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CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO SET FIRE TAX MILLAGE AT 0.0 MILLS

THOMASVILLE, GA – October 2, 2013 – On September 23, 2013, the City Council voted to set the 2013 City Fire Tax millage rate at 0.0 mills. The City has levied no fire tax since 2011.

“Unlike many communities, we fund our operations largely through utilities revenues,” said Steve Sykes, City manager/utilities superintendent. “When the City set the goal in 2009 to eliminate the fire tax, we were collecting about \$1.5 million in property taxes to fund the fire department. We began reducing the fire tax millage rate each year, and last year, we were able to achieve the Council’s goal of levying no fire tax. We are continuing that goal in 2013 as well.”

Margins above the cost to deliver services generated from City-owned utilities – electric, water, wastewater, natural gas, solid waste and CNS services – are transferred into the General Fund in order to provide funding for police and fire protection, street maintenance and other essential governmental services. For 2013, the City of Thomasville has budgeted utilities transfers to the General Fund of approximately \$8.5 million.

“In addition to not paying a fire tax, our citizens also enjoy the benefits of very competitive rates for services when compared to other providers,” said Sykes.

According to the Georgia Public Service Commission’s most recent residential electric rate survey of all electric providers in Georgia, the City of Thomasville’s cost for a residential electric customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours is approximately \$3.32 per month below the state average. In addition to low-cost electric service, citizens will also see savings through the City’s other services as well.

“We estimate that customers save between 10 and 20 percent on our other services compared to costs in other communities,” said Sykes. “Customers who bundle CNS services will see an annual savings of up to \$420, plus our ‘Smart Choice’ program saves qualifying customers 10 percent on their monthly bill.”

“The ‘Smart Choice’ program saves the typical customer approximately \$190 a year,” Sykes added.

At the same meeting, the City ratified the recommendation of the Thomasville City School Board to levy 17.341 mills of Thomasville City School tax. The City is responsible for levying and collecting Thomasville City School tax on behalf of the Thomasville City Schools.

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