

# **HART COUNTY FINANCING**

**HART COUNTY PROPERTY  
OWNERS ASSOC.**

**August 15, 2016**

# RESOURCES ARE TAPPED BY THREE POLITICAL ENTITIES

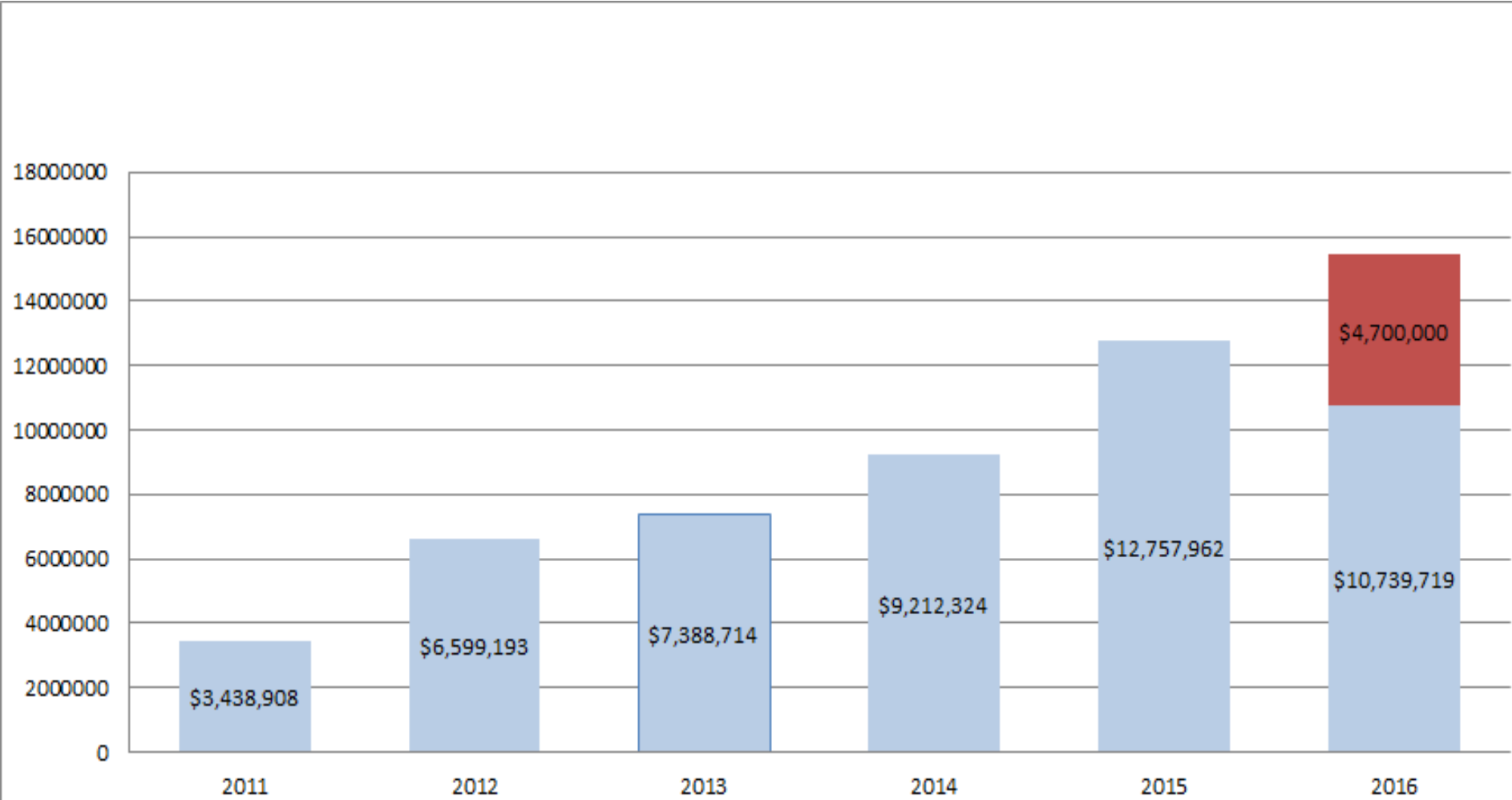
ENTITY	MILLAGE RATE	TAX REVENUE	TOTAL BUDGET	RESERVES
SCHOOL	13.7 mills	\$13 M	\$31.7 M	\$10.7 M
COUNTY	5.7 mills	\$4.4 M	\$10.8 M	\$3.5 M
CITY OF HARTWELL	11.3 mills	\$1.9 M	\$5.1 M	\$2.2 M

