

**PUBLIC HEARING
TAX MILLAGE RATE INCREASE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NASHVILLE
COUNTY OF BERRIEN
August 26, 2019
5:30 p.m.**

ROLL CALL: Mayor Michael Richbourg, Aldermen Scott Stalnaker, Billy Retterbush, Eric Gaither, Antonio Carter and Alderwoman Mellisa Watson

STAFF PRESENT: Mandy Luke, Jackie Jordan, Jill Wise, Chief Edwards, Peter Schultz, Mitchell Moore

OTHERS: Bryan Shaw, Nikki Wilson

Mayor Richbourg called the Public Hearing to order at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to allow the citizens to voice their opinion regarding the proposed millage increase of property taxes for the City of Nashville.

Bryan Shaw, a resident of Nashville and a member of the Nashville Historic Preservation, addressed the Mayor and Council explaining an email he sent them earlier opposing a tax millage rate increase. He provided information he obtained from DataUSA.io explaining DataUSA.io is a website that compiles information from many sources and lists public US Government data by community. The information he provided *{attached hereto}* focused on Nashville's demographics and economic profile including population, household incomes, poverty level, types of jobs, the number of City of Nashville employees with how many live within or outside the City limits and the crime rate statistics.

Mayor Richbourg mentioned as previously discussed the direction the City wants to go in regarding the Police Department (PD) and public safety as to what it would require and how to sustain it. He said there are two officers officially leaving the PD for higher paying jobs and one of those officers is the one that was going to be the full-time code enforcement officer. He said it is almost a crisis situation and will mean extra overtime. He said the bare minimum previously discussed to get to the Chief's recommended pay scale

and hire four (4) new officers instead of six (6) but now they will need two (2) more to replace those. Mrs. Luke explained she has to publish the five-year history and tax digest, along with the current year, two (2) weeks before the adoption of the rate. She said the tax bills go out in October with taxes due in December.

Bryan Shaw mentioned the public perception of police officers eating together instead of staggering breaks. Chief Edwards explained there are many reasons they are not always “on-duty” but often working overtime on reports well after their shifts and attending court dates. Scott Stalnaker mentioned officers are often subpoenaed for Grand Jury and Superior Court, in addition to City Court, and have to spend a lot of time waiting. Antonio Carter said it is a safety issue as well and there are many times they receive a call while eating and have to leave before they get to finish. He also mentioned they do not get paid a lot and they put their life on the line every day.

Nikki Wilson said when she first came to town, she thought there were a lot of officers around town and ask about the number of officers. Mayor Richbourg briefly explained the national average and how the City is well below that number. She also mentioned officers questioning people riding bikes and Mayor Richbourg explained due to the number of complaints of people seen on bikes casing neighborhoods. Scott Stalnaker said it would help if they could keep officers longer than three (3) years so they can get to know everyone in town.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Mayor Michael Richbourg

Alderman Eric Gaither

Alderwoman Mellisa Watson

Alderman Antonio Carter

Alderman Billy Retterbush

Alderman Scott Stalnaker

Alderman Walter Steward

ATTEST:

Jackie Jordan, City Clerk