

AUGUST 15, 2022

WISE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT MEETING

On this the 15th day of August, A.D., 2022 at 9:00 A.M. came on to be had a Special Meeting of the Commissioners' Court of Wise County, Texas held in the County Court at Law Court Room (3rd) Floor in County Courthouse of said County in the town of Decatur with the following members present and presiding:

J.D. Clark	County Judge
John "Biff" Hayes	Commissioner, Precinct No. 1
Kevin Burns	Commissioner, Precinct No. 2
Danny Lambert	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Gaylord Kennedy	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4

Sherry Lemon, County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of Commissioners' Court when and where the following proceedings were had, to-wit:

All attachments referred to in the minutes of the Wise County Commissioners' Court are designated original or copy and are provided at the time of action by the Court unless otherwise indicated by provider.

County Judge Clark votes aye on all agenda items unless otherwise indicated.

- 1) Clark called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. All court members were present.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Moment of Silence/Invocation
- 4) Community Forum: None
- 5) No action taken at this time by the court regarding changing a stop sign to a yield sign going from CR 2324 to CR 2323 in Precinct No. 1.
- 6) Motion made by Kennedy seconded by Burns and unanimously adopted by the Court to change the speed limit on Old Town Road in Precinct No. 4. (No attachment)
- 7) Clark presented the following for court record:
 - FY2023 Wise County Budget Proposal
 - FY2023 **proposed** budget draft #1
 - Proposed List of Elected Officials for FY2023, for court record. (See attachments)

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Clark reviewed his attached budget proposed with the court stating the following guiding revenue factors:

- Total certified property values are just over \$11.2 billion.
- Taxable new construction values are over \$334,000,000.00.
- Sales tax revenues continue to outperform expectations with a conservative budget projection for FY2023 for \$5.9 million. Clark stated the county has exceeded \$6 million so far this year.
- Property tax rate must be lowered to offset increased values and provide relief for tax payers. Clark stated that new construction values allow the county to meet service needs even as tax rate decreases.

Clark reviewed the guiding expenditure factors on the budget proposal presentation stating:

- Residential growth continues its steady increase in Wise County as evidenced by home sales; subdivision plats; and new 911 addresses.
- Demand on services and infrastructure is at an all-time high as the County grows.
- Job Competition: With a highly competitive job market in the DFW metroplex region the county must work to recruit and retain our skilled professionals.
- Inflation, fuel prices and supply issues continue to impact departments across county governments.

Clark stated the current FY2022 tax rate is \$0.34/\$100 valuation being \$0.295 for General Fund budget and \$0.045 for Road and Bridge Fund.

Clark stated the proposed FY2023 tax rate at \$0.30/\$100 valuation being \$0.255 for General Fund budget and \$0.045 for Road and Bridge Fund.

Clark stated the tax rate proposal would generate \$28.1 million for General Fund (increase of \$2.8 million) and would generate \$4.9 million for Road and Bridge Fund (increase of \$1.1 million).

Clark stated the general fund and road/bridge ratio; historic ratios; and the continuation of movement in the right direction of adding revenue to Road and Bridge Fund as the county grows.

Clark stated the tax rate percentage drop represents an 11.7% drop in the tax rate and a 21% decrease from ten (10) years ago as values have risen.

Clark stated the proposed FY2023 budget will include:

- 5% increase for employees added to payroll to be divided at the discretion of the elected official/department head. Clark stated elected officials are not included in the 5% increase, and while appointed/non-elected department heads cannot give themselves pay

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raises Clark has budgeted pay increases for those persons. Clark stated the total staff pay increase is approximately \$900,000.00.

