

OCONEE COUNTY

THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Fiscal Year Ending 6/30/10



OCONEE COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

Provide the highest quality services in a fiscally responsible manner to promote the health, safety and general welfare of all Oconee County citizens.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chairman's Letter	3
The Future	
Future Plans	4-5
The Present	
The Economy.....	6
Public Safety	
Emergency Medical Services	7
Emergency Management Agency	8
Fire Department	9
Sheriff's Office	
Quality of Life	
Parks & Recreation	10
Senior Center	11
Library	12
Taxes	
Tax Commissioner	13
Tax Assessor	14
Community Services	
Fleet Maintenance	14
Public Works.....	15
Tourism	16
Animal Control	17
Community Planning.....	18
Department of Human Services	19
Code Enforcement	20
Cooperative Extension/4-H	
County Finances	
Your \$2,000 Tax Bill	21
Revenue Chart	22
General Fund Expenditures Chart	23
Millage Rates	24
County Employees.....	24
General Fund	25
The Year in Photos	26
Elected Officials	27

Dear Fellow Oconee County Citizens,

The 2010 edition of *Oconee County – The Year In Review* summarizes activities that have occurred within the county's departments over the past fiscal year. Oconee County should be proud of the county staff that serves you on a daily basis. We have undergone the same financial issues that you have dealt with in your homes and businesses. This means we, too, are doing more with less – and that includes fewer personnel.

The period from July 1, 2009 until June 30, 2010 was truly challenging. First, our county staff was tasked with providing the same level of service to you with a budget of \$3.5 million less than the prior year. Additionally, personnel picked up the slack that resulted with us having 16 fewer personnel. In spite of the challenges, Oconee County continues to be a strong county and our government continues to perform at the highest of levels.

Some very notable projects have either been completed or initiated during the past year. I am sure that you have noticed the work currently underway along Jennings Mill Parkway. Currently, Jennings Mill Parkway has been rerouted to terminate on Virgil Langford Road and the bridge crossing Loop 10 is in progress. We have also completed a widening project along Daniells Bridge Road from Founders Grove to the Mars Hill Road intersection. These two projects will tie together with the Mars Hill Road widening project in several years that will basically span the distance from State Route 316 into downtown Watkinsville.

This past year has been difficult for many businesses in our area. However, unemployment in and around the Athens Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) remains some of the lowest in Georgia. Some bright news regarding businesses in Oconee County include the opening of Oconee County's first hotel, the SpringHill Suites; expansion of St. Mary's facilities, including the new Alzheimer's and Dementia facility and the relocation of their Health & Financial Management offices; plus the announcement of several new restaurants looking to open in Oconee County in the coming months.

Finally, we want to express our appreciation and gratitude to one of our own, Parks & Recreation Director John Gentry, who served most of the past year in Afghanistan thorough Operation Enduring Freedom. His service to our community and our country is greatly appreciated!

You and all other Oconee County residents are also to be commended again for your part in making Oconee County a great place to live, work and play!

For the Board of Commissioners,

Melvin Davis, Chairman

Jim Luke, Commissioner – Post 1
Margaret Hale, Commissioner Post 3

John Daniell, Commissioner – Post 2
Chuck Horton, Commissioner – Post 4

THE FUTURE

WATER

This subject is on the minds of many citizens, especially since we have been in a drought situation. The decision to partner with Walton County on Hard Labor Creek will help Oconee County meet our need for additional water in the future. This has been an intentional slow process due to land acquisition because of the economy with declining revenues and leveling citizen expectations.

SEWER

Commercial business (retail, office and industrial) is certainly needed to diversify our tax base. In order to attract this type of development, sewer must be available within the areas that are suitable for the purpose of development. An upgrade in waste water treatment and sewer capacity has additionally been a project of focus. A GEFA loan will assist in the upgrade of the main trunk line serving the Calls Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.

BUTLER'S CROSSING UPGRADES

The Georgia Department of Transportation has approved the design for the upgrades in the Butler's Crossing area which will include sidewalks. The right-of-way has been acquired and the project is being constructed. It is estimated that the cost of this project will be approximately \$120,000 and will be paid for with GDOT and county funds. The project is expected to be completed by the end of December 2010.

OCONEE CONNECTOR PROJECT

The Oconee Connector project (formerly known as Jennings Mill Parkway) is roughly midway through the construction period. As can easily be seen from the surrounding areas, the bridge crossing Loop 10 is nearing completion. Jennings Mill Road has already been rerouted to Virgil Langford Road. Additionally, the clearing and grubbing of the remaining roadways is underway. The project is estimated to cost approximately \$20 million when complete (including right-of-way acquisition), to be paid by the Georgia Department of Transportation. The project will conclude in 2011.



MARS HILL ROAD WIDENING

The design for the widening of Mars Hill Road is complete. Georgia DOT has approved the design and right-of-way acquisition is the next phase of the project. It is anticipated that the right-of-way will take approximately 2 years and will cost roughly \$8.5 million. Construction is expected to cost \$23 million and will be completed approximately 2 years after its initiation. The first phase of this project will span from SR 316 to Butler's Crossing.

THE FUTURE

TELECOMMUNICATIONS UPDATES

In the 2009 SPLOST referendum, voters approved a portion of the SPLOST proceeds to make telecommunications upgrades. These upgrades will include towers for an 800 MHz system that will support multiple departments within the county and allow for coordinated communication with different agencies throughout the region, including E-911, Sheriff's Office, Fire, and Road Departments. A plan has been approved to construct one tower in southern Oconee County.

REVIEW OF COURTHOUSE/ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE

The Land Use and Transportation Citizen Advisory Committee has completed meeting with county department heads and judicial personnel. The committee is in the process of summarizing the vocalized needs for increased space for county facilities. A public presentation will be sponsored by the committee and facilitated by county staff to illustrate the review process coinciding with committee conclusions. There is no timeline determined for the Board of Commissioners to take any action regarding this potential project.



LOCATION OF COUNTY FACILITIES

The Board of Commissioners is evaluating the potential of relocating a number of county functions to the Courthouse Annex located on Greensboro Highway. This process could result in the county ending its lease of the property across the street from the Courthouse. The Board will review the possibilities and determine if this project should be completed.



FIRE DEPARTMENT LOCATIONS

With an eye to the future, Oconee County is evaluating where future fire stations should be located. The fire department will be in the process of reviewing strategic locations for future fire stations in several parts of the county. These areas include Farmington, Eastville and Barnett Shoals. The county has developed a template for fire department needs in a fire station which will be used as a guide through this evaluation process.

OCONEE COUNTY ROADS

Oconee County's public works department will continue to maintain, pave and repair roadways throughout the county. Additionally, the public works department will be an integral component for the DOT funded projects such as the Oconee Connector construction and the Mars Hill Road widening projects.

THE ECONOMY

Oconee County was not immune from the economic crisis that gripped the nation. Unemployment increased to levels that Oconee has not experienced for decades, but still remained the lowest in the state. The construction industry experienced a very small amount of activity and retailers and manufacturers continued to see declining revenues.

