

TAX MEASURE
(Cont. from page 1)

an email admitting that its vendor had made the error. He added that it was important to have a news conference to inform voters that the corrected issue, when it is issued, was in fact a corrected issue and to not throw it away. Jack noted that on the county website, the ballot issue is printed correctly.

Local 4319 firefighters' union representative Mike Keough said that the members were going door to door to inform residents how the district budget works because "there are

not a lot of people that understand that." He said union members have gotten "a pretty good reception so far." He said they had spoken to businesses and had posters placed in many places supporting the ballot issue.

Two budgets proposed

In discussing the 2013 budget, Jack explained that there were now two proposed budgets, one that covered a mill levy passage with 11.5 mills and one that covered an 8.5 mill levy should passage not occur. He indicated

that no capital improvements were expected for 2013, so that was not a factor to be considered.

Jack anticipated that the budgets would be signed at the Dec. 5 regular meeting of the district board. "The budget message summary, again, would be rather short this year. It's gonna say our budget is relatively unchanged if the mill levy doesn't pass, operations-wise, no anticipated capital purchases, in the budget message summary. If we do pass the mill levy, we will have to include into

there such items as capital and the SAFER grant ... but those are ready to go and we can present those at your November meeting."

Jack said that as of Aug. 31, the district's checking account balance was \$331,429 and the savings account balance was \$844,648. The monthly expenditures were about \$300,000. He also stated that the district had received 98 percent of its budgeted property tax revenue. These funds had already been allocated for the last quarter's operations. He also noted that the beginning fund bal-

ance for 2013 would be \$427,188.

The account balance sheets—containing checking, savings, and impact fee balances—were not made available to the press. It was the second time this year that access had been denied to that public written information.

Jack suggested that a bridge loan would be needed in the first quarter to pay bills, even if the mill levy passes. He discussed some of the future expenses and the areas where there were possible cuts. He noted that the lease payments for the fire

trucks were not reflected because the payments were made from the impact fees last year. Estimated lease payments totaled \$281,000 and the impact fee balance was \$169,000.

Jack said the mill levy failure option does not include the chief's salary. A district reorganization has been discussed to make the money available. It was noted that if the mill levy passed, the reorganization would be unnecessary.

Jack noted that routine preventive maintenance in the district was minimal. He also mentioned that the doors on the fire stations were not insulated and that there were significant costs due to heat loss. He indicated that if the mill levy passed, the district would return to preventive maintenance routines and would increase that line item by \$5,000 for each fire station.

He said the district also had to look at the exhaust ventilation systems at all three stations and that there was no method for budgeting exhaust ventilation systems. A mold mitigation issue at Station 2 should be addressed, he said.

Aging communications equipment

Firefighter Elliot Link advised the board that the district's communications equipment was being operated well beyond its serviceable life. As an example, the XPS-3000 equipment was supposed to be utilized for seven years according to Motorola's standards, but the district has been using it for 14 years.

Link recommended that the district go to a dual band radio. He suggested a replacement program that with an additional charge (about \$1,000 per unit) would allow the units to be upgraded as needed.

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