



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE August 10, 2009

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Public hearings/proposed tax rate set

During a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, August 10, Ellis County Commissioners voted to set the date, time and location of three public hearings required by statute.

On the proposed budget for fiscal year 2009/2010, pursuant to Texas Local Government Code §111.007, the hearing will occur as follows:

**August 24, 2009, 6:00 p.m.**  
Ellis County Commissioners' Courtroom  
101 West Main Street  
Waxahachie, Texas, 75165

The proposed budget will be filed with the County Clerk's Office at 117 W. Franklin in Waxahachie no later than August 21. Once filed, it will also be posted on the county website at [www.co.ellis.tx.us](http://www.co.ellis.tx.us).

Also as part of the ongoing budget process, a record vote was taken on the proposed tax rate during Monday's meeting. All members of the Court voted in favor of capping the FY 2009/2010 tax rate at \$0.393599 per \$100 of assessed valuation.

"This is the same tax rate we have currently," said Special Projects Director Holly Davis.

Two hearings are scheduled to discuss the proposed tax rate for Budget FY 2009-2010, pursuant to Texas Tax Code §26.06, as follows:

**August 24, 2009 at 6 p.m.**  
Ellis County Commissioners' Courtroom (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
101 West Main Street  
Waxahachie, Texas, 75165

and

**September 8, 2009 at 8:15 a.m.**  
378<sup>th</sup> District Courtroom (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)  
101 West Main Street  
Waxahachie, Texas, 75165

According to Davis, the second hearing on the proposed tax rate must always be in a special meeting, because it must be held within three to seven days prior to the final vote establishing the tax rate, and that vote must occur during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Court.

The vote on the tax rate is expected to take place during the September 14 meeting, which will be at 10 a.m. in the second floor courtroom of the Historic Courthouse in downtown Waxahachie. At that time, the Court could vote for a lower rate, but cannot approve a higher rate.

Monday's meeting also saw the Court approving implementation of flexible spending accounts for medical expenses and child care expenses as allowed by law, utilizing an existing benefit provider, AFLAC, to administer the plan.

"This will allow our employees to set aside pre-tax dollars for their predictable medical and child care expenses," said Human Services Director Diana Buckley. "The County will reduce its FICA liability at the same time, which will offset the costs very quickly."

"I had a flex account for years and it was very beneficial," said Commissioner Bill Dodson, pct. 2. "I move to accept."

AFLAC Representative Chris Northrup said his estimates indicated the County would actually realize a savings by implementing the program, which will be rolled out to employees during the upcoming open enrollment period, which begins on August 31.

In other business, Commissioners:

- Heard a presentation from Alex Smith of Waxahachie, who serves as the Executive Director of the North Texas Behavioral Health Authority;
- Voted to allow retiree medical insurance premiums to remain unchanged for the 2009/2010 plan year;
- Adopted a resolution encouraging our legislators to take the time to consider proposed federal health care legislation very carefully, to avoid rushing into a program that will hurt the citizens of this community and this nation, and to seek, instead, to design real and lasting solutions to the problem of access to health care;
- Accepted donation of 0.2266 tenths of an acre for the bridge improvement project on Franks Road through the federal bridge replacement project;
- Accepted a grant award from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program, CFDA#16.804 for \$76,950;
- Approved the polling locations for the November 3, 2009 election;
- Approved the early voting schedule for the November 3, 2009 election;
- Approved the lease of one handicap voting machine (Auto Mark) to the City of Ovilla;
- Approved a reimbursement contract between Ellis County and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for Title IV-E Legal Services from September 1, 2009 through August 31, 2010;
- Approved salaries, expenses and allowances of elected officials for Budget FY 2009/2010, pursuant to Texas Local Government Code §152.013;
- Selected Bauhaus IG as the successful low bidder to provide and install the furniture for the Ellis County Bond Program, utilizing some existing furniture, some refurbished furniture and some new furniture, at a contract amount not to exceed \$1.2 million as allowed by the bond budget;
- Declared scrap metal in Precinct 4 as salvage and authorized disposal after no bids were received for surplus;

- Authorized purchase of a fully outfitted 2006 Dodge Charger at an approximate cost of \$32,600 for the Sheriff's Office, supplied by John Wright and Associates, and paid for by funds already budgeted for that department;
- Approved a replat for R.D.T. Development and a final plat for Country Creek Farm, both in precinct 3;
- Adjourned into a short executive session to consult with counsel regarding the possible sale or lease of real property, with no action taken following the session.