However, there were bright spots to the otherwise dismal reports. Throughout the year, Oconee County consistently held one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. In fact, our region has faired exceptionally well in regards to unemployment rates as Oconee, Athens-Clarke, Oglethorpe, Madison, Banks counties have maintained some of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. Our goal is to work toward getting everyone a job that wants one, so we must continue to be vigilant in those efforts.



Construction was completed on the SpringHill Suites located on Daniells Bridge Road. Oconee County's first hotel, a 99-room facility operating beneath the Marriott flag, was opened on July 21, 2009 - just in time to take advantage of UGA's football season. The facility is located near SR 316 and many office buildings in northern Oconee County. As the year progressed, the occupancy rates at the hotel continued to climb on a monthly basis.

Also during the year, St. Mary's Health Care opened an Alzheimer's and Dementia facility on its Highland Hills property. This 35 bed facility is equipped to serve those suffering from these debilitating conditions, but also allow the patient and their families to continue living their lives to the fullest. St. Mary's also relocated their business support functions to the Colony Square shopping center on Hwy. 53 during the past year.



The Oconee County Economic Development Department and the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce partnered during FY 2010 to develop the "go LOCAL" campaign to encourage residents of the community to support local businesses and spend their money with local retailers and service providers. This campaign is intended to educate local residents about the impacts of their spending habits and encourage them to further a sense of community pride by reinvesting in our community.

In an effort to help small businesses and entrepreneurs, the Oconee County Board of Commissioners approved a change to the county's capacity fee policy that will not require businesses to pay capacity fees in order to open a business in the county and at the same time reduced the costs that developers would have to pay for sewer capacity to accommodate higher capacity business uses to their facilities.



OCONEE COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE 2009-2010



Oconee County Fire Rescue provides Medical First Responder services to the citizens of the county with five (5) rescue trucks and one (1) mass casualty truck. These services are provided by 57 volunteer medically trained fire rescue personnel with an average response time of 7 minutes and 26 seconds. National EMS Inc. provides Advanced Life Support transport services in Oconee County through a contract with Athens Regional Medical Center and St. Mary's Healthcare System.

57 Oconee County Fire Rescue Personnel – Medically Trained

26 First Responders – over 80 hours training

26 EMTs – over 400 hours training

5 Paramedics – over 1000 hours training



Total Emergency Medical Responses

2007 - 1,759

2008 - 1,804

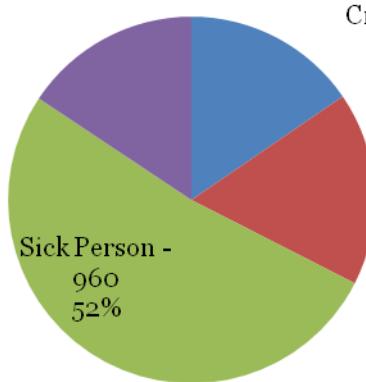
2009 - 1,852



Total Emergency Medical Responses 2009

Other (Lift, alarm, etc.) -

290
16%



Motor Vehicle Crash - 286

15%

Trauma (other than MVC) - 316
17%

■ Motor Vehicle Crash - 286

■ Trauma (other than MVC) - 316

■ Sick Person - 960

■ Other (Lift, alarm, etc.) - 290



OCONEE COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY 2009-2010



Oconee County Emergency Management Agency is the local community-based equivalent of the Georgia Emergency Management Agency at the state level and the Federal Emergency Management Agency at the federal level. We work closely with these agencies (as well as dozens of others, both public and private) before, during, and after emergencies and disasters.

The Oconee County Emergency Management Agency is responsible for assisting in the protection of lives and property of Oconee County citizens in the event of natural or manmade disasters. Emergency Management anticipates emergencies, takes steps to prevent loss of life and property, and provides quick response when havoc strikes.

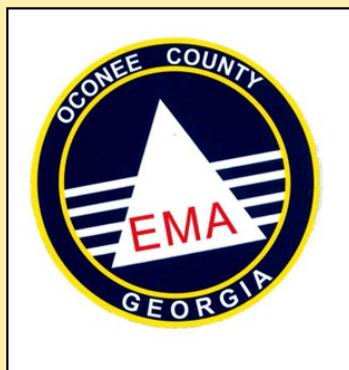
Oconee County's Emergency Management Agency was established by the commissioners to develop and implement a county-wide program. The backbone of the county-wide program is that all emergency agency and support agencies work together. Emergency management and other emergency agencies identify hazards that face each community and develop contingency plans for each potential emergency. Emergency management provides the expertise, training, and coordination that local governments need to protect lives and property.



Oconee County Fire Rescue has received numerous grants through the Emergency Management Agency to include most recently:

2008 FEMA Fire Grant—\$237,000

- 9 Thermal Imaging Cameras
- 54 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus





OCONEE COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

FIRE DEPARTMENT 2009-2010



The Fire Department is responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing the fire prevention and suppression activities of seven volunteer fire stations in Oconee County. These seven fire stations are staffed with 148 volunteer firefighters who have an average response time of 6 minutes and 58 seconds. In addition, the Fire Department has 57 volunteer Medical First Responders who provide EMS support services to Oconee County.

The Fire Department is also responsible for: responding to all structure fires in Oconee County and other applicable calls; keeping updated records for ISO (Insurance Services Organization) and working to achieve the best ISO rating; coordinating joint training for all stations; providing fire safety classes for schools and daycare centers; working with local and state agencies on arson investigations; recruiting new volunteer firefighters and coordinating volunteer firefighter training.

148 Oconee County Fire Rescue Personnel

35 Fire Rescue Personnel Basic 101 Certified – over 95 hours of training

103 Fire Rescue Personnel NPQ Certified – over 340 hours of training

7 Fire Rescue Personnel – Medical Training Only

3 Fire Rescue Personnel – Other Certification

Additional Training:

131 Fire Rescue Personnel Hazardous Material Certified – over 30 hours of training

124 Fire Rescue Personnel Crash Victim Extrication Certified – over 16 hours of training

24 Rescue Specialists – over 16 hours of training

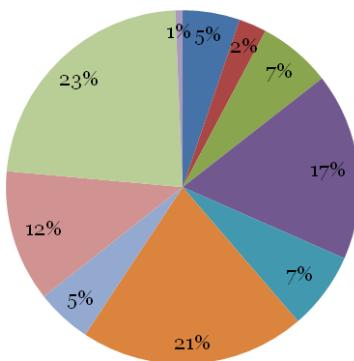


Total Fire Responses

2002 - 739	2006 - 787
2003 - 684	2007 - 903
2004 - 795	2008 - 801
2005 - 750	2009 - 747



Total Fire Rescue Responses 2009



- Structure Fires - 39
- Vehicle Fires - 19
- Wildland Fires, Control Burns - 50
- Alarm Activations, Smoke in Area - 128
- Haz-Mat and Power Line Calls - 53
- Automobile Accidents - 154

PARKS & RECREATION

Oconee County is a great place to live, work & PLAY!

