adjourned the court at 10:34 A.M.*

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*County Judge*

**Attest:** \_\_\_\_\_

***County Clerk***