By Jan Schultz
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The 2012-13 budget proposal for Chase County Schools originally had zero dollars earmarked for the building fund, but after lengthy discussion at the Sept. 11 meeting, school board members chose to add $101,000 after all.

The action came after a budget hearing during the regular meeting of the board. Other limited business outside the budget was also on the agenda.

The addition of the building fund dollars pushed the school's property tax request up to $6,149,110.

That's slightly higher than the 2011-12 figure of $6,023,000, or about two percent.

However, even though more tax dollars will be used, the district's growth in valuation will spread that burden over more property. Overall, taxpayers will see the levy to support the budget drop to just over 94 cents (per $100 valuation).

The 2012-13 total levy of .941876 is down from the 2011-12 levy of .965050

The General Fund will take the biggest chunk of property taxes at $5,808,100. It will support a budget of $7,773,960 and a cash reserve of $1,257,040.

Tax dollars will also be used to support the Quality Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund to begin paying for the new heating, ventilation and air conditioning project at the school.

Added to those two areas will be the $101,100 earmarked for the special building fund.

During the meeting discussion, board members had originally considered adding $200,000 to the building fund, but opted for the lower amount.

The last section of roof replacement is scheduled in the coming year, but some board members were concerned with other potential building maintenance costs that could arise. That led to adding some money to the building fund.

At last week's meeting, the building fund stood at $285,000.

The 2012-13 property tax dollar increase comes after several consecutive years of a lower levy, largely due to continued valuation increases and the paying off of the original school building bonds.

The latest valuation in the school district, released last month, shows property in the CCS district this year grew to $652,858,946.

In 2011, the valuation in the district was $624,112,395. That represents a growth of 4.6 percent.

Other school board business

- Bus pickup times were brought before the board by Tracy and Jonathan Beverly, who said their son is getting on the bus 40 minutes earlier than last year—at 7 a.m. versus 7:40 last year, and travels 22 miles from their home 10 miles out. Some of the earlier bus schedules are due to an earlier start time at school this year. Board President Charley Colton said adding a route would probably not shorten the rest of the routes equally, in addition to the added cost of a driver and bus. The number of students and how they are spaced out on the route are also

factors. "That's also some of the trade-off we have by living in the country," Colton said. Supt. Brad Schoeppey added that most of the other bus routes also start about the same time, with two starting earlier at 6:30 a.m. Schoeppey and Colton said they would reexamine the routes and see if anything could be altered.

- Lupe Torango was hired as activities custodian to replace Reuben Espitia, who had resigned. He moved from the community.
- A.D. Troy Hauxwell reviewed the September and October calendars, noting some of the important dates coming up—Sept. 28 Homecoming with no school that day. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled Sept. 25-26 from 5 to 8 p.m. each evening. CCS will also host the SPVA conference volleyball tournament on Oct. 11 and 13. New to the Activities Director position this year, Hauxwell said he is "living and learning."