

## So... what is "Millage?"

"Millage" is defined as the amount of tax paid per dollar of the assessed property value. It is called the mill rate because the number is expressed in mills -- one mill is 1/10th of a cent (\$.001). Chapter 200 of the Florida Statutes establishes the laws and procedures that all public agencies must follow in order to reach a final millage rate. These laws are also referred to as the Truth in Millage requirements or "TRIM" requirements.

Pursuant to the mandated TRIM process, Palmetto Bay receives a form from the Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser that certifies the taxable value within Palmetto Bay. Within 35 days of receiving this information, Palmetto Bay must establish a maximum millage rate, schedule hearing dates and return the form to the County. This maximum millage is a working rate, not the final established rate.

On Monday, July 13, the Council adopted a tentative maximum rate of 2.447. This is **not** the final rate. This is the maximum rate that the Village's administration had asked Council to consider in order to give staff the latitude to properly address current levels of service and continued day-to-day operations. The final rate could be lower, but it **cannot** be higher, as per Monday's Council vote. Again, this is just a tentative working rate – and a good one at that.

That's because Palmetto Bay is in a unique – and fortuitous – position this year, unlike most municipalities County-wide that have had to consider raising millage rates to make ends meet. Prudent fiscal management and the removal of the Mitigation fees (giving us access to an additional \$1.7 million annually) have allowed us to set a rate of \$2.447 for 2009-10. That's slightly lower than the current rate for the 2008-09 budget year (2.4476).

Still, Village Manager Ron Williams is seriously evaluating service levels, will reduce expenditures where appropriate, and will come back with a final millage rate for the Village Council's approval, following **two** public hearings. These hearings take place September 14 and 23 at 7 p.m. at the Deering Estate Visitor Center Auditorium.