



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: September 17, 2013

Prepared By/Phone Number:

Renea Deckard, Associate Deputy Ext 49632

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head:

Bruce Elfant, Tax Assessor/Collector

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Allow the Travis County Record Management's print shop to print 310,000 newsletters to be inserted with the 2013 tax statements.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

See attached copy of the 2013 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 310,000 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

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to, agenda@co.travis.tx.us County Judge's office, **by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

WE'RE GOING GREEN IN 2014

Pay Online at www.traviscountytax.org

Take advantage of reduced eCheck fees. There is no need to mail your payment or wonder if your bank check arrived. With eCheck, your payment is posted to your property tax account instantly. A \$2 - \$5 convenience fee is collected by the vendor for all eCheck payments. You can also pay using American Express, Visa, MasterCard, or Discover. A 3% convenience fee is collected by the vendor for all credit card payments.

Manage Multiple Accounts—Do you have more than one property? Our redesigned website allows you to search for all of your accounts, add them to a cart, and make a single payment.

Request Your 2014 eBill—Instead of waiting for the post office to deliver your bill each year, sign up for our eBill service at www.traviscountytax.org.

**2013 RECEIPTS WILL NOT BE
AUTOMATICALLY PRINTED AND
MAILED**

RECEIPTS AVAILABLE
ONLINE

Receipts Available Online—It is now easier than ever to get your property tax receipt. Go online to www.traviscountytax.org, search for your account by name, address or account number, click on “View Details” and “Receipts.”

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



2013/2014 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? Property taxes are due upon receipt of the bill. All payments showing a **Friday, January 31, 2014** or earlier U.S. postmark (not meters) 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? The exemption is explained on the tax bill directly above boxes 1 & 2.

How do I apply for an 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.

How do I save for next year's taxes? If you do not escrow with your mortgage company and you 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 Properties Menu.

SENIOR & DISABLED OWNERS

Who qualifies for additional exemptions? Owners who are age 65 or older, are disabled or are a disabled veteran qualify to receive additional exemptions.

How do I apply? Seniors can apply as soon as they reach age 65. Disabled persons and disabled veterans exemptions are based on federal guidelines. Contact the Travis Central Appraisal District at www.traviscad.org or 512-834-9138.

What payment options are available? Owners with an over 65, disabled, or disabled veteran exemption are eligible to 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 a payment of at least 25% of the tax due by January 31, 2014. 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 interest rate of 8% per year. If you have a mortgage, check with your lender before applying. Contact the Travis Central Appraisal District for details.

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, 2014 and contact the tax office for a payment plan.

Can I make a payment plan online? Online payment plans for 2013 taxes are available at www.traviscountytax.org. Search for your property using name, address or account number, click on "View Details" and select "Apply for 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. To apply by email, contact us at payment.agreements@co.travis.tx.us

What is the penalty for late payment? On February 1, 2014, 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.

DISABLED VETERANS QUALIFY FOR
QUARTERLY PAYMENTS STARTING
JANUARY 1, 2014