

Chalkboard

By

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Gentry Public Schools

I confess. As accurately noted by a reader earlier this year, sometimes I do have a tendency to ramble. While such might be acceptable as lyrics in a Led Zeppelin song, it is unacceptable for today's topic. So today you'll just get the bare facts of the matter.

On September 18, 2007, the Gentry School District will hold an annual school election, as will most all other public schools in the state. At Gentry, three candidate positions are to be filled and a proposed millage increase is to be considered. You may check elsewhere in this paper for an official election notice and sample ballots.

Two of the three board member races are uncontested. The proposed millage increase is three mills. A mill is $1/10^{\text{th}}$ of 1 cent or $1/1000^{\text{th}}$ of a dollar.

The revenue that would be generated from its passage would be for dedicated maintenance and operation. In the past those type revenues have purchased school buses, bought computers, replaced roofs, renovated segments of school buildings, etc. Such and similar are the plans again if the proposed increase

If the millage increase passes, you will pay more local taxes. The following example illustrates how much more. An individual owns real and personal property with an assessed value of \$100,000. This amount is multiplied by .20 or twenty percent to derive the dollar amount of property that is to be taxed. In this example the taxable amount would be \$20,000. This amount is then multiplied by the millage rate to determine the amount of taxes owed. In this example, 3 mills would cost the taxpayer an additional \$60 per year in local taxes.

One mill in the Gentry School District generates approximately \$132,000 at a 100% collection rate or about \$125,000 at a 95% collection rate.

Three new mills at a 98% collection rate would generate about \$388,000 per year.

The school bus we bought this year and placed out on a country route cost approximately \$77,275. We try to purchase a new bus each year and place it in the rotation.

The last roof put on the Intermediate School section north of the bus tunnel cost \$90,000. It's time for one on the south side and time for one out

at the middle school next year.

We bought two floor scrubbers last year at about \$7000 apiece.

We spend about \$52,000 on low-value technology equipment with low value being defined as a purchase price less than \$2500.

We had to prove to the Department of Education last year that we were not in 'fiscal distress'.

We borrowed 1.25 million dollars, using current but future tax collections as collateral, to make payroll and pay operating costs for April, May, & June.

We finished the year with that same 1.25 million plus about \$150,000 more.

\$150,000 is about 1% of our total budget for 2007-08.

Save all these facts for next week or the next. I'll be ready to ramble on by then.