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Bargain

County Nixes Request For Total Funding For Tax Dist.

(Continued from Page One)

have to approve such action (by state statute) however little doubt was expressed that the entities would approve.

Smith told the court that a survey of the ten entities also showed that all but one wants the county district to assess and collect taxes once it becomes fully operational on Jan. 1, 1982.

He said that the district wants to have a preliminary budget estimate by its July meeting in order that the entities involved may receive their allocation of the costs of operating the district in the event the county did not finance the entire costs. Under state statute, the entities are obligated to pay the pro-rata share of the costs on the basis of total dollar tax revenue for the previous year.

Need Conservation
Precinct 4 Commissioner Bill Stiles added some comments at this time pointing out that if all participating entities paid a part of the bill, "they might tend to be more conservative in their operations." Smith replied that since the directors are elected by the people they would have input; also that each entity would have to hold a public hearing before setting the tax rate on the total 100% of market assessed tax roll, once it is completed.

County Judge Lester J. Cranek said he saw some merit to the plan but added that one stigma which must be considered is the fact that the county does not have surplus funds and the county would be obligated to raise taxes substantially, without question. "Funds which the county has in certificates of obligation are not surplus as some are led to believe," said Judge Cranek. "They are

budgeted for the current year and are drawing interest until such time as they need to be used, resulting in additional income and a savings to the county taxpayers and a means of providing additional services which are always in demand."

The judge, who has the obligation of preparing the annual budget, said that he has been studying 1981 budget requirements (the budget must be adopted in September) and can foresee inflationary costs increasing the budget above the 4% increase which the county can legally face without holding public hearings.

He conceded that the taxpayers in the county will end up paying all of the bill, no matter how it is divided up; but agreed that the "more entities" that you have to consider budgets could lead to conservatism.

Costs Running High
Smith informed the court that another county of approximately the same size as Colorado County and with about the same number of parcels is considering a \$300,000 budget. He pledged that the local directors will make every effort toward a conservative operation and estimated the annual budget at from \$175,000 to \$200,000. He added that the state has contributed \$2,800 toward formation of the district to date and "expects to give a little more."

One of the big issues which the commissioners raised was "if the county raises its taxes and pays all the bill - would the other entities reduce theirs?" Precinct 1 Commissioner Otto Loessin raised this question. Precinct 3 Commissioner Crockett Leyendecker, who incidentally will be going off the court on January 1, 1981, said, "I don't believe other entities

will. My idea of a true partnership is when everybody gives and takes."

Precinct 2 Commissioner Rafael Veselka said that he could see where it would cost more to the taxpayers if the costs were allocated to the respective entities.

Smith noted that all of the entities will have to continue operation of their assessing and collecting offices for the year of 1981 and will also have to pay a proportionate share of the costs of the countywide district, which likely will mean increases in taxes in some participating entities. He said that for efficiency and for fairness, the board felt that if the county financed the whole budget, it would be a much more affable situation.

Yousens, the district's new chief appraiser, pointed out that budget hearings will be required by each entity and "taxpayers would have a say in how and for what money is being spent." He commented in response to Stiles' insistence that "public input can regulate expenditures."

The issue became most when Judge Cranek announced that the county's current tax rate of 64c is only 15c from the constitutional limit allowed to be set by counties (80c per \$100 is the maximum the state legislature allows). He added that with an anticipated total valuation figure of \$98 to \$100 million, there just would be no way for the county to raise enough money for financing the entire budget, without drastic cuts in other areas of operation for 1981.

He conceded that some relief to this situation could become effective in 1982 when the tax rate will be applied to a 100% of full market value. This he estimated would increase the total valuations in the county to some \$400 million since the county is currently assessing at 25% of market value. In response to a question on the possibility of raising the assessment ratio for 1981, Judge Cranek noted that the board of equalization has already completed most of its work and there would be no way to change the assessment ratio at this time.

The judge added that if 5c or 6c tax increase is necessary, as is anticipated, to meet inflationary costs without adding any new services, the constitutional limit placed on the county would leave only 10c per \$100 which at the maximum of \$100 million valuations would raise less than \$100,000. This would also leave the county without any leeway for any further future increases, he noted. Taxpayers To Be Hit 3 Times in a final appeal, board member Anderson pointed

Anderson, Corella Win First In State Music Meet

The Board of Directors of the Eagle Lake Community Center announce a new list of renter's clean up responsibilities. The rules are presented so that each renter will know exactly what he or she is responsible for when they rent the hall.

In the recent past there have been frequent complaints about the hall being left in bad condition. The most frequent complaint is that the tables are being left out or put back in the closet dirty. The floor is the next major problem area. When the renter's party is over the floor must be dry mopped. Food, is being left in the refrigerator and the air conditioner is being left on.

Renters are asked to comply with the regulations or their \$50.00 deposit will not be refunded.

The hall will be closed from July 14th to July 26th so that the main hall floor can be replaced. This project is being done at great expense and it is essential that renter's take care of the new floor.

The hall can be rented by calling 234-5551 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon.

Housekeeping Rules
These good housekeeping rules must be carried out after each use of the Eagle

out that in effect the residents of the cities will be hit three times by the pro-rata assessment program (by the county, city and school district) while rural residents generally will be hit only twice (by the county and a school district). He also commented on the great difference in valuations in the respective entities and concluded that "the county financing of the county tax district would prove to be the most equitable way possible."