- Additional 2% pay increase for law enforcement officers; jailers and dispatchers to allow the county to be more competitive and attractive as the county competes for employees against larger urban neighboring counties.
- Health insurance increase of 5.9%. Clark noted the county still provides 100% coverage for employees and contributes \$10,000.00 toward dependent coverage.
- Overtime for Sheriff's Office at rates of \$250,000.00 for enforcement; \$60,000.00 for jailers; and \$70,000.00 for dispatchers. Clark explained the purpose of the use of overtime versus compensatory time.
- Additional Fire Department Funding being \$157,400.00 added to the existing base of \$866,000.00 allocated for the 17 Wise County fire departments. Clark stated the base amount is divided equally among the departments with the \$157,400.00 being divided based on meeting benchmarks such as training, reporting, etc. Clark stated the total fire department funding in the proposed budget is \$1.1 million.
- 2 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) positions in general fund. Clark stated the six Emergency Medical Services (EMS) employees for the New Fairview station is paid of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding with two positions being absorbed into the General fund until all positions are eventually paid from General Fund. Clark stated this proposed budget reflects paying two from General fund with the other four from ARP.
- Equipment Capital Funding for Commissioners and Public Works. Clark stated the proposed budget includes \$758,517.17 in general fund to pay for the tax notes and to be paid from sales tax revenue.
- Additional funding for partner agencies being \$65,000.00 with the breakdown stated. Clark detailed this information by agency.
- Additional funding for public libraries being \$225,000.00, an increase of \$20,000.00.
- Additional funding for Wise County Historical Commission being \$15,000.00 with the breakdown stated.
- No General Fund transfer for Wise County Park which is currently self-sustaining/supporting through its own revenue.
- Administrative Assistant for Sheriff, as stated.

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- Proposed 3% salary increase for elected officials. Clark noted the proposed salary increase of \$5,000.00 each for the four constables as their salary is well below other elected officials and their job duties have increased in the county.
- Shared position with the City of Decatur being a county employee under the Office of Emergency Management handling hazard mitigation and disaster recovery grant writing and administration for both the county and the city. Clark stated the salary of \$50,000.00 with the City of Decatur budgeting \$35,000.00 to go toward that budget. Clark stated the pilot program could be a great model for collaborations with other cities going forward.
- Contingency: budget \$100,000.00 for contingency funds and \$50,000.00 for payroll contingency for any unforeseen circumstances.

Clark presented Precinct Road and Bridge budget funding information based on a 50/50 split (half road mileage and half population), as follows and stated on the attachment:

- Precinct No. 1 - \$1,112,067.00 (current budget \$842,000.00)
- Precinct No. 2 - \$1,313,414.00 (current budget \$1,191,000.00)
- Precinct No. 3 - \$937,116.00 (current budget \$626,000)
- Precinct No. 4 - \$1,036,621.00 (current budget \$761,000)

Clark presented Precinct Road and Bridge budget funding information based on a 75/25 split, as follows and stated on the attachment:

- Precinct No. 1 - \$1,118,202.00 (current budget \$842,000.00)
- Precinct No. 2 - \$1,420,223.00 (current budget \$1,191,000.00)
- Precinct No. 3 - \$855,776.00 (current budget \$626,000)
- Precinct No. 4 - \$1,005,033.00 (current budget \$761,000)

Clark reviewed the four precincts Road and Bridge budget side-by-side showing current FY2022 budget; 50/50 split; 75/25 split; by mileage only; and equally. Clark and County Auditor Ann McCuiston both agreed that the 50/50 split is the better option because all precincts, overall, gain more that way. Clark continued that the 50/50 split doesn't budget for a reserve transfer to make it whole. Clark stated the 75/25 split includes the budget reserve transfer into Precinct No. 3. Clark stated he feels the court would rather budget not planning on a budget reserve transfer and handle those as they come up. McCuiston commented that this is something that is reviewed each year as it should be.

Clark opened the meeting to commissioner discussion regarding Road and Bridge fund if needed. No comment made.

Clark stated that 61% of the General Fund budget is allotted to Public Safety and Court System Spending. Clark reviewed Wise County Sheriff's Office historic funding and employee retention.

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Clark stated the current average homestead value in Wise County is \$205,420.00. At that value and with a proposed \$0.30 county tax rate the county portion of a tax bill on the average homestead will be \$616.26.

Clark presented the following recommended action:

- Agenda Item #7 propose FY2023 budget as presented, using the voted on split for Road and Bridge precinct budgets.
- Agenda Item #8 propose FY2023 Wise County tax rate to be \$0.30 per \$100 valuation; with \$0.255 funding the General Fund and \$0.045 funding the Farm-to-Market/Lateral Road and Bridge Fund.
- Agenda Item #9 propose the FY2023 Weatherford College Wise County Branch Campus Maintenance Tax to be \$0.0375 per \$100 valuation.
- Agenda Item #10 schedule public hearings for the budget and tax rates to be held on Monday, September 12, 2022 beginning at 8:45 AM with adoption to be considered on that same day during regular Commissioners Court meeting at 9:00 AM.
- Agenda Item #11 authorize County Treasurer Katherine Hudson to publish public notice of proposed FY2023 Elected Official salaries.

