

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE of the Board of County Commissioners of Thurston County, Washington, relating to regular property taxes; providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the County at an election to be held on August 3, 2021, of a proposition authorizing the County to levy regular property taxes for Thurston County Medic One emergency medical care and services in excess of the limitations of Ch. 84.55 RCW, exempting qualified seniors, disabled and veterans pursuant to RCW 84.36.381, and setting forth the text of the ballot proposition.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Thurston County, Washington (the “Board”) has determined that it is in the interest of the County to raise additional funds for Thurston County Medic One emergency medical services essential to the public health, life and property of its residents; and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.55.050(2) provides for the levy of regular property taxes in an amount exceeding the limitations specified in chapter 84.55 RCW, if such increased levy is authorized by a ballot proposition approved by a majority of the voters at a primary or general election held within the taxing district (a “levy lid lift”); and

WHEREAS, in 199__, the County’s voters approved a permanent emergency medical care and services levy in the amount of up to \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, but because of increased assessed values and limits on raising levy rates the County currently is collecting \$0.289 per \$1,000; and

WHEREAS, taxpayers who qualify for a senior citizen, disabled or veteran exemptions pursuant to RCW 84.36.381 may be exempt from the increased levy pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4)(e) if expressly stated in the ballot proposition; and

[WHEREAS, the Board held a public hearing to consider comments on this ordinance on _____, 2021; and]

WHEREAS, the County has determined that it is in the best interest of the County and its residents to submit a levy lid lift proposition under RCW 84.55.050(2) to the voters for their approval or rejection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THURSTON COUNTY, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Calling of Election. The Board finds that it is in the best interests of the County to submit to the qualified voters of the County, at an election to be held on August 3, 2021, a proposition authorizing the County to increase its regular property tax levy for Thurston County Medic One emergency medical care and services beginning for collection in 2022, by an amount greater than otherwise permitted under chapter 84.55 RCW for the purposes described in Section 2 and that the exemption for seniors, disabled and veterans, authorized by RCW 84.36.381, will apply to the levy of any additional regular property taxes authorized by voters. If this proposition is approved, the

Board will be authorized to adopt, in accordance with its regular budget process, an increased regular property tax as described in Section 2.

Section 2. Purpose and Description of Levy Lid Lift Proposition. For the purposes identified below, the Board seeks voter approval under RCW 84.55.050(2) for a levy lid lift, as follows:

(a) Purpose. The amounts collected pursuant to the increase authorized in Section 1 shall be used solely for emergency medical care and services, including related personnel costs, training for such personnel, and related equipment, supplies, vehicles and structures needed for the provision of emergency medical care or emergency medical services.

(b) Levy Lid Lift. The proposition authorizes a maximum total levy rate for collection in 2022 under RCW 84.52.069 and chapter 84.55 RCW of not to exceed \$0.35 per \$1,000 of assessed value. This represents an incremental increase in the regular property tax rate for emergency medical care and services of approximately \$0.06 per \$1,000 of assessed value, over the current year's (2021) levy rate. The County's maximum allocable regular tax levy for emergency medical care and services in each of the following five years (2023 through 2027) shall be computed annually and by applying a limit factor as follows:

Year	Levy Rate
2023	\$0.38 per thousand
2024	\$0.41 per thousand
2025	\$0.44 per thousand
2026	\$0.47 per thousand
2027	\$0.50 per thousand

After the measure expires, the dollar amount of the maximum allowable levy under chapter 84.55 RCW levied for collection in 2027 shall be used for the purpose of computing the limitations on subsequent levies under chapter 84.55 RCW and RCW 84.52.069.

