

James City County residents plead for no tax increase ahead of budget planning

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JAMES CITY — Citizens spoke out against tax increases in James City County during a public hearing to help the county prepare its fiscal year 2026 budget.

The residents spoke during a pre-budget public hearing at the Board of Supervisors meeting on Jan. 14.

James City County's real estate rate remained at 83 cents per \$100 valuation in fiscal year 2025 despite a revaluation that saw large increases in property assessments. The county held five community budget meetings and many residents asked the board to consider spreading the increase over time. The supervisors adopted a budget with a 5-cent tax credit for the current year.

"According to the census bureau, household income rose only 6% in James City County last year, and I wonder where those households found the difference between what they made and what you took," resident **Steven Mains** told the board.

Mains said the tax burden means many workers in Colonial Williamsburg and the nearby stores commute from lower tax communities, creating additional pressure on roads in the Williamsburg area.

"I urge you to relook at the budget and the tax increase you passed last year," Mains said. He urged the county to set a property tax rate of 78 cents to "lock in the rebate that you agreed we needed this year."

Resident **Susan Franz** told the board the county should consider cost-cutting measures such as eliminating mobile hotspots in county libraries.

"You guys are all very smart," Franz said. "You can find ways to cut government inefficiencies in order to keep our taxes down."

Resident **Terry Ricks** said he'd like to see car taxes reduced or eliminated.

“Over the past couple of years, it’s very clear to me, by talking to my friends, and my neighbors, and my acquaintances that there is widespread dissatisfaction with this tax policy,” Ricks told the hearing.

Jack Gurliuccio has lived on a fixed income for three years. “There are many residents that are in the situation I am in, living on a fixed income. Many had to go get second jobs. I see them pushing carts at Walmarts and Harris Teeters. This isn’t right and it shouldn’t be what we look to do to our residents here in James City,” he said.

The board took no action on Jan. 14.

“The comments and suggestions made at this pre-budget public hearing will help guide staff in preparing a budget proposal for the board’s consideration,” county Finance Director Sharon McCarthy said.

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