

Road bond pushes county expenses up

Written by Deb Egenberger
Wednesday, 08 September 2010 20:05 -

| DAWSON COUNTY BUDGET | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2009-10 | Difference |
| Valuation | \$1,854,020,790 | \$1,871,404,943 | 7.9% |
| Expenses | \$18,680,071 | \$12,143,237 | 20.9% |
| Revenue | \$20,720,071 | \$17,217,275 | 21.0% |
| Tax asking | \$7,340,200 | \$6,178,562 | 18.8% |
| Levy | .40889 | .39025 | 2.3% |

Dawson County's levy inches up slightly.

It looks worse than it is.

Seeing a 20% increase in expenses and close to a 19% hike in tax request for Dawson County for the 2010-11 fiscal year will probably raise the blood pressure of more than a few property owners.

Clerk Karla Zlatkovsky cautions taxpayers to look deeper before picking up the phone to complain.

Included in both the revenue and expense totals for the coming budget is a five-year road allocation bond worth \$2.735 million.

The bond was agreed upon by county commissioners last spring to pay for resurfacing 15 miles of highway from Overton to Sumner on Road 444.

The project is supposed to be complete in October, putting the cost in the next budget year.

Zlatkovsky said the bond was secured with highway allocation funds. The first principal payment of \$535,000 is due in July.

Even after considering the road bond, property owners are still likely to grumble about increased county expenses when the economy is tight, Zlatkovsky said.

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The tax levy will go up just about a penny, she said. That translates to a taxpayer cost of roughly \$100 more for every \$100,000 in value.

“For the average person who owns an average home, that’s \$100 to \$200 more per year on their taxes,” Zlatkovsky said.

It’s the county residents who own a large amount of land, especially agricultural land, who will feel the hit the hardest, she said.

Overall, the county’s valuation increased from \$1.7 billion to \$1.8 billion.

Some Dawson County ag land values jumped as much as 12% or more as the assessor’s office worked to bring values in line with state requirements.

“Some people aren’t going to notice much difference,” Zlatkovsky said. “Others won’t be so lucky.”

The county’s budget hearing will be during the commissioners regular bimonthly meeting on Sept. 15.

| COUNTY LEVY ALLOCATIONS | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Allocation of levy authority in Dawson County's 14 political subdivisions was approved by resolution of the commissioners on Sept. 1. The subdivision levies are all part of the county's overall levy authority. The Railroad Transportation Safety District is an entity added by the county last fiscal year. None of the allocations includes bond funding. | | |
| The subdivisions and budget requests are as follows: | | |
| Political subdivision | 2010-11 | 2009-10 |
| Dawson County Ag Society | \$217,745 | \$211,325 |
| Coast Hospital District | \$214,200 | \$14,200 |
| Gothenburg Hospital District | \$123,000 | \$89,920 |
| No. 3 Fairview Cemetery District | \$6,620 | \$6,430 |
| No. 3 Cottonwood Cemetery District | \$2,125 | \$2,125 |
| No. 4 Platte Valley Cemetery District | \$5,814 | \$5,825 |
| No. 5 Mount Hope Cemetery District | \$3,900 | \$3,800 |
| No. 6 Lumsden Cemetery District | \$7,224 | \$6,980 |
| No. 11 Lexington Fire District | \$69,988 | \$59,944 |
| No. 3 Overton Fire District | \$29,430 | \$20,488 |
| No. 4 Gothenburg Fire District | \$43,109 | \$38,600 |
| No. 17 Coast Fire District | \$28,190 | \$23,995 |
| No. 9 Eddyville Fire District | \$12,340 | \$11,400 |
| Railroad Transportation Safety District | \$180,403 | \$197,225 |
| Total | \$943,198 | \$863,114 |