Oconee Veterans Park

- Accepted & maintained initial care for 48 new willow oak trees donated by Select Trees
- Managed over 100 park rentals
- The Community Center averaged over 6,000 users per month.
- Park held 6th annual Movie in the Park on May 8 with over 2,500 attendees
- Other events hosted included the annual Table Tennis Tournament, Veterans Day event, Memorial Day event, NOHS Veterans Memorial Fast-Pitch Softball tournament, multiple 5K runs and a tennis tournament



Bogart Sports Complex

- Coordinated & prepared fields for over 100 Little League teams in the fall and spring
- Hosted Little League District Tournament in July 2009
- Held annual Pitch, Hit & Run competition in April 2010

Herman C. Michael Park

- Hosted annual Briarwood All-Night Softball tournament
- New playground funded through SPLOST was installed & opened for play in June 2010
- Other events included May Day Madness III disc golf tournament and the Punt, Pass & Kick competition in September



Heritage Park

- Tenant House was relocated to the History Village area of the park through funding from private citizens
- Volunteer labor added four miles of horse trails to the existing 10 miles of mountain bike trails on the property
- Held 5th Annual Touch a Truck event on March 20, 2010 with over 500 in attendance
- Hosted Oconee River Club AKC Dog Show, trail run races, Animal Control Family Fun Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Cole Brothers Circus, FFA Horse Show, FFA Cattleman's Show & UGA Equestrian Team



Volunteers

- Volunteers contributed over 15,000 hours to our parks & programs, the equivalent of over \$275,000

Departmental Awards

- 2009 Roy A. Hammond Leadership Award - John Gentry
- 2009 District 7 Programmer of the Year - Whitney Byce
- 2009 State Publication Award - OCPRD Quarterly Program Guide

SENIOR CENTER



- The Oconee Co. Senior Center is in its first full year of operation. Since moving to the new facility at the Veterans Park in November of 2008, we participation and services have grown. There are **50-80** seniors utilizing the building daily. Seniors seem very impressed with the building and all the activities taking place.
- The patio pergola and gardens opened this year. This has been such a wonderful addition to a spectacular facility. With the help of volunteer groups, roses, annuals, perennials, shrubbery, and trees have been added. Patio furniture, benches, and bird feeders, make this outdoor “room” an ideal attraction for picnics, ice cream socials and many outdoor events.
- Center staff are transporting seniors daily to center events, trips & appointments.
- The lunch program provides quality meals to Oconee seniors. The lunch meal is catered in, but we have the ability with a commercial kitchen to enhance and add to the catered noon meal. A morning snack and sometimes breakfast in also offered.
- Some of the ongoing activities include line dance and ballroom classes, exercise classes, yoga, reading club, Tai Chi, bridge games, pinochle, Mahjong, dominoes, craft classes, knitting class, karaoke , pool, shuffleboard, health fairs, visits by professionals talking about senior issues, nutrition programs, computer class, AARP Driver Safety classes, and bingo.
- Some of the center’s special events for the year have been “Dance Mania”, Star Spangled Senior Celebration, breakfast by Waffle House, Old Fashioned Carnival, bus trip to Niagara Falls, New Year’s Party and Dance, American Senior Idol, Valentine Gala, Arbor Terrace Game Day, Mardi Gras party, St. Patrick’s Day Party, Easter Party and Hat Parade, and Johnny “Crash” Show. Many of these special event parties are held annually. The sixth annual formal Valentine Gala has become a tradition that many Oconee and surrounding county seniors have come to look forward to. Recently a popular summer activity was “Family Day” when senior members invited kids, grandkids, family members, and friends. Hawaiian Food, hula contests, and beach music were highlights of the day.
- **The goal of the Oconee County Senior Center is to provide the best services we can and provide quality programs for our members so that their senior years are a joy and that they have an outlet in life to look forward to. The center strives to be the place that senior adults want to come to and can be active in body and spirit.**

OCONEE COUNTY LIBRARIES

There are two Libraries in Oconee County: the Oconee County Library and Bogart Public Library

The libraries in Oconee County are funded by four local agencies: the Oconee County Board of Commissioners, the Oconee County School District, the City of Watkinsville, and the City of Bogart.

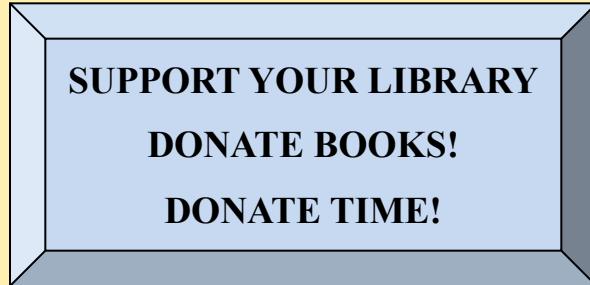
During the past year, programs of note included a Writer's Workshop with Brian Jay Corrigan in January, 2010 and a visit with author William Rawlings, Jr. in April. Both were sponsored by the Oconee County Library Friends and grants from the Georgia Council for the Arts Literacy Event Grants of Georgia.

The Library Friends held a successful Used Book Sale in September, 2009 which netted \$12,000 in sales. A donation of \$9,000 was also given to the Materials Budget of Oconee County Library.

The Friends of the Bogart Library opened a Book Store next to City Hall in Bogart in May, 2010. At this store, used books were sold for donations. All proceeds help with programs and materials at Bogart Public Library.

Both Friends organizations sponsored programs during the Summer Reading Program: Cowboy Bruce; David Ginn, Magician; All Hands Puppets Troupe puppet show; Carol Cain, Storyteller; and several others. Monthly Genealogy and Computer classes also train adults in popular areas of interest.

- **Checkouts:** 198,760 Oconee County Library
51,360 Bogart Public Library
250,120 Total
- **Door Count (Attendance):** 237,160 Oconee County Library
61,443 Bogart Public Library
298,603 Total
- **Number of people attending programs:** 17,906 Total
- **Number of programs offered:** 2,034 Total
- **Library Cards issued:** 1,346 Total in FY10 at both libraries
- **Summer Reading Program 2009:** 1,929 children and teens participated at both libraries



TAX ASSESSOR

In 2009, the number of housing sales decreased significantly in Oconee County, the third consecutive year with significantly fewer houses purchased. Similar to trends seen throughout the nation, Oconee County's overall housing sale values fell compared to sales from previous years. There were considerably more existing houses sold in Oconee County during 2009 than 2008. However, the total number of newly constructed houses that were sold fell dramatically.

The tax assessor's office has a difficult charge; it must determine the fair market value of all property within the county. Under state law, the tax digest must mirror the sales data very closely.

