

FY 2016 Budget Highlights

- County adopts same tax rate as previous year
- Set \$10 minimum wage for County *and* UMC employees
- General service employees received a four (4) percent wage increase – NOT A STEP BUT WAGE INCREASE
- Professional service employees received a two-and-one-half (2.5) percent wage increase – NOT A STEP BUT WAGE INCREASE
- Reduced employees' health premiums, keeping more money in their pockets

FY 2017 Budget Highlights and considerations

- County Commissioners received a 42.3 percent salary increase or \$26,569 each. The County Judge received a 16.4 percent increase or \$14,422. The total impact on the budget for elected officials' increases is \$240,000 or 0.088 percent of the General Fund budget.
- Approved salary increase for Constables by \$14,352 each.
- Approved 2.5 percent salary increase for County Clerk, District Clerk, Tax Assessor-Collector, and JPs.
- Approved STEP increase program for County employees which is a \$2.5 million budget impact. First STEP increase for employees since FY 2012. The effort behind this is to retain our employees by awarding them with competitive pay and competitive step increases that rival other public institutions in El Paso.
- District judges and local appellate judges also will get an increase in their salary supplements. The supplement for district judges will increase from \$15,450 to \$18,000, and the supplement for appellate judges will rise from \$7,725 to \$9,000.
- County court at law judges did not receive an increase because they make more than the district judges and handle less serious cases than the district judges.
- With regard to the 7-year reclassification plan, the policy adopted by the Commissioners Court, included a review of Commissioners and County Judge reclassifications back in FY 2014. The court at the time must have punted to future courts.

- County saved nearly \$6 million by refinancing \$40 million in tax-exempt debt. These funds will go to pay much needed capital improvement projects.
- The County last raised the tax rate in FY 2015. If the current rate is held this year, the County will have not raised the rate since then.
- NOTE FROM BETSY: Salaries for County and precinct officers – I understand there is some confusion about the 2.5% increases that were approved for certain elected officials yesterday. The court may want to discuss this issue again under this item on Monday. The 2.5% that was approved yesterday is over and above the positions (County Clerk, District Clerk, Tax-Assessor, and Justices of the Peace) already being at least 70% of the market even if the market goes up by 2.5% this year. Basically, the positions are more than 72.5% of market already. A couple of you have indicated that was not your understanding so we want to clarify this information for you and apologize for our lack of clarity if it caused the misunderstanding.