



NEWS RELEASE

September 10, 2024

County adopts 2024-2025 budget, tax rate

Caldwell County Commissioners have approved the FY 2024-2025 budget and set the 2024 tax rate, optimizing available funds and grant programs, keeping expenses under revenues and continuing to provide necessary services for county residents.

The annual operating budget covers the cost of maintaining and improving more than 400 miles of roads, emergency management services, 9-1-1 emergency communications, public safety and law enforcement, elections, permitting and planning, pursuit of grants and numerous additional programs and benefits.

Commissioners approved a budget that includes \$33,699,097.57 in planned general fund expenses for the period beginning Oct. 1, 2024 and ending Sept. 30, 2025 at their regular meeting on Sept. 10 and adopted a total no-new-revenue tax rate of 43.91 cents per \$100 property valuation.

The no-new-revenue tax rate enables the public to evaluate the relationship between taxes for the prior year and current year based on a tax rate that would produce the same amount of taxes if applied to the same properties in both years.

The proposed tax rate represents a decrease of 3.1 cents per \$100 valuation from FY 2023-2024. The county expects to raise more money from property taxes than it did the year before by approximately \$1.5 million, with \$887,337 coming from new property added to the tax roll this year.

“This budget represents hard work and critical thinking by individual departments that assessed what they needed in the coming year to best serve the citizens of Caldwell County,” Caldwell County Judge Hoppy Haden said. “Our departments are working to judiciously use available funding and pursue grants so that we can continue to make necessary improvements without placing undue burden on taxpayers.”

Due to substantial changes brought on by Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019, the county’s ability to generate revenue and provide taxes by

raising the tax rate is limited. Taxing entities like counties can only adopt property tax increases of up to 3.5% without triggering a voter-approval rate election as opposed to the previously allowed increase of 8%.

The county's portion of total ad valorem taxes (including school districts and municipalities) paid by a property owner are approximately 16%.

The FY 2024-2025 budget optimizes funding made available by Texas Senate Bill 22, a grant program signed into law in 2023 that provides additional money to qualified sheriff's, constable's and prosecutor's offices in rural counties.

Independent of that grant program, commissioners voted to approve pay increases for the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office to help with staff retention and recruitment. Personnel including detectives, captains, lieutenants, sergeants and patrol deputies will receive a 13% pay raise. Jailers will receive an 8% raise and courthouse security will see a 5% raise.

The budget also provides for necessary funding to push closer to its goal of paving all county roadways within two years. Of approximately 400 miles of county roads, there are about 110 miles that remain unpaved. The goal is to pave between 50-60 miles of roadway in FY 2024-2025 — weather permitting — and complete what remains in the following fiscal year.

The adopted budget will be posted on the county's website at co.caldwell.tx.us.