Board member Heffley asked if there was absolutely no way the county could raise the money and Judge Cranek said, "No." Heffley also threw out a new line of thought. "After the 100% values are established in 1982, what would be your position on total funding by the county?"

Judge Cranek said that in his opinion, "if funds were available when 100% market values are established, I would have no problem considering the plan." But he emphasized that this was strictly his personal opinion. Yousens later raised the question to the court about the possibility of total financing after the 100% market values were established but the only answer received was that the court would give it consideration at such time.

County Tax Assessor and Collector Henry J. Hajovsky suggested that instead of using the total tax revenue method of allocating funds, as set out by the state legislature, that the number of parcels as well as the total tax dollars be used on a weighted basis in determining the costs to be assigned to each of the ten participating entities.

At that point the discussion ended and the tax district's board of directors adjourned to another room to discuss its future budget and the method of allocating costs to the respective districts.

Commissioners' Court indicated agreement that the present offices occupied by Tax Officer Henry J. Hajovsky on the first floor of the county courthouse would be available for the county tax district once it becomes fully operational. Until that time Judge Cranek noted that a large office on the third floor would be available for use of the district's chief appraiser and staff. The court also indicated that there would be no charges to the district for use of the facilities or for utilities. Yousens indicated this information is necessary in preparation of the tax district's budget for 1981.

Judge Cranek added that Mr. Hajovsky has consented to move his offices to new locations in the basement of the courthouse once the new county tax district begins operation in his present office location.

The University Interscholastic League held its annual State Solo-Ensemble Contest May 31 and June 2nd of this year at the University of Texas in Austin and Rice High School Raider band members did well in the state competition, according to director Floyd Spenrath.

He noted that only band members who received Division One on First Class music at the Regional level are able to participate in the State Meet.

Due to the number of participants, results of this contest have just now been received. The results are very good, in fact they are superior," said Spenrath.

Two members of the Raider Band received the coveted First Division Award. These proud band members are Becky Anderson and Gilbert Corella. Becky, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Anderson, performed a Piano Solo and Mr. Gilbert Corella, performed a Tuba Solo. Gilbert's pianist was Mrs. L. J. (Sonny) Spaniel. Becky's piano instructor was Kay Williams, instructor at Blinn Junior College.

Other members of the band and their ratings were: Cindy Rodriguez, a very excellent Division Two for her Tenor Saxophone Solo (she was accompanied by Mrs. Bill Abell); and results of a flute solo by Michele Sibley were not available as of late Tuesday. She was accompanied by her mother, Mrs. Melburn Sibley.

Some business firms plan to extend the holiday period through Saturday, July 5th.

Those listed with the Headlight are: Eagle Lake Insurance and Strickland Insurance Agencies will be closed all day Friday and Saturday, July 4th and 5th.

Gifts of Distinction in Eagle Lake will be closed Friday and Saturday, July 4th and 5th.

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Gala July 4th Slated Here

The fifth annual Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce Fourth of July celebration, marking the 204th anniversary of the independence of the United States, is nearly here and chamber members and organizations who will sponsor booths and other activities are busy with final plans for the event.

All of the activities will be held this year on Friday, July 4th at the Eagle Lake Community Center.

The schedule of activities will be as follows:

★ Dawn to dusk, U.S. Flags will be displayed by V.F.W. in front of local businesses.

★ 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. the barbecued chicken and trimmings dinners will be served at the Community Center with dining in the air-conditioned center or in a fast curb service line. Tickets MUST be purchased in advance not later than Mon., June 30th.

★ 6:00 p.m. The parade will start in front of the Eagle Lake Community Center will be closed to traffic and booths offering food, drinks, recreation and entertainment will open in the covered pavilion area on the north side of the Center. These will also include kiddie rides.

★ 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Free concert by "Lust" musical group, directed by Andy Gertson.

★ 8:00 p.m. A free street dance featuring the music of the Country Playboys will begin on Walnut Street in front of the Community Center. Free will donations will be accepted several times during the dance, however to help defray expenses of the music.

★ 9:00 p.m. or at the first intermission of the dance, a special group of twirlers from Marilyn Thomas' Super Strutters will present a "Live Fire" twirling demonstration.

★ 12:00 midnight. All activities will cease and the clean-up of the area will

begin.

Large Crowd Expected
Ralph Truly, chairman of the Fourth of July celebration, said that plans are being made for a large crowd. The chamber has set a goal of 1,000 tickets for the barbecued chicken dinner. No dinners will be sold at the Community Center unless some of the reserved dinners are not picked up by 1:00 p.m. Ticket holders must pick up their dinners by the 1:00 p.m. deadline or the dinners will be resold to someone else.

Bob McInerney, C. of C. president, said this week, "we invite all citizens of the area to come join us for this gala Fourth of July celebration. Proceeds derived from the event will aid the chamber in maintaining the part-time office in the Municipal Building and to allow the chamber to continue to sponsor outstanding events this year and in the future."

Visit in Calif.
Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Herman of Lissie returned Monday evening from a two weeks' trip to San Diego and Los Angeles, California and Tijuana, Mexico. They visited with their son's family, Mr. and Mrs. George Herman, who were making a move from San Diego to Los Angeles to make their home. The Hermans report having a wonderful time.

Undergoes Triple By-Pass
Monsignor A. A. Leopold of Nada is recuperating from surgery, a triple by-pass and a permanent pacemaker was installed, in St. Luke's Hospital in Houston. He is now in the coronary care unit, recovery room 1. Friends in the area wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

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