

**DeFuniak Springs City Council**  
**Budget First Public Hearing Minutes**  
**Council Chambers**  
**September 7, 2021**  
**5:05 p.m.**

The following Council members were present: Mayor Bob Campbell, Mayor Pro-Tempore Todd Bierbaum (Seat 1); Councilmember Robert McKnight (Seat 2); Councilmember Kevin Crystal (Seat 3); Councilmember Henry D. Ennis (Seat 4), and Councilmember Anthony Vallée (Seat 5). Staff present: City Manager Robert Thompson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Director Debra Gibson, and City Clerk Maryanne Schrader.

Mayor Bob Campbell called the meeting for the budget hearing to order at 5:05 p.m. starting with the millage rate.

## 2. Tentative FY22 Millage Rate

City Attorney Clay Adkinson opened the Public Hearing stating the purpose of the meeting is to hold the first Public Hearing on the millage rate and budget.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson said the millage rate of 5.5000 is greater than the rollback rate of 5.2525 mills by 4.71%. He announced the budget was presented at \$42,799,743.00.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember K. Crystal to adopt the tentative millage rate at 5.5000.

Jene Robinson, residing at Lakeside Drive, said the budget has increased by 103 percent since 2019 and did not understand the increase in the tax rate when the city is only growing by 2.2 percent. He mentioned the share of property tax to the County and School Board is not increasing but the city is increasing 11.3 percent. He encouraged the Council to keep the millage rate at 5.5 and continue to reduce the budget more in the future.

Mayor Campbell mentioned the growth of the city is coming, and we have to prepare for the volume of users.

Jene Robinson said the increase is not needed as it is a 33% increase over last year. Mayor Campbell mentioned our financial advisors have given us advice through studies on what to project in the budget to keep in compliance.

Councilmember K. Crystal mentioned the finance manager has discussed this issue, and Finance Director D. Gibson said since 2019 the budget reflects a 141% increase in grants with \$10 million worth of grants.

Councilmember K. Crystal said there are things that have not been done infrastructure wise in twenty years, we have development coming and an aging Wastewater Treatment Plant. Once we get to the point of certain usage, we have to plan for usage. We have 1,000 units or more that are projected to come on-line. He said we do not receive all of the money from impact fees. These are things we have to do to run the city, and we do not have a choice.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum stated that since day one, he has harped on the fact that the city has been making transfers to the general fund to run operations. It has been done that way for decades, and the rates have not kept pace with the growth that has occurred. He added provided services is not free. We have tried to get our employees to the minimum wage or higher to keep our employees. As a city our actual budget is 16 to 20 million dollars, and the rest of the city is run by grants. Our taxes have not kept pace with what the city demands.

**Vote:** Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallée, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

### 3. Tentative FY22 Budget

City Attorney Clay Adkinson asked for a motion to approve the tentative budget.

**Motion** by Councilmember K. Crystal and seconded by Councilmember T. Bierbaum to adopt the tentative budget of \$42,799,743.00.

**Vote:** Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallée, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

### 4. Set Final FY22 Budget Hearing date


**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember K. Crystal to set the final Budget Hearing date for September 20, 2021 at 5:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**Vote:** Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallée, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Campbell adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

Approved:

Attest:

  
Minutes submitted by Maryanne Schrader, City Clerk  
*Proper notice having been duly given*

