



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: September 11, 2012

Prepared By/Phone Number:

Renea Deckard, Associate Deputy Ext 49632

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head:

Tina Morton, Tax Assessor/Collector

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Allow the Travis County Record Management's print shop to print 300,000 newsletters to be inserted with the 2012 tax statements.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

See attached copy of the 2012 newsletter. Historically, the Travis County Tax Office has inserted a newsletter with each current tax statement mailed. The newsletter highlights possible exemptions that one may qualify for, payment options, locations of operations and other informative information regarding local property taxes.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Allow Travis County Record's Management to print 300,000 newsletters.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

In addition to informing the public of operating locations and hours, the newsletter allows the Tax Office to highlight any property tax law changes and/or changes within the Tax Office.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Records Management and the Tax Office have funded this item for many fiscal years through our normal budgets.

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Commissioner's Court approval.

Records Management, Steve Broberg Ext. 49064

WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANNOT PAY TAXES

What should I do if I can't pay taxes?

Pay as much as possible by January 31, 2013 and contact the tax office for a payment plan.

What do I need for a payment plan?

You will need the property account number, the name and daytime telephone number of the person making payments, and a proposed schedule of payments.

What is the penalty for late payment?

On February 1, 2013, 6% penalty and 1% interest accrue on the unpaid balance. Penalty and interest increase each month and total 18% in July, 24% after one year.

What happens if taxes remain unpaid?

Owners of unpaid accounts receive delinquent tax notices. In failing to pay taxes, owners risk costly lawsuits and foreclosure.

SAVE FOR NEXT YEAR'S TAXES

If you pay your own taxes and would like to save for next year's taxes, we will draft from a savings or checking account once monthly. See details about Escrow plans online at www.traviscountytax.org. Select Payment Options in the Property Menu. Or, call us.

TRAVIS COUNTY TAX OFFICE

5501 Airport Blvd. Austin, TX 78751
P.O. Box 149328, Austin, TX 78714-9328

Phone: 512-854-9473
Website: www.traviscountytax.org
E-mail: Tax_Office@co.travis.tx.us

TRAVIS COUNTY TAX OFFICE



2012/2013 TAXPAYER NEWS

Contact Us

Online at www.traviscountytax.org

In person Monday - Friday at the following locations:

Main: 5501 Airport Blvd
7:30 am - 5:30 pm

East: 4705 Heflin Ln
8 am - 5 pm

Pflugerville: 15822 Foothill Farms Loop
8 am—5 pm

Southwest: 8656 Highway 71, Bldg B
8 am—5 pm

Southeast: 4011 McKinney Falls Pkwy
8 am—5 pm

By mail: Travis County Tax Office
P.O. Box 149328
Austin, TX 78714-9328

By phone: 512-854-9473

Account search:



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

PAYMENT DEADLINE

When are taxes due? All payments showing a **Thursday, January 31, 2013** or earlier postmark will be considered timely upon receipt.

HOW TO SAVE ON PROPERTY TAXES

Who can get a homestead exemption? If you own and live in the home on January 1 of the tax year, you qualify to apply.

How can I confirm my exemption? Confirm by checking box #6 on your tax bill for the letter "H". If you are a senior or a disabled taxpayer, it will show "S" or "D".

How do I apply for an exemption? New exemption applications require a copy of your vehicle registration receipt. If you do not have one, call us at 512-854-9473 and we can fax, e-mail, or mail you a duplicate free of charge along with an exemption application form.

Where do I file the exemption? File exemptions at the Travis Central Appraisal District . Contact their office at www.traviscad.org or 512-834-9138.

Is there a charge to file? No, there is no charge to file. Beware of letters from private businesses offering to file the application for a fee.

SENIOR & DISABLED OWNERS

What is the over-65 / disabled exemption? Just like the residence homestead exemption, it lowers the tax amount due and can only be applied where you live. Check box #6 on your tax bill for "S" or "D" to confirm this exemption.

When can I apply for an over-65 exemption? Apply as soon as you reach age 65.

I am disabled. How do I apply?

The disability exemption is based on federal guidelines. Contact the Travis Central Appraisal District at www.traviscad.org or 512-834-9138.

What payment options are available?

Senior and disabled persons may pay taxes on their homestead in 4 equal installments due at the end of January, March, May and July. To enroll, send a Letter of Intent with 1/4 payment by January 31, 2013. Download the letter of intent at www.traviscountytax.org.

Is there an option to defer taxes? Yes, senior and disabled taxpayers may postpone taxes on their homesteads and pay at a future date with a reduced rate of 8% per year. If you have a mortgage, check with your lender before applying. Contact our office for details.

HOW TO MAKE A PAYMENT

How do I send a payment by mail? Tear off the bottom portion of the tax bill and mail it in the green envelope with a personal check, cashier's check, or money order. Do not mail cash or credit card information.

How do I pay by telephone? Call 512-854-9473 from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm weekdays with your credit card. See credit card types and fees below.

How do I make a payment online? Access www.traviscountytax.org and select "Pay Taxes" from the Property menu. Follow the prompts to access your account. Use a credit card or electronic check. See credit card types and fees below.

How do I make a payment in person? Visit any of the 5 tax office locations listed on the front. Cash payments can only be made in person.

Is there a drop box for payments? Yes. Deposit a personal check, cashier's check, or money order ONLY in the red drop boxes at 5501 Airport Blvd.

What credit cards can I use? Pay with American Express, VISA, MasterCard, or Discover. A 3% credit card convenience fee is collected by the vendor for all credit card payments. Electronic check fees range from \$3 - \$40.