



# **BANKS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS JOINT WORKSESSION TO NEGOTIATE THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX WITH THE CITIES OF ALTO, BALDWIN, GILLSVILLE, HOMER, LULA & MAYSVILLE**

Courthouse Annex Boardroom | 150 Hudson Ridge | Homer, GA 30547

Thursday, August 04, 2022 at 6:00 PM

## **MINUTES**

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### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Ch. Turk called the meeting to order.

#### **PRESENT**

Commissioner Bo Garrison

Chairman Charles Turk

Vice Chairman Danny Maxwell

Commissioner Sammy Reece

#### **ABSENT**

Commissioner Keith Gardiner

#### **OTHERS**

Copy of Sign-In Sheet Attached

### **2. AGENDA ITEMS**

Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Maxwell, Seconded by Commissioner Reece.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Garrison, Chairman Turk, Vice Chairman Maxwell, Commissioner Reece

Vote: 4:0

All yea votes and the motion passed.

#### **a. 2022 Local Option Sales Tax Distribution Negotiation**

The cities in attendance were as follows:

Lula      Maysville      Baldwin

Homer   Alto

Ch. Turk asked all the cities if they had a majority and they stated no.

Ch. Turk asked what percentage the cities had come up with since the last meeting?

Dennis Bergin, Lula City Manager stated they wanted to see if the County had made any concessions since the last meeting.

Ch. Turk stated the County agreed at the last meeting to not accept 81%.

Mr. Bergin discussed the rise in the tax digest and how the County would be getting more revenue because of the increase. He also stated the cities wouldn't be able to set their millage rate until the

LOST was settled. He stated the percentage based on population was the fairest way. He further stated when you looked at the big picture the city residents were being taxed for double services and discussed tax inequity.

Ch. Turk quoted the 1979 LOST Legislative Act, which required the County to use their proceeds to rollback property taxes County wide and not just in the unincorporated areas of the County. Ch. Turk also stated the eight criteria for receiving LOST.

Joe Elam, Mayor City of Baldwin discussed the decrease in population of the County and increase in the City's population.

Comm. Garrison stated the decrease in County population was due to the City's annexations and also stated the County had filed a challenge with the Census Bureau concerning the County population decrease.

Mr. Bergin challenged the eight criteria and stated the citizens in cities were being taxed for duplicate services that were being offered by the city and the County.

Mayor Elam stated it seemed that the County was demonstrating a none willingness to negotiate by stating at the last meeting they had no room to decrease their percentage.

James Dumas, Homer City Council Member stated every City had a different story. He went over the criteria and events that Homer provided that met the criteria and asked if those did not add value to the County.

The cities left the Board Room at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the LOST percentage and re-entered the Board Room at 7:36 p.m.

Mr. Bergin stated the cities proposal was 81.93%.

Ch. Turk stated the County proposal was 84%.

Council Member Dumas stated they were trying to negotiate and at 81.93% they were giving up \$1M and at 84% they would be losing \$2.3M more from their budget.

Ch. Turk stated you had to look at the public safety and judicial services the County had to provide to all citizens including the ones in the cities.

Council Member Dumas said another loss in revenue would force cities to have to increase their tax.

Mayor Elam stated the cities would like to step away and discuss the percentage further rather than walk away and have to go into arbitration.

The cities left the Board Room at 7:49 p.m. and returned at 8:05 p.m.

Mr. Bergin stated the cities proposal was 82.25%.

Ch. Turk stated the County proposed 83.75%.

Comm Reece stated the cities are getting more money also with the increase in the tax digest.

Vice Ch. Maxwell stated when the total increases everyone gains not just the County.

Ch. Turk stated the cities and County were within \$200,000 agreeing on the percentage.

Richard Presley, Mayor City of Maysville stated the cities proposed 83%.

Ch. Turk stated the County's proposal was 83.75%.

Comm. Garrison stated that arbitration would cost the cities and County a lot of money. He further stated what if the County met the cities a little closer at 83.5% and that was the last proposal. He said he didn't want to waste any money on arbitration.

Mayor Elam stated they accepted 83.5%.

Ch. Turk stated he would get the paperwork drawn up for the cities and County to approve in their meetings.

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

Motion made by Commissioner Garrison, Seconded by Chairman Turk.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Garrison, Chairman Turk, Vice Chairman Maxwell, Commissioner Reece

Vote: 4:0

All yea votes and motion passed.

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Chairman

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Assistant County Clerk