

**Called Council Meeting
City of Doraville
Minutes
May 19, 2005
7:00 p.m.**

Present were: Ray Jenkins, Mayor,
Council Members: Donna Pittman
Marlene Hadden
Jason Anavitarte
Ed Lowe

Council Members Weese and Lang were absent.

The Mayor called the meeting to order and explained that the purpose of the called meeting is to set the millage rate. The Mayor explained that the City had held two public hearings on the proposed millage rate on May 12, 2005.

Council Member Anavitarte read the following statement:

The City of Doraville has been an envied City for many years continuing up to this year with a large commercial and industrial tax base to keep city taxes low. For this we should be grateful that we have had greater fiscal responsibility than other cities, but now the time has come for Doraville to advance our quality of life and remain fiscally responsible at the same time.

Recently, DeKalb County has implemented a Storm Water Utility and mandated that the cities of DeKalb collect this tax as well. The City estimates that this utility (tax) will collect approximately just over \$400,000 this year from all property owners. This alone is a substantial increase in the tax base when you consider that under the current mileage (8.00), if continued, the city will collect about \$2.8 million in property taxes for FY06.

On top of this County mandated tax, the proposed FY2006 operational budget would continue the mileage rate at 8.0 collecting approximately \$110,000 in additional taxes.

The combination of these two taxes would be nearly a 19% increase in taxes on all property owners in Doraville. A decision to keep tax rates constant when it is known that assessed values by the County have increased is a decision to raise property tax revenue.

Fiscal Year 2005 surplus projections according to our accountant at our last public hearings would amount to nearly \$1 million with between \$4-5 million in reserves. It troubles me that the Mayor and Council would all of a sudden be concerned about keeping reserves and not reducing the mileage rate when reserve funds were used to pay for a poorly designed public safety building which consumed nearly \$250,000 in extra funds almost three years ago, the city decides to pour \$70,000 into a pool that is hardly utilized while we have parks that are in need of desperate repair such as English Oak Park, we must continue to fight gang activity, ensure equal code enforcement city-wide, and reduce the DUI rate on our highways, but some members of the Council are not willing to provide incentives for Doraville to keep our employees and police officers here and compete against metro area jurisdictions.

Also, another question that I raise is what is the city is doing to attract new business and development to spur revitalization in Doraville. I recently

led an effort for the city to obtain a \$100,000 in funding to complete a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) plan by the end of this year to provide a tool for the city to use for business attraction. This is only one tool and is not alone going to allow us to compete in this regional and global market. If you support economic development in Doraville, then you will vote to provide incentives and give businesses a reason to come to our area by lowering taxes. Just like the City needs to invest in our parks for improvements, we must give reason for others to want to invest in Doraville.

Our government was not created to make money off the backs of the residents and small business owners. If you can justify these numbers I suggest you vote to raise taxes and explain to your constituents why more is not being done in Doraville for the citizens, employees, and property owners.

Finally, some Council members expressed a concern and changed positions on reducing the mileage rate because they felt the residents would not feel the proposed fraction of a cut by 2/10 of a mil. What I propose to is to reduce the burden of taxes on property owners by reducing the mileage rate by .5 of a mil. This will then allow for the residents to feel a greater benefit and help offset mandatory increased taxes by DeKalb County that would pay for stormwater and increased assessments by DeKalb County.

Council Member Hadden made a motion to keep the millage rate at 8 mills which is the same as it was. Motion died from lack of second.

Council Member Anavitarte made a motion to roll back the millage rate to 7.5 mills. Council Member Pittman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council Member Lowe, Anavitarte and Pittman voting yes. Council Member Hadden voted no.

Council Member Hadden made a motion to void the No-rehire Policy. Council Member Pittman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Jenkins adjourned the meeting.

Mayor Ray Jenkins

Attest