

**Minutes of Public Hearing
Elbert County Board of Commissioners
July 17, 2023**

After the pledge to the United States flag, the invocation was given by County Attorney Bill Daughtry.

Discussion of the FY2024 Budget

County Administrator Allen Hulme gave a presentation of the proposed FY2024 budget highlighting a \$2.2 million increase in the property tax digest, a \$120,000 increase in LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) and an almost \$2.364 million total increase in general fund revenues. There were some budget increases in several departments from FY2023. Several people from the audience commented, mostly about animal control; but some about the Sheriff's and Detention Center budgets. Chuck Almond, EMS Director spoke about the proposed 3% employee pay increase stating it was much needed in his departments for retaining qualified employees. Also, Mr. Hulme stated that during the Covid pandemic even though public safety personnel received some retention raises, all other county employees did not. Chairman Vaughn expressed his approval of the pay increase, but Commissioner Casey Freeman did not; stating he had to think about the taxpayers.

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Chairman Lee Vaughn called the meeting to order. Present were Commissioner David Hunt, Commissioner Casey Freeman, Commissioner Chris Alexander, Commissioner Mike Scoggins, Commissioner Freddie Jones, County Administrator Allen Hulme, CFO Macie Witcher, County Attorney Bill Daughtry, County Clerk Tamara Butler and media.

Adoption of the agenda. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and approval of a Tax Anticipation Note for up to 3 million dollars. Mr. Hulme stated that out of six (6) proposals that was sent out only two (2) returned proposals. Northeast Georgia Bank proposed a 4.95% interest rate and Pinnacle Bank proposed a 4% interest rate on a \$3 million dollar Tax Anticipation Note with a \$1,500 origination fee. Therefore, it was his recommendation to go with the lowest proposal from Pinnacle Bank. Commissioner Freeman made the motion to approve the recommendation of Pinnacle Bank. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Public Comments. There were several comments from the audience concerning the budget.

Adjournment. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Hunt. The motion passed unanimously.