Clark asked the commissioners for direction on the road/bridge split. Lambert told the court he prefers the 50/50 split (half road mileage/half population). Burns told Lambert that based on the 50/50 split Burns will have half the money per mile available than Lambert will. Burns stated he has twice as many miles compared to Precinct No. 3 with not much difference in traffic. Burns continued that Precinct No.2 residents have to drive more miles to get to town compared to Precinct No. 3. Burns commented that it is a huge difference. Clark stated that road mileage is the hardest part of redistricting (population) because it is not comparing "apples to apples". Burns commented no one wants more miles but do want more money. Clark noted that Precinct No. 2 has more road miles than any other precinct. Clark stated that none of these options are ideal of any precinct. Clark stated he's trying to find a compromise for this situation. Burns stated that based on straight mileage isn't the most accurate. Clark and McCuiston stated that this amount is based on the most recent road mileage provided by the County Engineer.

Kennedy commented about the separate divisions. Hayes stated he's neutral about the impact to his precinct. Hayes commented that it's a difficult division because of the impact to Precincts No. 2 and 3. Burns commented about precinct employees compared to funds budgeted for road maintenance and stated the problem is a management issue. Hayes commented that is a problem for all precincts. Kennedy commented about the two scenarios.

Motion made by Lambert seconded by Kennedy with Hayes and Clark voting aye and Burns voting nay to propose the FY2023 budget with a 50/50 split between road miles and population for the Road and Bridge fund, as presented.

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8) Motion made by Kennedy seconded by Hayes and unanimously adopted by the Court to propose a FY2023 tax rate of \$0.30 per \$100 valuation with \$0.255 funding General Fund budget and \$0.045 funding the Road and Bridge budget, as presented.

9) Motion made by Kennedy seconded by Burns and unanimously adopted by the Court to propose a FY2023 Weatherford College Wise County tax rate of \$0.0375 per \$100 valuation, as presented.

10) Clark proposed setting public hearings for the proposed budget and tax rates to be held on Monday, September 12, 2022 beginning at 8:45 AM with adoption being considered for the same during the 9:00 AM regular meeting.

Clark stated the District and County Clerk public hearings for the record archive fee will be held the same day. Lemon stated the District Clerk does not have to have public hearing any more due to statute. Clark stated the County Clerk public hearing for the record archive fee will be held on Monday, September 12, 2022 at 8:40 AM.

Motion made by Burns seconded by Kennedy and unanimously adopted by the Court to approve the budget planning calendar dates with hearings noted above as stated/recommended by Clark.

11) McCuiston noted the auto allowance listed in the FY2023 List of Elected Official Salaries for the County Judge will be paid the same as the commissioners. County Treasurer Katherine Hudson noted the cell phone stipend for Precinct No. 4. Clark noted the 3% increase except the constables that have a \$5,000.00 each per precinct. McCuiston noted the elected officials that will be donating their cell phone allowance back to the county.

Motion made by Kennedy seconded by Lambert and unanimously adopted by the Court to authorize County Treasurer Katherine Hudson to publish the list of FY2023 proposed list of elected officials salaries, as presented.

12) Clark announced the next meeting as being Monday, August 22, 2022 at 9:00 AM.

Clark adjourned the meeting at 9:50 AM, there being no further business to be had by the court.

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Minutes approved this 22nd day of August, 2022, as printed.

J.D. Clark
J.D. Clark, County Judge, Wise County

John Hayes
John Hayes, Commr. Pct. No. 1

Kevin Burns
Kevin Burns, Commr. Pct. No. 2

Danny Lambert
Danny Lambert, Commr. Pct. No. 3

Gaylord Kennedy
Gaylord Kennedy, Commr. Pct. No. 4

ATTEST:

Sherry Lendon
Sherry Lendon, County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of Commissioners' Court,
Wise County, Texas.



The Wise County Commissioners' Court adopted revised **Rules of Procedures, Conduct & Decorum at Meetings of Wise County Commissioners' Court** on March 25, 2019.