

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

September 10, 2021

A public hearing will be held at the Milam County Courthouse, located at 102 S. Fannin Ave., Cameron, Texas on Monday, September 13, 2021, beginning at 9:30 a.m. whereby the Milam County Commissioners Court will entertain any comments from any member of the public on the following topics:

1. The proposed 2022 Milam County budget which does not increase the current ad valorum tax rate of .73 cents per one hundred dollars of evaluation and includes:
 - a. Proposed M&O tax rate - .6759
 - b. Proposed I&S tax rate - .0541
2. The Milam County Clerk and Milam County District Clerk's 2022 records archive plan.

Dated this the 10th day of September 2021:
Commissioner's Court of Milam County, Texas
By: [Signature]
Steve Young, Milam County Judge

I, Jodi Morgan, the undersigned County Clerk, do hereby certify that the Notice of convening of the Milam County Commissioners Court is a true and correct copy of said Notice. Further, the Notice is published on the Courthouse door and the County Clerk's Office of Milam County, Texas and at other place(s) readily accessible to the public at all times beginning on the 10th day of September 2021. The notice will remain so posted continuously for at least 72 hours preceding the scheduled date and time of said Court.

Dated this 10th day of September 2021.
County Clerk of Milam County, Texas

By: [Signature]
Jodi Morgan, Milam County Clerk

Filed 9 day of Sept
in 2021, At 3:35 P.M.
JODI MORGAN
County Clerk, Milam County, Texas
By [Signature]
Deputy

PUBLIC HEARING NOTES FOR 2022 BUDGET AT COMMISSIONERS' COURT

13 September 2021

- I'm Bill Whitmire and I'm here today as a concerned citizen.
- I thank the Court for the opportunity to speak.
- I wish we could have done this in the evening to allow others who might want to be here the chance to attend.
- Recently in Milano we had an evening public hearing on the solar issue and had roughly 75 people or more in attendance.
- We never know how many will show up, but they should have the opportunity.

- In a town hall with Representative Terry Wilson in Rockdale last month, we discussed Property taxes and he expressed how we need to first address those in our commissioners' court, our school boards, and our city councils.
- I am here today to do my part and discuss it with you all.
- There are two ways to raise taxes, you can raise the tax rate or raise appraisals. For the last few years this court has patted themselves on the back for not touching the tax rate but has stood by and watched as appraisals have skyrocketed causing a lot of harm on the residents of Milam County.

- Our budget is based in no small part on the projected revenues for the up-coming year. When you look at historical trend analysis over the last 40 years, you see that in the last 12 years that projected revenue has been on average around \$3 million higher than the actual revenue. (\$3,252,002.03)
- How can this continually be so far off? – I don't know.

- Since this is the figure we use to help set our budgets, is there any doubt why we have suffered a budget deficit the last two years and why we are headed for a record deficit this year?
-
- Prior to 2019, we had a fairly stable tax system and our county revenues balanced out over time. If we had an up year, we'd adjust to lower the taxes the next year and likewise, if we had a down year, we would look at ways to save money, or, if we had to, raise taxes as appropriate.
 - o During Judge Barkemeyer's time in office, on average, the county budget increased \$434,000 per year.
 - o After this year's budget increase, that number increases to \$734,000 per year just since 2019.

- So, if we are increasing the budget this much it begs a few questions:
- What are we doing with the money?
 - o The budget has already increased nearly 3% faster than inflation.
- And where are all the improvements for the constant increase in our taxes?
 - o I have a list of issues, but now is not the time to list all of those.

- So instead, let's look at just a few of the financial issues with this budget.
 - o Why are we passing a budget with equal money for each of the road and bridge departments when we know that redistricting is going to reshape the precincts in the county. If you look at the prospective population trends, there will be a sizable difference in the amounts of territory each of the commissioners will have to service after redistricting. For instance, Precinct 1 is likely to have around 10-15% more area than precinct 4.
 - o Speaking of the commissioners, who else in America is getting a 14.67% pay raise this year, or a 17.91% pay raise over the last two?

