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Fort Bend County Commissioners Court Adopts FY 2024-2025 Budget *Proposed Budget Reflects Investment in Public Safety, Infrastructure, and Taxpayer Relief*

(FORT BEND, TX) - The Fort Bend County Commissioners Court today passed the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget, underscoring the county's commitment to responsible financial stewardship while addressing critical needs for public safety, infrastructure, and community services.

The FY 2025 budget totals \$731.6 million, marking an 8.2% increase from the previous year. This budget continues to prioritize the health, safety, and quality of life for Fort Bend County residents while providing tax relief to mitigate the rising property values.

The adopted tax rate for Fort Bend County is 41.2¢ per \$100 valuation, a reduction of 1.45¢ from last year. Additionally, the tax rate for the Fort Bend County Drainage District is set at 1¢, a reduction of 0.24¢. The combined total tax rate for the County and Drainage District is 42.2¢, a 1.69¢ decrease from last year's rate.

Although the average homestead value in Fort Bend County increased by 8.8%, the Commissioners Court has worked to lessen the tax impact by implementing a tax rate reduction of 1.69¢. As a result, the tax on the average homestead will increase by \$78, or 4.6%, which is significantly less than what it would have been without the tax reduction.

Notably, both tax rates are lower than the No New Revenue Rate (NNR), reflecting the Commissioners Court's efforts to reduce the burden on taxpayers. Fort Bend County has maintained a tradition of either holding steady or decreasing its tax rate for the last 15 years. Over the past decade, the tax rate has been reduced by a total of 7.77¢, a testament to the County's commitment to keeping taxes low while continuing to fund essential services.

FY 2025 Budget Highlights

Key highlights from the FY 2025 budget include:

- **Public Safety:** The budget provides compensation increases for 843 law enforcement personnel, with an average pay raise of 22%. It also includes the addition of two new Associate District Courts and a new Magistrate Court.
- **New Positions:** The budget funds 75 new positions across various departments, including 27 in the Administration of Justice and 22 in Health & Welfare, with a total cost of \$7.7 million.

- **Youth Programs:** Expansion of the Youth Employment Program and Expose Excellence Youth Program, with a combined total of 4 new full-time positions.
- **Parks & Recreation:** New recreational facilities throughout the county, including Boys & Girls Clubs in Rosenberg, Arcola, and Fresno, and the development of All Abilities Park in Fulshear. The budget also includes the reopening of the Arboretum Cricket Complex and South Post Oak baseball fields.

The FY 2025 budget also addresses infrastructure needs through various capital improvement projects, such as traffic signal upgrades, school zone safety improvements, and fairground renovations. These investments will enhance safety and mobility across the county, improving the quality of life for residents.

The proposed budget reflects Fort Bend County's continued adherence to its fiscal policies, including maintaining a 30% general fund balance for emergencies. The projected ending balance is \$131.3 million, or 30.1%, ensuring that the County remains financially prepared for unforeseen circumstances.

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