Historical Trends for Improved Residential Sales				Weighted Averages		
New Construction			Existing Construction		New & Existing Construction	
Year	# of Sales	Average \$/ Sale	# of Sales	Average \$/ Sale	# of Sales	Average \$/ Sale
2000	141	\$269,991.00	372	\$189,031.00	513	\$211,283.16
2001	129	\$293,259.00	352	\$189,130.00	481	\$217,056.49
2002	203	\$260,779.00	346	\$209,146.00	549	\$228,237.98
2003	263	\$274,926.00	361	\$208,915.00	624	\$236,736.94
2004	203	\$330,198.00	330	\$229,337.00	533	\$258,068.00
2005	263	\$315,062.00	427	\$255,861.00	690	\$278,426.00
2006	243	\$355,517.00	458	\$266,158.00	701	\$297,134.00
2007	199	\$382,152.00	350	\$255,770.00	549	\$301,581.00
2008	137	\$370,452.00	207	\$269,004.00	344	\$309,406.00
2009	36	\$361,717.00	239	\$265,079.00	275	\$277,729.00

These values were complied from **Fair Market Value** sales only. **2009 sales are through 12/31/2009.** Questionable Fair Market Value sales were not included. New sales include 2007, 2008 and 2009 year built. Custom built homes not sold on the open market are **not** included.

TAX COMMISSIONER

The Tax Commissioner is elected to oversee the administrative functions surrounding tax collection. Each year, this office must establish the tax digest for submission to the Georgia Dept. of Revenue. This is completed so that property tax rates can then be set by the Board of Commissioners, the Board of Education, and each of the municipalities within the county.

Additionally, the tax commissioner's office is responsible for the collection of all taxes within the county. Oconee County typically collects roughly 99 percent of all property taxes levied on real and personal property each year. This is a testament to the diligence of the tax commissioner and her office, as well as the residents of Oconee County.

TAX COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE DATA	
Tag Registrations Issued	34,978
Ad Valorem collected for Vehicles & Mobile Homes for County purposes	\$705,044
Ad Valorem collected for Vehicles & Mobile Homes for School purposes	\$1,718,890
Tax Parcels for tax year 2008	17,575
Property Tax collected for County purposes - Current Year	\$9,840,789
Property Tax collected for County purposes - Prior Years	\$246,027
(Prior years tax consists of tax collected in 2008 for 2007 and prior years.)	
Property Tax collected for School purposes - Current Year	\$23,998,483
Property Tax collected for School Purposes - Prior Years	\$601,416
(Prior years tax consists of tax collected in 2008 for 2007 and prior years.)	

FLEET MAINTENANCE

- 663 Services (includes oil change and inspection of the following: brakes, fluids, coolant, battery, tires/PSI, wipers, lights, suspension, hoses, glass, mirrors, universal joints, engine belts, and air filters)
- 56 brake jobs
- 174 tire jobs
- 47 air conditioning/heat jobs
- 149 miscellaneous jobs
- 135 rollback/service calls

UTILITIES

One of the first projects undertaken by the Oconee County Utility Department (OCUD) was the installation of a new filter on the Hillcrest Well. This allowed OCUD to withdraw and adequately treat the water to eliminate air and minerals that previously rendered the well unusable.

Additionally, the department initiated an upgrade to the Lampkin Branch main trunk line and lift station that supplied the Calls Creek Wastewater Treatment plant. The county will realize a savings of approximately \$300,000 due to a grant that the utility department received.

Also during FY2010, Oconee County applied for and received partial grant funding to construct a new wastewater collection line in northern Oconee County that will serve Zoom Bait and St. Mary's Highland Hills facilities. This project is expected to be completed during FY 11.

To help the administrative functions of the department, a meter change-out program was initiated to allow for easier, more precise meter readings for OCUD's customers. The department also installed new billing software that will enable OCUD to maintain much more in-depth information on customers and the history of their water or sewer service.

During Fiscal Year 2010, the total water demand for Oconee County was 933 million gallons. Of this total, 893.1 million gallons (97%) were purchased from the Bear Creek Reservoir. An additional 36.0 million gallons (2%) came from Oconee County wells and 3.9 million gallons (1%) came from Barrow County. The average daily demand for 2009-2010 was 2.56 MGD, up significantly from the average of 1.98 MGD during the prior year.

	As of June 30, 2009	As of June 30, 2010
Water Customers	8,538	8,618
Sewer Customers	1,422	1,436

At the end of 2010, the Oconee County Utility Department was serving 8,618 water and 1,436 wastewater customers.

The total rainfall amounts in Oconee County for the year 2009-2010 was 68.20 inches. During the same reporting period of the previous year we received only 39.55 inches. The drought that northeast Georgia experienced was officially determined to have ended. However, rainfall amounts during the early summer were quite a bit lower than last year's total. OCUD will continue to monitor rainfall amounts and reservoir levels to ensure that Oconee County water customers have ample water to consume.

Month	09/10 Inches	08/09 Inches
July	1.8	4.7
August	3.9	1.6
September	13.5	1.8
October	10.6	5.4
November	6.7	3.5
December	5.5	4.2
January	6.4	2.6
February	6.0	3.9
March	2.2	12.9
April	1.6	4.4
May	5.1	2.9
June	4.9	1.7

PUBLIC WORKS

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION UPGRADES AND IMPROVEMENTS

During FY 2010, the public works department oversaw the completion of the **Daniells Bridge Road intersection and road improvement project**. This project was completed at a cost of approximately \$250,000.

Public Works also worked with the contractors completing work on the **Jennings Mill Parkway project**. When completed, the new road will be renamed Oconee Connector. To date, construction has begun, Jennings Mill Road has been rerouted to terminate at Virgil Langford Road, initial grading has occurred for the new roads, and bridge construction is currently underway. The estimated total cost of this project is approximately \$14 million, with the Georgia DOT funding the construction and right-of-way acquisition. This road network is expected to be opened during 2011.

Design work has been completed for the **Mars Hill Road widening project**. Oconee County has received DOT approval to begin the right-of-way acquisition for Phase I of the project. Oconee County is anticipating Georgia DOT to authorize the right-of-way acquisition during the second half of 2010.



Georgia DOT is fully funding right-of-way acquisition and construction costs for the Mars Hill Road widening project. The right-of-way is expected to cost approximately \$8.5 million and take approximately two years to obtain. Overall construction costs for the widening project are anticipated to be \$23 million and take roughly two years from the start of construction. The project will be completed in three phases going from SR 316 to Butlers Crossing; from Butlers Crossing to the Hwy. 441 Bypass; and from the Hwy. 441 Bypass to Main Street in downtown Watkinsville.

Design work and right-of-way acquisition have also been completed for the **Butlers Crossing sidewalk project**. This project is ready for construction and will cost an estimated \$120,000. This project will be funded from SPLOST revenues.

In addition to working with these major construction projects, Oconee County Public Works also resurfaced 8.1 miles of county roads using \$743,000 from SPLOST revenues, completed 906 work orders, responded to 169 citizen inquiries, coordinated with the Oconee County Utility Department for Water and Sewer Plan Review, and provided support to the Development Review Committee & Planning Commission.

