

For Immediate Release

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If you missed the article "Tax Appraisal season goes all sorts of sideways" in the March 16 edition of the De Leon Free Press, I will post it on our website under publications. In this release, I will try to give enough information to let the public know the issues the Comanche Central Appraisal District (CCAD) faces with the 2020 tax year valuations for the county.

CCAD's Hands are Tied

State law requires that CCAD appraise all taxable property in the county based on its market value as of January 1, 2020 and anything that occurs after that date is usually not considered. The Legislature passed a "Disaster Exemption" law in the last session that would allow for exemptions of between 15% and 100%, but the Texas Attorney General has issued an opinion that the exemption is only for disasters that cause physical damage to property, like hurricanes or tornadoes, and not like what is happening now with the pandemic.

Appraisal notices are scheduled to be mailed in May and preliminary numbers indicate that some values will increase from the January 1, 2019 value. The CCAD knows that this is a bad time for appraised values to increase but under current law, the current pandemic cannot be considered when determining the 2020 appraisal valuations.

Since the Coronavirus facing our state and nation began after January 1st, the CCAD cannot take that into consideration when performing the appraisals for the District. The real estate market was still appreciating as of January 1, 2020 and this means that appraised values may be higher this year compared to last year.

The Property Value Study (PVS) that the State Comptroller's Office performed on CCAD's 2019 values indicated that the appraised values were lower than what was reflected in the market. While the PVS showed that CCAD's values were valid, they were very near the lower limit of acceptability for some school districts. When values fall below the acceptable range established by the PVS,

schools can be in jeopardy of losing state funding. The 2019 PVS results for CCAD and the school districts can be found on the Comptrollers website at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/pvs/2019p/047index.php>.

After mailing notices, the equalization phase of informal meetings with owners starts. If the CCAD staff cannot resolve the protest, the owner is scheduled for a formal hearing with the Appraisal Review Board (ARB). **These are changing times but the CCAD will work out a way for taxpayers to be heard informally to discuss their values and proceed to a protest hearing if an agreement cannot be reached.**

We are sympathetic to the situation ALL Texans are facing **because we are in that situation with you**, but the appraisal district's hands are tied. Governor Greg Abbott's public health disaster declaration will not bring any disaster relief on your valuation or your tax bill and Attorney General Ken Paxton says the state law providing relief for natural disasters doesn't apply to the pandemic. I hope that everyone will contact our legislators and leaders in Austin to respectfully ask them to enact some sort of Property Tax Relief as directives must come from the state level.

The Comanche Central Appraisal District (CCAD) is closed to the public but we are still working to serve the public. We have a skeleton crew at the office, so you can still reach us for assistance.

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