# OBVIOUSLY SCHOOLS ARE THE BIGGEST TAX ISSUE

- Schools are swimming in money –it is ours
- Have built up a large cash surplus “reserve”
  - Reserve has grown by over budgeting and under spending – excess profits
  - This has gone on for years

# SCHOOL RESERVE FUND

Derived from Monthly Financial Reports



# **THE SCHOOL HAS SPENT SOME RESERVE MONEY**

- \$3.7 M Transferred to the Building Fund and Ag Center enhancements
- \$1 M Spent on the football field and scoreboards

# THE SCHOOL HAS SPENT A LOT OF MONEY OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS

- All new school buildings
- Fine Arts Center
- Renovation of the football field
  - Just paid off last year
  - Now an artificial field surface
  - Scoreboards
- Sports palace
- CTAE/CCA
- Agricultural, Multipurpose Center

# HOW ARE WE DOING?

(Source: Georgia Department of Education Data Base)

## Spring 2016 Georgia Milestones End-of-Course Assessment-Coordinate Algebra

School Name	Number Tested	% Beginning Learner	% Developing Learner	% Proficient Learner	% Distinguished Learner
HART COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL	123	49.6	42.3	8.1	0.0
STATE AVERAGES		32.0	37.0	25.0	6.0

## Spring 2016 Georgia Milestones End-of-Course Assessment-Analytic Geometry

HART COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL	150	32.7	48.0	18.7	0.7
STATE AVERAGES		30.0	38.0	26.0	7.0
NORTH OCONEE HIGH SCHOOL	181	9.4	33.7	30.4	26.5
OCONEE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL	140	16.4	31.4	25.7	26.4

**Annual Cost Per Full Time Student (2015) Hart County = \$8444 Oconee County = \$8007**

# WHY DID WE PICK MATH CLASSES?

- It was a completely random choice.
- We felt that a thorough knowledge of math is necessary whether you work as:
  - a carpenter reading construction plans,
  - a machinist reading blue prints, or
  - a hedge fund manager computing return on investment
- We included the state average scores because some people believe they are an appropriate goal for our students to achieve.
- We included the assessments from Oconee County because their school is considered one of the best in the state academically.
- HCPOA members believe that our students are just as exceptional as those at Oconee High School and can perform at a comparable level.



# HOW ARE WE DOING?

(The Hartwell Sun, July 28, 2016)

## Jaybez Floyd – Superintendent of Hart County Charter System

“We definitely had a lot of bright spots in the district...but not enough bright spots... we definitely have room for improvement.”

## Kevin Gaines – Principal, Hart County High School

“The State released the spring results and for schools such as HCHS that are on block scheduling, those results don’t take into account our winter results. In order to get an accurate picture, you have to get the whole year, which the State didn’t release. That way you get a fair comparison. For other schools it would be an accurate comparison, but that is not the case with HCHS.”

# **A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF SCHOOL MONEY IS SPENT ON NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

- Athletic supplements
- Athletic Director
- Sports palace
- Agricultural Center
- Football field turf
- Scoreboards

# COUNTY FINANCES ARE CLOSE TO DISTRESS

- Revenues have been flat for many years and are now projected to be reduced
- Most department budgets are stretched and some are underfunded
  - Roads are a good example
- Several accounts are already over budget
- The FY-16 reserve account is only 20% of the budget
  - Needed to meet payroll
- Commissioners are now working on FY-17 budget

# UNLIKE THE COUNTY THE SCHOOL DOES NOT FACE LIFE/DEATH ISSUES

- EMS
- FIRE
- COURTS
- SHERIFF
- ROADS

- At this writing the budget is \$1 M more than expected revenue
  - \$1 m is approximately 1 mill

# **WE URGE YOU TO CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER**

- Lower the millage rate to reduce the reserve
- Remind them that they have dual responsibilities
  - Schools
  - Citizens
- Last year we suggested that a rollback of 2.2 mills
  - Would still generate \$10.2 M
  - Reduce reserve by only \$2.6 M
  - We were ignored

**AFTER ALL IT IS OUR MONEY**

# A REASONABLE STRATEGY

- If the County goes broke our taxes will increase
- If the School Board reduces the millage, the County can raise millage
- Our tax burden will be neutral

**THIS STRATEGY COULD SAVE THE COUNTY AND TAXPAYERS DISTRESS**