

This is an excerpt from the bottom of an email from Carolyn Cooper in which she tried to change the subject.

Commissioner Carolyn Cooper <1carolyncooper@gmail.com>

To peterjweldon@outlook.com

Sun 8/2/2020 9:59

As the longest serving member of the City Commission (including the Mayor), I have never supported raising property taxes. Actually, in my 11 years as a Commissioner, I have never before even felt the need to select a tentative millage cap to provide flexibility as the City moved through the annual budget process.

On July 22nd, I supported a tentative millage rate cap at 4.5623 giving the Commission the opportunity (but not the obligation) to raise the adopted millage rate up to (but not in excess of) the tentative cap. Between now and September, the City will receive additional Orange County tax base estimates and state revenue sharing information and will be examining proposed expenditures. The actual millage rate will be decided by the Commission in September.

Due to uncertainties in our economy, I am not as confident in this year's projected revenues as I have been of revenue projections in prior years. Maintaining flexibility in our millage rate until we receive outstanding information addressing revenues seems prudent.

Our City Manager, a Certified Public Accountant with over 30 years municipal experience wrote the following regarding the FY2021 budget process:

"In all the years of presenting and deliberating over budgets, this is one of the most challenging, with many unknown economic outcomes that will result from the issues facing our nation, state and city."

I fully agree that a millage increase is not what we want in the face of this pandemic. I also believe it is the City's responsibility to maintain public services at a level that ensures our families are safe and our community is ready for a robust recovery.

As I stated at the July 22nd meeting, I see my support of the tentative millage cap as an insurance policy. It is not my intention to support a millage increase in September, unless holding the existing millage rate causes significant a reduction in City services.

I will make every effort to maintain Winter Park's current millage rate at 4.0923 in FY2021.