TOURISM

As a product of the Hotel-Motel Tax recently implemented by Oconee County, the Tourism Department, with the assistance of the Cultural Affairs & Tourism Citizen Advisory Committee, proposed to restore the Tourism Assistant position. This position, now restored, is in charge of keeping the Tourism Department up-to-date through various social media outlets.

A new marketing brochure has been developed, printed, and distributed to welcome/visitor information centers across the state.



Website:

In FY 10, the Tourism Department got approval to redesign the www.visitooconee.com website. The revision will be initiated and completed during the fall of 2010 in efforts to keep visitors and Oconee Countians up-to-date with upcoming events, as well as to show people the opportunities that they can experience here in Oconee County.

Social Media:

Oconee County Tourism is currently increasing activity to Oconee County through various online social media outlets. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blog, Flickr) are online sources that can be used as free marketing tools to encourage people to visit Oconee County.

Geocaching:

Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure-seekers equipped with GPS devices. The Oconee County Tourism Department has placed six caches around the County and invite locals and travelers to find the caches. So log-on and visit www.geocaching.com to find Oconee County's hidden treasures. Good hunting!



ANIMAL CONTROL

Oconee County's animal control department oversees a shelter that takes in almost 1,400 animals per year. The facility is dependent upon numerous volunteers to ensure the care of the animals housed there. During FY 2009, volunteers donated their time, efforts and energies at the shelter over 700 times! These volunteers help ensure that the staff are able to operate the shelter at extremely high levels and provide the animals with love and support.



The mission of the Animal Control Department is to assist, protect and educate the public on animal care, welfare issues, and to enforce the county's animal control ordinance. Activity within the Animal Control Department during the fiscal year is shown below.

Mo.	Visits	# of Calls	# of Complaints	# Volunteers	# Adopted	Trans. to Licensed Agencies	# of Returns to owner	# of Intakes
July	159	5,217	175	43	23	16	10	160
Aug	147	4,873	155	41	16	7	11	100
Sept	135	5,376	205	76	9	23	7	167
Oct	124	5,376	194	54	14	12	21	140
Nov	100	4,987	112	61	12	12	9	94
Dec	171	4,793	137	60	21	23	14	106
Jan	82	4,823	133	48	11	22	11	58
Feb	118	4,679	136	79	13	14	14	86
Mar	125	5,074	163	57	17	11	13	95
Apr	178	5,346	150	90	10	23	18	86
May	119	4,973	141	40	9	19	6	116
Jun	136	5,289	158	57	14	34	21	180
Total	1,594	60,709	1,859	706	169	216	155	1,388



COMMUNITY PLANNING

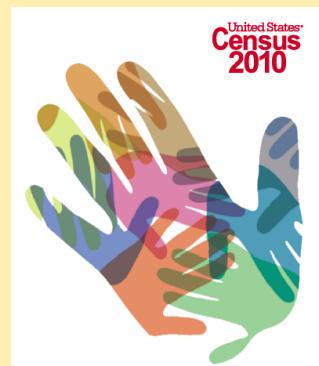
The Oconee County Planning staff continues to provide routine services, in accordance with the Service Delivery Strategy agreement, for the municipalities of Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville. Two of the more substantial duties for the municipalities were a Conditional Use Permit for a cell tower in North High Shoals and an amendment to the City of Bogart's Zoning Regulations. During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, Planning Department staff responded to **4,800** telephone calls, **136** code driven process of standard reviews, and assisted **585** customers in the office to discuss land uses and zoning of properties and development requirements.

Staff continued to serve on the Madison Athens Clarke Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) Technical Coordinating Committee. One re-certification was granted to staff by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Beginning with the initial review of existing flood data in May 2007, Planning staff worked with the Office of the State Flood Plain Manager and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to coordinate the local review of the newly created Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) and to adopt the state and federal standards for flood hazard prevention. The 26 month process culminated with adoption of the DFIRMs and amendments to local to the Unified Development Code by the Board of Commissioners in September 2009.

Staff completed two amendment rounds of the Unified Development Code (UDC) to the Planning Commission and the BOC for adoption September 2009 and June 2010. The later of the two amendment rounds included state mandated revisions to the Erosion, Sediment and Pollution Control code components. Included in the second round of code amendments was a re-adoption of the *“Official Zoning Maps”*. The Geographical Information System (GIS) division staff aided Planning Department in 5 month process of zoning maps updating and re-adoption.

- **One re-certification was granted to staff by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission.**
- **In 2009 staff served as “Champions” for the 2010 Census by serving as lead and contact point for the local Complete Count Committee (CCC).**
- **Oconee County had a return rate of 80 %, while the state average return rate was 70%, and the national return was 72%. Oconee’s return rate was third highest in the state of Georgia.**
- **Presentations were given to undergraduate students in the School of Environment and Design’s City Planning Classes.**



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

On August 14, 2009, Oconee County Department of Family and Children Services, along with the remainder of Region V DFCS, was awarded the Thunder Stick Award which recognizes leadership and good practice in Region V for Brave New Adventures for Permanency, helping find permanent homes for children.

Also, the Statewide Each One Recruit One/Each One Retain One (EORO2) Foster Care and Adoption Recruitment and Retention Plan encourages all DHR staff in the agency to recruit and retain foster and adoptive families. The Region V Resource Development Team from Oconee, Greene, Morgan and Jasper counties provided interested staff with their very own stuffed bear to temporarily “adopt.” These bears represented a specific child from Region V who is either in need of an adoptive home or is placed outside of the region who DFCS would like to move back to their community. We asked staff to keep these bears at their desk as a reminder of a child that needs a home in hopes of inspiring staff to recruit at least one foster or adoptive family for their “adopted” child/bear this year.

On May 13, 2010, Chairman Melvin Davis signed a proclamation for Foster & Adoptive Parents Appreciation Day. This proclamation honored those in our communities who serve as the primary source of love, identity, self-esteem and support for our children who need adults who will open their homes and hearts to the children giving them a safe, secure and stable home.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

