

Districts will approve final budgets in the next few weeks

My son is a Boy Scout who is working toward attaining Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Boy Scouts. One of the required badges for Eagle Scout is the personal management merit badge.

One of the requirements for this badge is that the Scout prepare a budget and track his income, expenses and savings for 13 consecutive weeks, which is an eternity for a teenager. It also requires the Scout to compare budgeted income versus budgeted expenses and determine steps to balance his budget.

As the son of a budget director, you can imagine how “exciting” this process has been for him!

The Districts have also been working on the fiscal year 2015-16 budget process over the last six months and will be approving final budgets over the next few weeks.

The District’s fiscal year begins Oct. 1, so the Office of Management and Budget has been busy finalizing budgets for adoption in accordance with Florida State Statutes and to be ready for the upcoming fiscal year.

All of the Districts approved their fiscal year 2015-16 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 to view a hard copy.

As communicated in my May 28 Our Place column, three Districts were proposing increases to their fiscal year 2015-16 maintenance assessments rates. As explained in that column, every homeowner



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in Districts 2, 3 and 4 would receive a notification letter as required by state statutes.

The homeowners received their letters last week along with a page of frequently asked questions to help explain maintenance assessments and the reasons for the proposed increases. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 751-3939.

The budget process has continued through the summer as we have updated numbers, made adjustments and completed the cost allocation process.

The cost allocation process involves a detailed analysis to allocate personnel and overhead costs for various services, including 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 that are provided to the Village Center, Sumter Landing, Brownwood and residential community development districts in addition to 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 soon will be adopted. The following 14 districts will have separate public hearings to accept public comments, followed by adoption of the fiscal year 2015-16 final budgets and final maintenance assessment rates which will take place during the September board meetings listed below.

- Sept. 3, District Conference Room: District 5, 8 a.m.; District 6 – 9:30 a.m.; District 7 – 11 a.m.; District 8 – 2 p.m.

- Sept. 9, District Conference Room: Village Center Community Development District, 2 p.m.; District 11, 3 p.m.

- Sept. 10, District Conference Room: Sumter Landing CDD, 10 a.m.; Brownwood CDD, 11:30 a.m.; District 9, 1:30 p.m.; District 10, 3 p.m.

- Sept. 11, 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.

Each district board has spent time reviewing its budgets and carefully planning how to use its resources in an efficient and effective manner, not only for next fiscal year but for years to come. This careful planning is key to the sustainability of our community.

Once the fiscal year 2015-16 budgets are adopted in September, they will be available on the District’s website for you to view.

Don’t forget that Sept. 7 is the Labor Day holiday in recognition of the American

workforce and its contributions to the success of our nation. The District comprises almost 1,000 hard-working employees (full-time and part-time),

approximately 80 percent of whom are residents like you who work diligently to provide you with this wonderful Villages lifestyle.

In the past, the District has received many comments from residents regarding household trash and recycling pickup on

holidays that fall on a Monday. District Staff, in cooperation with CH2MHILL, the contracted sanitation hauler, worked out a solution for the upcoming Labor Day holiday.

If you are a resident in Sumter or Marion county and your household trash and recycling

pickup is on a Monday, your pickup has been adjusted to occur Saturday, Sept. 5. The normal pickup schedule will resume Sept. 8.

So fire up the grill, throw on some burgers (medium for me, please), and enjoy your Labor Day holiday weekend.

Don't forget to meet us back here at Our Place!

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