PUBLIC HEARING NOTES FOR 2022 BUDGET AT COMMISSIONERS' COURT

13 September 2021

- Why are we passing a budget increase of \$1,264,693 based off of a projected revenue that will have given us deficits of:
 - 2019 - \$1,433,655 deficit
 - 2020 - \$524,564 deficit
 - 2021 – over \$3,000,000 deficit (projected \$3,547,309, based on historical trend analysis)
- We need to stop and take a hard, long look at this budget, figure out what we need, what we don't need, where we can cut spending, and make a budget that works, and if there's no other way and you, the commissioners' court are going to raise taxes, then step up and raise taxes.
- But please quit patronizing the citizens of Milam County by acting like you're doing us a favor by leaving the tax rate constant.
- You're not doing anyone any favors.
- Thank You



102 South Fannin • Suite 5
Cameron, Texas 76520

KAREN BERRY
District Clerk, Milam County

Office: 254-697-7052
Fax: 254-697-7056

September 13, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Milam County Commissioner's Court

From: Karen Berry, District Clerk

Copies: Honorable John Youngblood, 20th District Judge

Re: District Clerk Archive Fee under Sec. 51.305(b) Govt. Code

I am submitting the yearly District Clerk Archive Fee Plan as required by Government Code 51.305(b). The plan for 2021 will be to continue to collect the \$10.00 Archive Fee, have more files restored, District Clerk Deputies will continue to scan old files into our case management system, move files to basement to make room for new files on 3rd floor, iDocket is now putting records on line to reduce handling of the files, Check on the price to scan the older files into case management by a company, and look into the cost of a new microfilm scanner, computer, and printer.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your assistance.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Berry".

Karen Berry
District Clerk
Milam County, Texas

**DISTRICT CLERK – MILAM COUNTY, TEXAS
PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION RECORDS PLAN FOR 2022**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to define the restoration and preservation, digital capture, storage, retention and management of archived records belonging to the District Clerk's Office. It has been identified that we still have several records archives that need to be reproduced for space availability purposes. It is the intent of the District Clerk to follow guidelines set by the Texas State Library and Archives Commissioner.

GOAL

The goal is to reproduce and archive all documents, regardless of type, as efficiently as possible. The District Clerk's Office is also looking at restoring records, suspending or reducing deterioration of public records, improving the public access to these documents in a manner that reduces the risk of deterioration, and possible reducing or eliminating paper documents.

SCOPE

The scope of this document includes the following

- *All District Clerk records filed with the District Clerk
- *Plans to restore and preserve records with significant historical value
- *Future plans are to improve public and governmental access

This document addresses the restoration and preservation needs of the District Clerk Records Archive. No other departments are addressed.

- **SECTION ONE: RECORDS CURRENTLY IN REPOSITORY**

INVENTORY

Currently the District Clerk's office holds over 100 books regarding civil and criminal actions that occur on a daily basis.

- **SECTION TWO: RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION**

There are many more files, documents, and records to be restored. The Records prior to 1951 are considered historical and we cannot get rid of them or any files, our files are stored on 3rd floor of courthouse, in basement of courthouse, and at the old jail.

PERMANENT RECORDS

After reducing and/or reproducing these records, the District Clerk plans to utilize the space for the growing number of cases occurring daily. The extra space will allow better access to the records by the public.

- **SECTION THREE: FUTURE PLANS**

Continue to collect the \$10.00 for record management
Have more files, documents and records restored by Kofile
District Clerk Deputies will continue to scan old files into our case management system
Check on the price to scan the older files into case management by a company
Look into the cost of a new microfilm scanner, computer, and printer

PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENTAL ACCESS

It is the intent of the District Clerk's Office to make public records accessible on the computer, by index, at a future date. This will allow faster access to District Court records.

The District Clerk's records management fees are charged upon the filing of a new court case or request for affirmative relief in an existing case; these filing types are a small percentage of district court cases comprised of Attorney General IV-D child support cases that are exempted from paying this fee, the revenue that will be generated is a mere fraction of what is annually required to perform the District Clerk's records management functions.

The funds accruing in this account are designated for the archiving of the District Court records and are being maintained for that purpose.


Karen Berry, District Clerk, Milam County, Texas

2022 Archive Fee

The purpose of this public hearing is to define the restoration and preservation of records belonging to the District Clerk's Office. Archive is a collection of historical documents or records filed with the Clerk. District Clerk's Office looks at restoring, reducing deterioration and improving the public access to these documents in a manner that reduces the risk of deterioration and possible reducing or eliminating paper documents. Everything will be paperless one day, but until then we will have to restore files. And there are many from beginning of time. It is the intent of the District Clerk to follow guidelines set by the Texas State Library and Archives Commissioner.

Milam County District Clerk collects \$10.00 for the archive fee on filing of a new court case or request for affirmative relief in an existing case. The fee is designated for the archiving of the District Court records and being maintained for that purpose. This is a small fraction of what is annually required to perform the records management functions. The Records prior to 1951 are considered historical and we cannot get rid of them or any files. There are many files, documents, and records to be restored. There have been some of the records restored though the years but have many more to do. Our files are stored on 3rd floor of courthouse, in basement of courthouse, and at the old jail. \$2,355.00 has been collected from Archive Fees as of July 31 for this year 2020. Need to get with Danica about total amount District Clerk has form the archive fee.