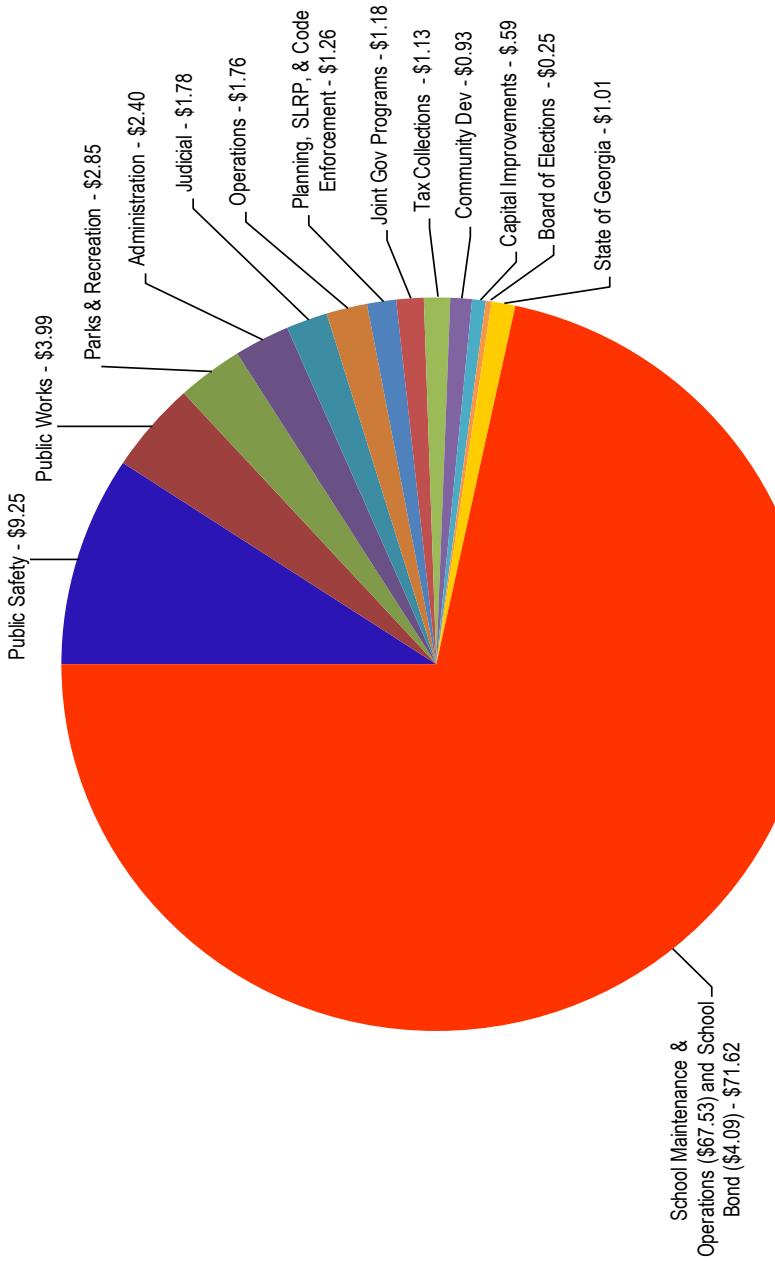
Year	Type of Inspection	Total Inspections
FY 2006	Residential	3,007
	Commercial	597
FY 2007	Residential	2,011
	Commercial	387
FY 2008	Residential	1,065
	Commercial	354
FY 2009	Residential	1,064
	Commercial	398

Permits	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Single Family Dwelling	413	202	66	68
Mobile Home	18	4	2	8
Commercial	92	79	50	38
Miscellaneous	391	324	249	221

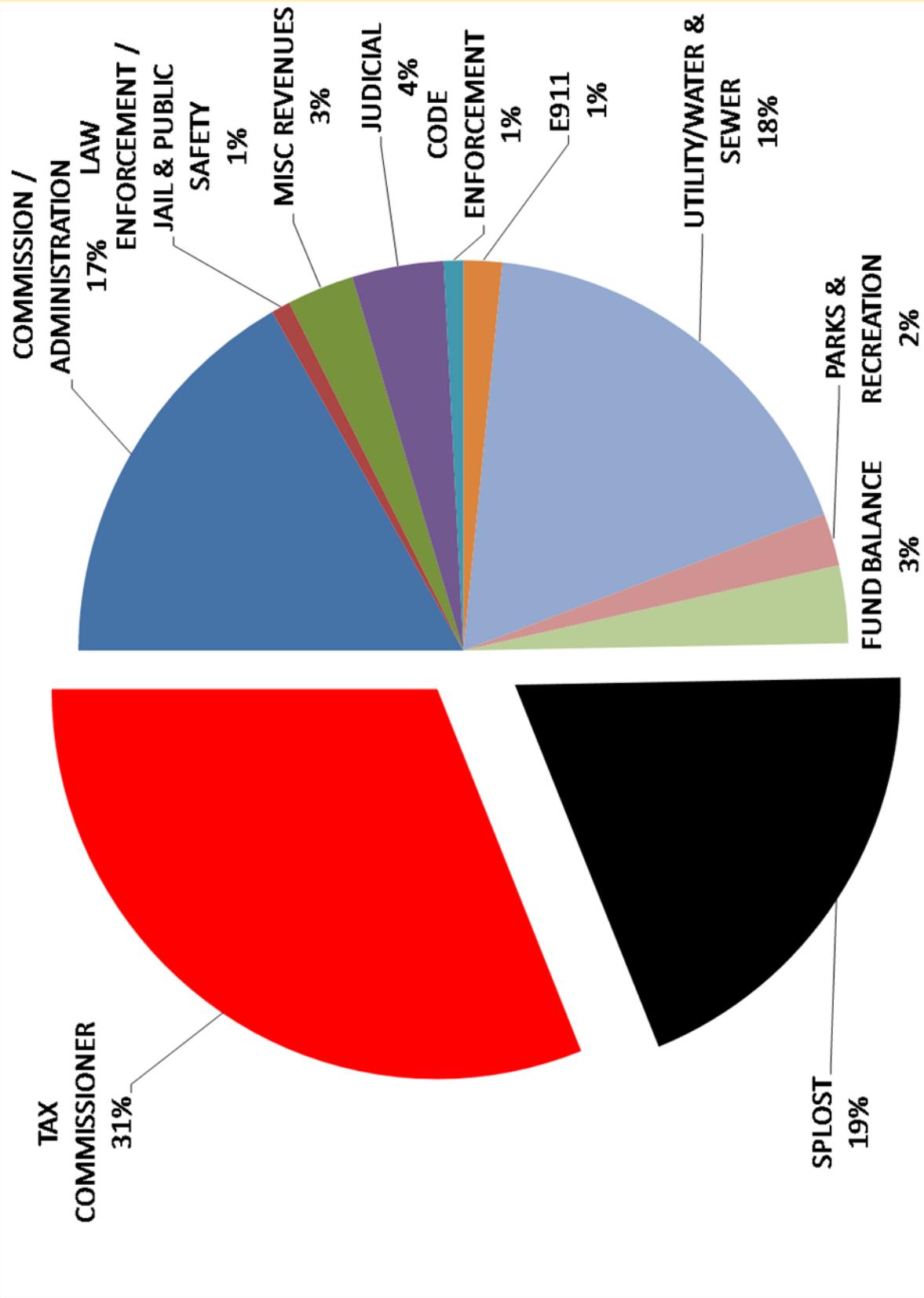
YOUR \$2,000 TAX BILL....

