

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Commissioners Court Briefing

By Jessica Nohealapa'ahi
The Bandera Prophet

Following a public forum, during which there was no comment, Bandera County commissioners unanimously approved a 5 percent Cost of Living Adjustment for elected officials to be added to the next fiscal year's budget.

Prior to the vote, Pct. 3 Commissioner Jack Moseley initiated a discussion on whether to raise elected officials' base salaries.

"I've been a commissioner for seven-and-a-half years. I may have one more term left in me. Mr. [Bruce] Elikier is gone after this one. I don't know if [Pct. 4 Commissioner Jody Rutherford] has another term," Moseley said Thursday, adding he had been thinking about elected officials' salaries since the last budget workshop in July.

Though he agreed county employees' grade and step plans should be reviewed, County Judge Richard Evans said the conversation on elected officials' salaries should have been had when the COLA was proposed.

"You told the public that this is what we propose when you voted," Evans said, who added changing the salaries now would be unethical, akin to a "switch and bait."

"We said this is what it's going to be," Evans said.

The next public hearing on the proposed budget and proposed tax rate of .5595 will be Thursday, Aug. 24, at 10 a.m., when the court will vote to adopt both.

~ In other business, commissioners approved the adoption of a rental fee for the grassy area at Mansfield Park, between the highway and the arena.

The lease fee for Mansfield Park in its entirety is \$1,900 per day. In preparation for the Oct. 14 annular eclipse, Moseley proposed closing the park and offering only the grassy area to lease at \$600 for three days. "It does not include the restrooms or showers. Parking only," Moseley said.

Evans said unless there is a rental agreement designating the park for exclusive use, Mansfield Park must remain open to the public, in accordance to the terms of its donation to the county. Evans also suggested breaking down Moseley's proposal from \$600 for three days to \$200 per day.

"I think that gives us some flexibility," Rutherford said.

The vote to charge \$200 per day for the grassy area only carried with a unanimous vote.