

Summary regarding the Proposed BUDGET and TAX RATE (August 2019)

The Erath County Commissioner’s Court has proposed a .4660 County Tax Rate for the upcoming tax year.

If you received my June Summary, you may recall I included a brief update on the budgeting process, as well as an explanation of the main considerations for proposing the County budget and tax rate for the new year.

The Budget and Tax Rate

Budget hearings with all County Elected Officials and Department Heads have been held to review their budget proposals for the 2019-2020 year. The Erath County tax rate has held steady for several years, as illustrated in the table below. This year we anticipate significant added expenses as we propose a new Budget and Tax Rate.

At this time last year, the Commissioner’s Court approved the 2018-2019 budget. It included a plan to pay off the remaining \$3.9M debt on the jail (from 2010). Later in the year, the Court learned that the jail note could not be paid off early. By then the new Budget was approved and the new Tax Rate had already been reduced (*see table below*), and the debt service rate of about two cents was not collected. We drew from other sources earlier this year to make the annual debt (jail note) payment. In short, the jail note was not paid off. We propose reinstating the debt service rate (as required by law, when the county has debt) to the Tax Rate in the coming year. This allows the County to continue to make annual payments on the jail note; keeps the tax rate below levels dating back to 2014; and allows us to take on some major projects that are long overdue.

Erath County Tax Rates (per \$100 of assessed value):		
Year – Property Tax Rate	Debt Rate Collected?	
2014 – 0.4700	Yes	
2015 – 0.4700	Yes	
2016 – 0.4700	Yes	
2017 – 0.4700	Yes	
2018 – 0.4458	No	
2019 - 0.4660 (PROPOSED)	Yes	

Major considerations affecting the proposed budget and tax rate:

- Reinstating the Debt Rate to continue making the annual payments on our jail note;
- Funding for improvements to radios and related infrastructure for Sheriff’s Office, EMS, Fire, etc., and
- Funding for Capital Projects to provide additional office space and to address state-mandated security measures at county facilities.

Erath County and County Property Tax Rates (2017):

- *County Tax Rates ranged from \$.15 (Midland County) to \$1.15 (Jim Hogg County),*
- *Erath County ranked 68th lowest (out of 254 counties).*

Commissioner’s Meetings and Budget Hearing Notices (including Agendas) are posted at the Courthouse and on the County website <http://co.erath.tx.us/agendas.php> Public Hearings on the Tax Rate are scheduled for August 27 and August 30. Both start at 9AM at the Courthouse.

2019-2010 Proposed Budget: [http://co.erath.tx.us/Budgets/2019-2020 Proposed Budget.pdf](http://co.erath.tx.us/Budgets/2019-2020%20Proposed%20Budget.pdf)

Please call (254) 965-1415 or (512) 844-1609 or send us an email at countyjudge@co.erath.tx.us if you have questions. County business is like an open book, we are here to serve you, until next time –

Regards,



Alfonso Campos – Erath County Judge