Plans

Continue to collect the \$10.00 for record management
Have more files, documents and records restored by Kofile
District Clerk Deputies will continue to scan old files into our case management system
Check on the price to scan the older files into case management by a company
Look into the cost of a new microfilm scanner, computer, and printer



Milam County- County Clerk
Records Archive Fee
Plan Year 2022

Background (Statutory History)

- Records Archive Fee – Per Local Government Code: Section 118.011(f)(1), the county clerk of a county shall, if the commissioners court of the county adopts the fee as part of the county’s annual budget, collect the fee from any person filing a document. The fee cannot exceed \$10. Local Government Code: Section 118.025 describes the scope of the County Clerk’s Records Archive Fee.
- ***Effective September 1, 2019, the maximum allowable archive fee will be permanent. It was scheduled to be reduced to a maximum \$5 fee on 9/1/19, but SB 658 of the 86th TX Legislature made the current \$10 maximum allowable amount a permanent figure.***

Bill Overview

- ***Began*** on the **2011** Annual Budget. The fee must be set and itemized in the County's budget as part of the budget preparation process annually.
- The \$10.00 fees are assessed on any instrument, document, paper or other record that the County Clerk is authorized to accept for filing or recording (deeds or official public records, assumed names, marriage licenses, civil, probate case filings).
- Changes to the plan must be approved by Commissioners' Court.

Purpose

Official Milam County records are computerized and automated in electronic format back to **1982** for some records. The County Clerk's office is progressive in the preservation of current records, utilizing the original Records Management Fee, as well as the Records Archive Fee in order to preserve and enhance the integrity of the existing system for recording and preserving public documents; the County Clerk seeks to preserve existing original records by restoring or re-creating old volumes, digitizing older microfilm and paper records, re-indexing old handwritten and typed index books and converting all older media into electronic format and importing this newly created data into the existing computer system.

The overall goal and vision of the County Clerk's office is to:

To have all records in a digital format



Milam County- County Clerk
Records Archive Fee
Plan Year 2022

Modernize and upgrade old record systems in the office.

- Continue to add records and information to our existing computer system.
- Eliminate or reduce manual lookups and searches.
- Expedite record searching by having more records available for electronic retrieval.
- Provide public information to the citizens of the County via the Intra/Internet.
- Continue to eliminate the need for paper records.
- Preserving original records by reducing daily usage.
- Purchasing fireproof/waterproof file cabinets for storage.
- Purchasing a Plotter/Scanner for oversized Plat.

Length of Project

The restoration and archiving of records is an ongoing project and the length of completion is unknown.

Additional Provisionⁱ

Any other project that may arise concerning the restoration, preservation or archival of records in the Milam County Clerk records during the 2022 budget year.



Milam County- County Clerk
Records Archive Fee
Plan Year 2022

Summary

The Legislature has provided a means to raise revenue for the records management and preservation of county property and vital records. This "user" fee is an alternative to raising taxes or spending general fund monies to accomplish these projects. This plan will be implemented in "phases" as money is accrued and deposited into a special revenue accounts. Any outsourcing and purchase of equipment will be done through standard purchasing processes. Approval of this plan will prevent the potential hazard and "disaster in waiting" as years and years of vital county property records remain unprotected and not adequately preserved.



Milam County- County Clerk
Records Archive Fee
Plan Year 2022

Projects in Progress

<u>Record Type</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Project Start Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Plats/Maps	Digitize, index, scan to Kofile/ Purchase a Plat Scanning machine	2022		Estimated Cost \$5,000-\$12,000
DD-214's	Digitize – Index, scan into Edotec	2020	2020	In House 15 Books 9,000 pages JN & HD- COVID 19
Land Records	Index & Scan Kofile	2020	2021	\$599,237.21
Case Managment	Index & Scan in Edotec	Pending		In House
Marriage License's	Scan into Kofile	9/1/2019		In House
Voter Cards	Index and Scan into Vista	9/1/2017		In House
Commissioner Court Resolutions & Ordinances	Vista Kofile	2020 In progress		In House
Applications for Ballot By Mail	Scanned in Vista	2020	Yearly	In House
Candidate Filings & Reports	Scanned in Vista	2020	2021	In House
School Census Shelving	Kofile	Pending		In House
Vital Records Rockdale	Book Binders	2022		New Annex In progress
Preservation of 25 Historical Volumes	Kofile	2022		\$78,445.00