

Road bond pushes county expenses up

Written by Deb Egenberger

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DAWSON COUNTY BUDGET			
	2010-11	2009-10	Difference
Valuation	\$1,854,020,790	\$1,871,404,943	7.9%
Expenses	\$18,680,571	\$12,143,237	20.9%
Revenue	\$20,720,371	\$17,517,275	21.8%
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	\$36,900
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	\$663,114