

Fiscal year 2014-15 budgets to be adopted in September

Dishes and pots and sheets ... oh my! These were just a few things on our long list of items to purchase this summer to prepare for not just one college student, but now my husband and I have two college students to pay for!

Both are living in apartments and needed these setup items, along with many other items for their new digs. Let's just say it has been an expensive summer and will continue to be expensive, but it's a worthwhile investment.

It also has required us to carefully plan and allocate our resources in an efficient manner for the year. And that is just what we are doing with the District's budget.

The beginning of the District's fiscal year is Oct. 1, so the Office of Management and Budget has been busy finalizing budgets for adoption to be ready for the upcoming fiscal year.

All of the districts approved their fiscal year 2014-15 proposed budgets and maintenance assessment rates in June as required by state statute. You may view them on the District's website - districtgov.org - or come by the administration office and view a hard copy.

There were no increases to the current year maintenance assessments in the numbered districts. District 3 residents received a letter in the mail last week notifying them that there was no increase to their assessments.

However, it also stated that the District would continue to use the uniform method of collection, i.e. the Tax



**BARBARA
KAYS**
COLUMNIST

Collector's Office, to collect the bond and maintenance assessments.

The budget process continues through the summer as we have continued to update numbers, make adjustments and work on the cost allocation process.

The cost allocation process involves a detailed analysis to allocate personnel and overhead costs for various services such as general governmental services provided by the District's general fund departments (Office of the District Manager, Budget, Purchasing, Finance, Clerk, Human Resources, and Property Management) and services such as Recreation, Customer Service and Community Watch to the appropriate entities, which include the Village Center, Sumter Landing and Brownwood Community Development Districts, numbered districts and the North Sumter County Utility Dependent District.

Various allocation methodologies are used, depending on the type and function of the shared cost. The methodologies are reviewed annually to ensure the costs are being allocated in a fair and equitable manner.

Now that we have finalized the cost allocation process, the final budgets are close to being adopted.

The following 14 Districts will have separate public hearings to accept public comments, followed by adoption of the fiscal year 2014-15 final budgets and final maintenance assessment rates, which will take place during the September board meetings listed below.

■ Sept. 5, Lake Miona Recreation Center, America 3A/3B rooms: District 5, 8 a.m.; District 6, 9:30 a.m.; District 7, 11 a.m.; District 8, 2 p.m.

■ Sept. 10, District Conference Room: Village Center Community Development District, 2 p.m.; District 11, 3 p.m.

■ Sept. 11, District Conference Room: Sumter Landing CDD, 10 a.m.; Brownwood CDD, 11:30 a.m.

■ Sept. 11, Lake Miona Recreation Center, America 3A/3B rooms: District 9, 1:30 p.m.; District 10, 3 p.m.

■ Sept. 12, Savannah Center, Ashley Wilkes Room: District 1, 8 a.m.; District 2, 9:30 a.m.; District 3, 11 a.m.; District 4, 1:30 p.m.

As we continue to work to finalize a spending plan that uses the resources in an efficient and effective manner, I hope to see you at the September board meetings for the adoption of the fiscal year 2014-15 budgets.

Once the budgets have been adopted, they will be available on the District's website for you to view.

Don't forget that Monday is the Labor Day holiday in recognition of the American workforce and their

contributions to the success of our nation.

The District has a lot of

hard-working employees who work diligently to provide you this wonderful Villages lifestyle. And with the interesting weather we have had over the last few weeks, some District employees have been working in extreme

temperatures, lightning and heavy rain to keep you safe.

Kudos to the Safety Department for handling several fire calls; Community Watch for assisting with traffic control; and Property Management for flood

control and tree/branch clean-up in the pouring rain.

So, fire up the grill and throw on some burgers (cook mine medium, please) and enjoy your Labor Day holiday weekend. But don't forget to meet us back

here at Our Place next week.

Barbara Kays is the budget director for the District Office of Management and Budget. She can be reached at barbara.kays@districtgov.org.