

increase foreseen

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For those reasons, Dipper sees a tax increase as unavoidable.

"I've tried to say I wouldn't go along with a full increase. I don't like it, but I don't see any help coming from state or federal" government, said the Democrat. "I'm not in favor of that but it looks like we don't have too many alternatives."

The full increase to which Dipper referred was increasing the county's property tax rate to the maximum allowed by law, which is 25 cents per \$100 assessed valuation.

The county currently taxes at a rate of 18 cents.

For the owner of a home with a \$60,000 market value, assessed correctly at one-third of market value and with a full \$3,500 homestead exemption, the tax increase would mean an extra \$11 to \$12 for county government.

The increase would bring in \$490,000 in new revenue, Dipper said, which will not pay for the new jail staffing. He predicts Holsapple might have to make cuts elsewhere in his budget.

Taxpayers can expect to begin paying at much as \$90 a year in additional taxes beginning next year for the next 20 years for construction of the new law center.

Dipper was preparing a memo late Monday to officeholders about the budget and will announce it at this morning's county board meeting.

He will tell officeholders to submit their budget proposals — minus personnel — as soon as possible to their board oversight committees for discussion. They are to use the same appropriation figure they currently have.

"There is no chance for any increase for any officeholders," Dipper said, adding that cuts are possible.

However, Dipper said many offices operate on small budgets and even a 10 percent cut would cripple them and still not solve the budget dilemma.

County board Republican David Drobsch met with officeholders late Monday afternoon about the budget and said some are upset with the likelihood they will have no new funds.

County tax increases

By DAWN MORVILLE

Herald & Review Staff Writer

Macon County government needs to increase its tax rate to keep out of the red.

That was the news Monday from county board Chairman Donald Dipper after he met with county Auditor Richard Ferre, Treasurer Jim O. Edgcomb and Republican board minority leader Bennett Bradley Jr.

Ferre explained the budget scenario this way:

- He and Edgcomb agree the county will have \$400,000 to \$500,000 left at fiscal year's end Nov. 30.

- Add the same revenue of \$6,942,000 for this year and get a total of \$7.4 million. If the county has the same expenses as this year, it will need \$7.8 million.

- That means a \$400,000 deficit. Although fees are expected to be \$200,000 to \$300,000 higher, the county will lose this year's one-time-only revenue increase of \$471,000 in the general fund.

The county has at least two major funding unknowns: staffing of the new county jail facility to be completed in October 1988 and union-negotiated salary increases.

Sheriff Lee Holsapple has estimated that the minimum number of new employees he needs is 56. For staff training and salaries, along with an expected increase in inmates, the sheriff estimates he will need an extra \$540,000 for five months in the 1988 budget.

Also, deputies and command officers

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