Section 3. Ballot Proposition. The Auditor of Thurston County, Washington (the "Auditor"), as ex officio supervisor of elections, is hereby requested to call and conduct a special election in the County in conjunction with the primary election, in the manner provided by law, to be held on August 3, 2021, for the purpose of submitting to the voters of the County, a proposition in substantially the following form:

THURSTON COUNTY
MEDIC ONE EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE AND SERVICES
PROPOSITION NO. __

The Board of County Commissioners of Thurston County adopted Ordinance No. _____ concerning property taxes for Medic One emergency medical care and services. This proposition would increase the 2022 regular property tax levy for emergency medical care and services to \$0.35/\$1,000 of assessed value (an increase of approximately \$0.06); set the limit factor for calculating levy rates per \$1,000 of assessed value at an increase of \$0.03 per \$1,000 of assessed value in each of the years 2023 through 2027; and provide that the levy for 2027 would be used to compute limits on levies after 2027 under chapter 84.55 RCW.

Should this proposition be: Approved
 Rejected

Section 4. Notices Relating to Ballot Proposition. For purposes of receiving notice of the exact language of the ballot proposition required by RCW 29A.36.080, the Board hereby designates (1) the County Manager; and (2) Thurston County Special Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Nancy Neraas of Foster Garvey P.C., ((206) 447-4400, Nancy.neraas@foster.com), as the individuals to whom such notice should be provided. The County Manager and Special Deputy Prosecuting Attorney are authorized to make such minor adjustments to the wording of such proposition, as may be recommended, by the Thurston County Auditor's Office, as long as the intent of the proposition remains clear and consistent with the intent of this Ordinance, as approved by the Board.

Section 5. Authorization of Local Voters' Pamphlet. To the extent a local voters' pamphlet and/or online voters' guide (the "Pamphlet") will be produced for the August 3, 2021 special election, the preparation and distribution of information on the ballot title for inclusion in the Pamphlet is hereby authorized; provided that, the County reserves the right not to participate in the preparation and distribution of the Pamphlet if such participation would create undue financial hardship for the County or would otherwise not be in the best interests of the County. The preparation of the explanatory statement, the appointment of pro/con committees and the preparation of statements in favor and in opposition to the ballot title shall be in accordance with chapter 29A.32 RCW and the rules and guidelines of the Thurston County Local Voters' Pamphlet Administrative Rules for Jurisdictions, as applicable.

In accordance with RCW 29A.32.280, the Board shall, by May 14, 2021, formally appoint a committee to prepare arguments advocating voters' approval of the measure and shall formally appoint a committee to prepare arguments advocating voters' rejection of the measure. The Board shall, whenever possible, appoint persons known to favor the measure to serve on the committee advocating approval and shall, appoint persons known to oppose the measure to serve on the committee advocating rejection. Each committee shall have not more than three members. If the Board fails to make such appointments by May 14, 2021, the County Auditor shall, whenever possible, make the appointments.

Section 6. Authorization to Deliver Ordinance and Perform Other Necessary Duties. The County Manager is authorized and directed, no later than May 14, 2021, to certify a copy of this Ordinance and any amendments setting the dollar rate to the Auditor and to perform such other duties as are necessary or required by law to the end that the Proposition described herein should appear on the ballot at the election identified in Section 1 of this Ordinance.

Section 7. Election Notice. The Thurston County Auditor's Office shall publish and post notices calling the special election, for August 3, 2021 in the manner provided by law.

Section 8. Severability. The recitals stated above (i.e., the "Whereas" clauses) constitute specific findings by the Board in support of passage of this Ordinance. If any provision of this Ordinance is declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, then such provision shall be null and void and shall be separable from the remaining provisions of this Ordinance and shall in no way affect the validity of the other provisions of this Ordinance or of any other Ordinance or resolution, or of the levy or collection of the taxes authorized herein.

Section 9. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 2021.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Thurston County, Washington

Amy Davis
Clerk of the Board

Tye Menser, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Gary Edwards, Vice Chair

JON TUNHEIM
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

By: _____
Nancy Neraas, Bond Counsel
Special Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Carolina Mejia, Commissioner

DRAFT