27.4% BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (\$547) – 6.68 mils (Unincorporated)
71.6% BOARD OF EDUCATION (\$1,433) – 17.50
1.0% STATE OF GEORGIA (\$20) – .25

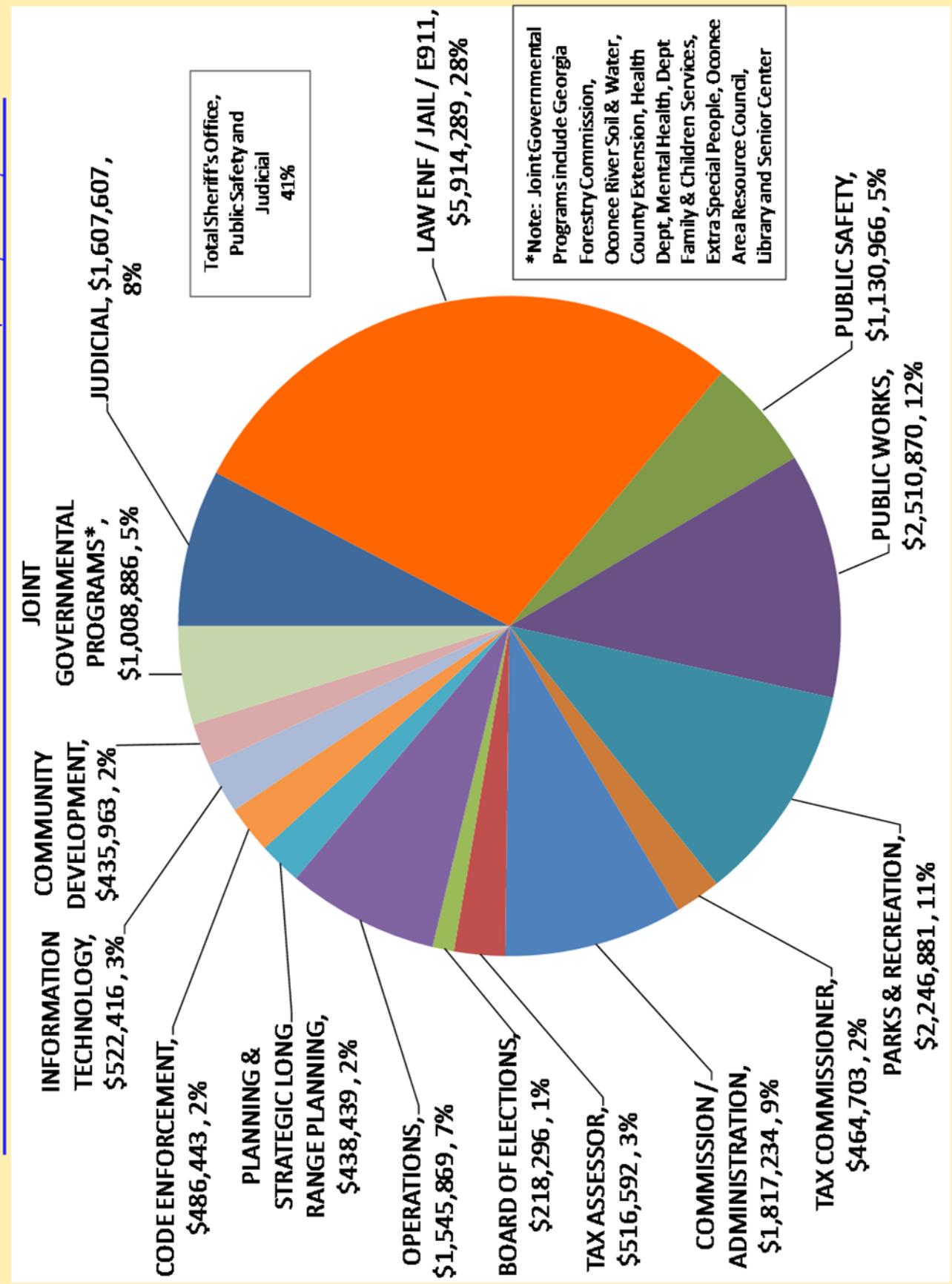
In FY09 For Every \$100 in Property Taxes, You Paid.....



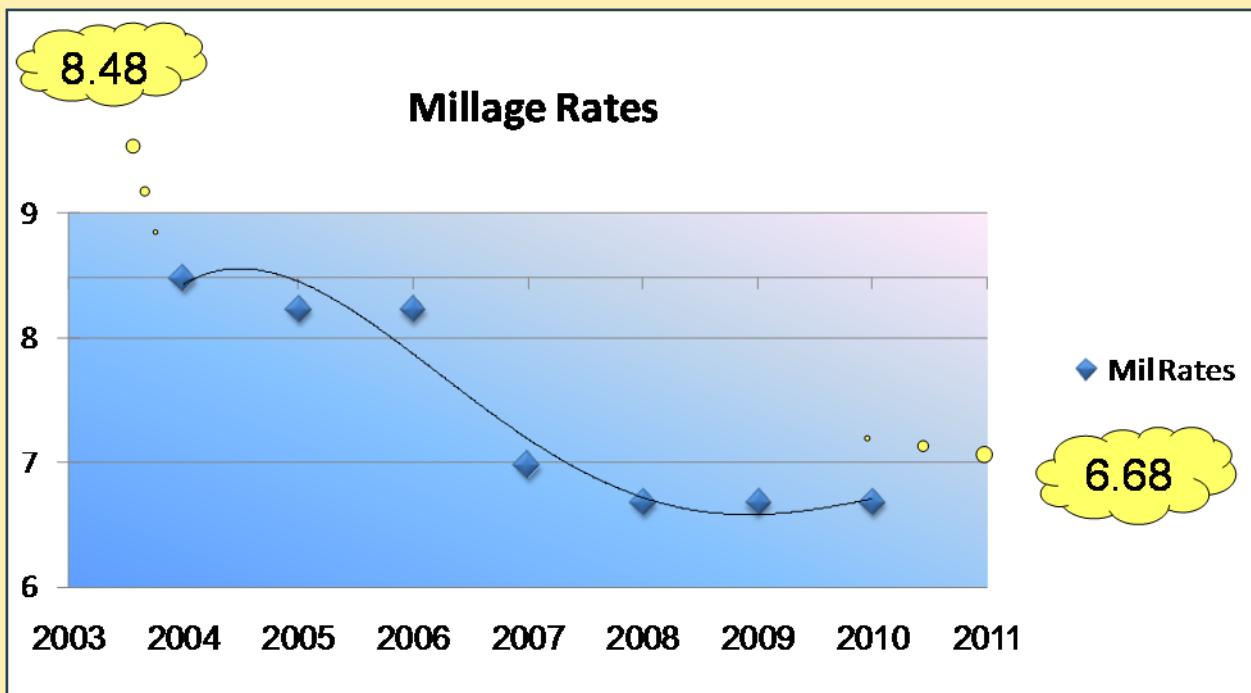
FY11 ALL REVENUES - \$36,080,659



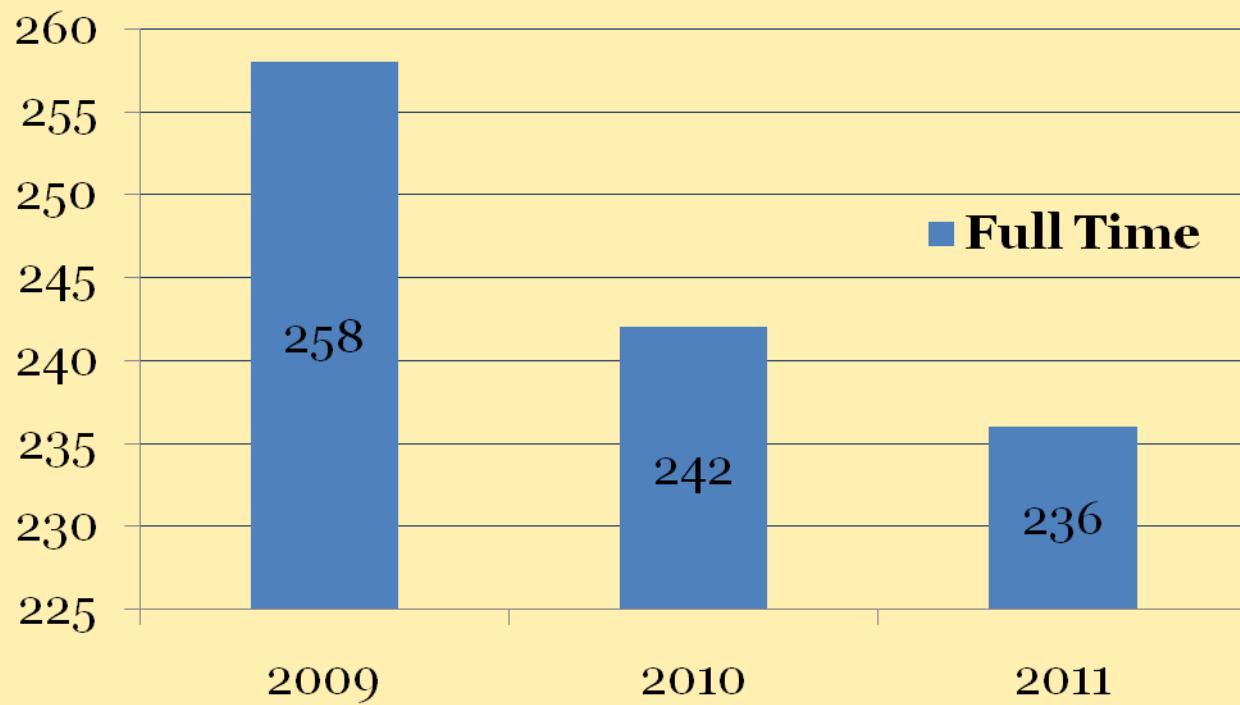
FY11 GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES - \$20,865,454



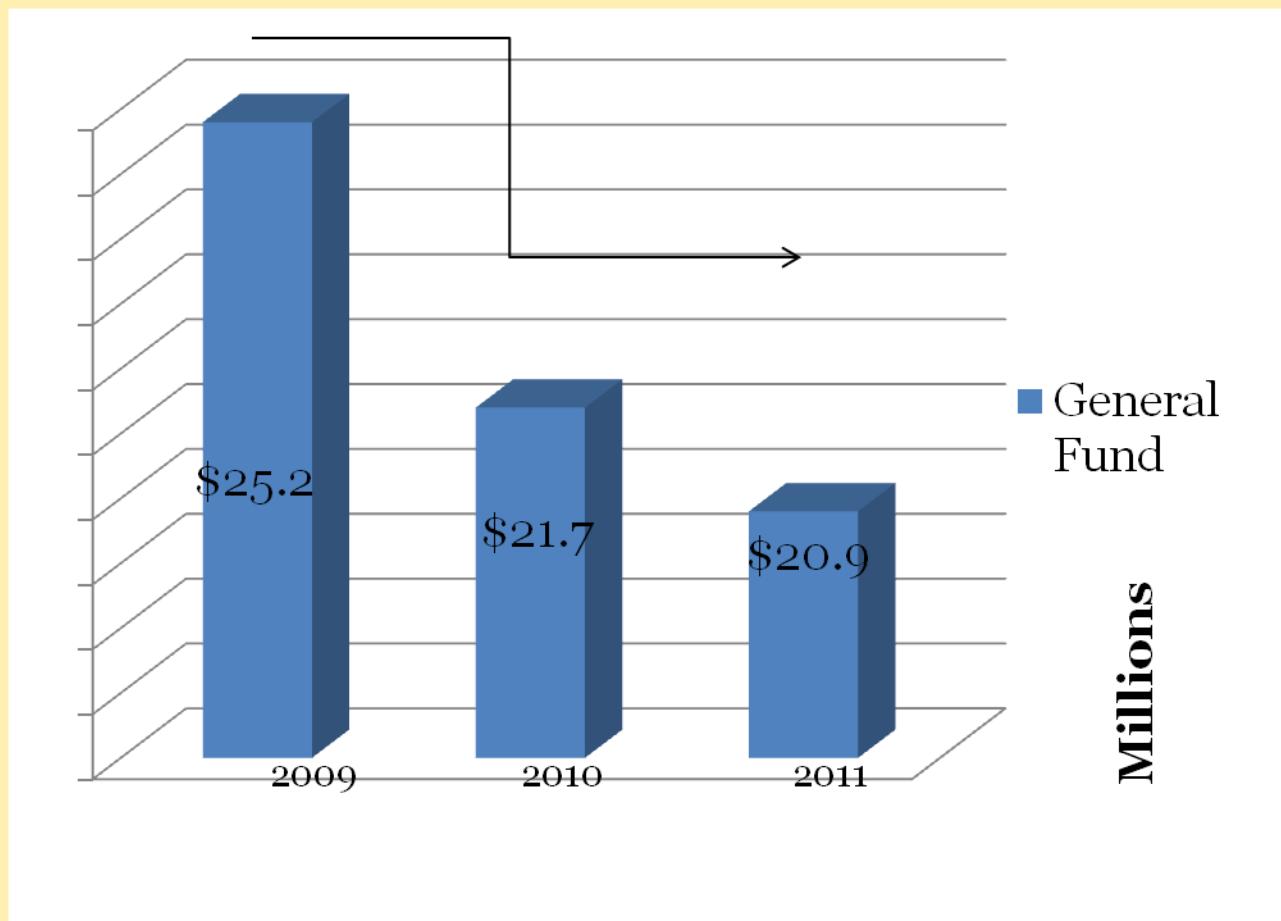
HISTORICAL OCONEE COUNTY MILLAGE RATES



FULL-TIME OCONEE COUNTY EMPLOYEES



GENERAL FUND AMOUNTS



THE YEAR IN PHOTOS





Board of Commissioners

Melvin Davis, Chairman

Jim Luke, Post 1

John Daniell, Post 2

Margaret Hale, Post 3

Chuck Horton, Post 4

Constitutional Officers

David Anglin, Probate Judge

Scott Berry, Sheriff

Harriette Browning, Tax Commissioner

Angela Watson, Clerk of Courts

Elected Officials

Lawton Stephens, Chief Judge

Steve Jones, Judge

David Sweat, Judge

Ken Mauldin, District Attorney

Ed Carson, Coroner

*Year in Review
Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2010*