

Hillsboro School Board finalizes 2023-24 budget, holds off on increasing mill levies

By COLE SHORT

The Hillsboro School Board approved its final budget for the 2023-24 school year during an efficient 40-minute meeting Thursday, Sept. 14.

The approved budget will keep the district's property tax levy at 86 mills next year, marking the fifth consecutive year that the school board has held off raising its mill levies.

However, increases in the valuations of farmland and homes should allow the district to take in an additional \$161,260 in tax money in the coming year, Superintendent Paula Suda said.

The taxable valuation of property in the Hillsboro School District increased from \$23.79 million in 2022 to \$25.49 million in 2023, according to tax figures released by Traill County.

School administrators pro-

jected the district will collect \$6.6 million in revenues during the 2023-24 school year, while expenses are expected to hover around \$6.7 million.

Based on her calculations, Suda projected the district will deficit spend by roughly \$120,000 in the coming year.

The deficit spending will reduce the district's expected year-end carryover from 22 percent during the previous school year to 17 percent by the end of the 2023-24 school year.

Suda pointed out the school's \$12 million bond referendum coming up Tuesday could require the district to revise its final budget with Traill County prior to Oct. 10.

If voters approve the proposed referendum, the district's property taxes generated from its sinking and interest mills will

climb by 37.21 mills next year, Suda said.

Passage of the 20-year referendum would raise taxes on a \$100,000 home by \$167.43 a year, while a landowner or farmer who owns \$100,000 in commercial or ag land would see a \$186.05 bump in taxes.

In other business Sept. 14, the Hillsboro School Board:

■ Received word from Hillsboro-Central Valley athletic director Dave Nelson that the North Dakota High School Activities Association's board of directors approved a three-class system for volleyball in 2025.

State athletic officials previously adopted a three-class system in North Dakota for boys and girls basketball, which will make its debut this fall.

■ Learned from Suda that the district's enrollment had

increased in the first month of school.

The district's opening-day enrollment of 483 students in grades K-12 climbed 10 in the past three weeks, Suda said.

The enrollment figures included 256 pupils at Hillsboro Elementary School, 233 students at Hillsboro High School and four children attending Spruce Lane School near Blanchard.

■ Received a reminder from Suda that polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday inside the Hillsboro High School library for voters interested in casting ballots in the district's \$12 million bond referendum.

Absentee ballots for Tuesday's special election need to be returned to Hillsboro High School by 4 p.m. Monday or postmarked no later than Monday, Suda said.

Traill County EDC approves interest buydown loans for pair of Hillsboro-based businesses

By JAMES R. JOHNSON

When interest rates in the United States began to rise, the executive director of the Traill County Economic Development Commission knew, "This is our time to make hay."

Jim Murphy presented a pair of interest buydown loan requests Tuesday to TCEDC's board of directors.

The buydowns help reduce interest payments on Flex PACE loans obtained through the Bank of North Dakota.

The first request came from Mark Merck for Hillsboro Storage, more commonly known as U Store Lock and Leave in Hillsboro, which has 40 of its 100 rental storage units occupied along Interstate 29.

Merck said Hillsboro has been "a good fit for me. Hillsboro Storage will be a good fit for the growth of area developments."

Merck said Hillsboro Storage attracts traffic off I-29 and that Mayville State students make use of his rental units.

When Merck departed, TCEDC board member Marshall Erickson recommended the board approve a five-year,



Merck

Walden

\$57,000 buydown that will save Hillsboro Storage \$131,293 in interest, according to Murphy.

Board president Jami Hovet noted the loan marked the largest buydown brought forward by the commission, before Erickson's motion was passed by a quorum of TCEDC directors.

The second buydown request came from Scott Walden of Walden Veterinary Clinic, which recently opened in the former Reno's Sports Bar building on Caledonia Avenue, following floor and roof repairs.

Erickson recommended a two-year interest buydown loan of \$16,000 for Walden.

Murphy said the Bank of North Dakota will write off about \$35,000 in interest. Once more, Erickson's motion was seconded and passed.

Murphy plans to present both buydown agreements to Hillsboro Economic Development Corp. on Monday to see if HEDC will chip in on the loans.

In other business Tuesday, Traill County EDC's board of directors:

■ Learned from Murphy that he had received "good, positive feedback" for TCEDC's recently announced "Hot On The Trail" shop local campaign.

The campaign will use electronic coupons to keep tax revenue in Traill County and attract shoppers from outside of the county, Murphy said.

■ Received word from Murphy that the TCEDC Community Showcase has been tentatively set Nov. 30. The event will show area contractors development opportunities that Traill County has to offer.

■ Discussed the recent closing of the Traill County Tribune newspaper in Mayville.

"When a community loses its voice, it's big news," Murphy said. "Having a solid voice is important."

■ Congratulated Murphy for being named North Dakota economic developer of the year by

the Economic Development Association of North Dakota.

Murphy, who is serving his fifth year as TCEDC executive director, led a child care roundtable at EDND's annual conference last week in Bowman, N.D.

■ Congratulated board member AJ Andresen, manager of Valley United Grain Operations, for receiving the emerging grain professional of the year award at Barchart's 2023 Hedge Awards in Nashville, Tenn.

The award honors "rising stars of the commercial grain industry who have shown exceptional talent, dedication and promise."

■ Learned that TCEDC's office had a new landlord after the LEP Office Complex had been purchased by the Traill County Water Resource Board.

TCEDC will be charged \$775 a month in rent through Jan. 1 and before its rental costs are increased 10 percent for three years.

SUBSCRIBE to the BANNER

Veterans Corner

Sheri Pearlstein
Traill County Veterans Service Officer



OFFICE HOURS:

Hillsboro Office
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday
114 West Caledonia Ave., Hillsboro
701-636-4414

Mayville Office
8 a.m. to noon Fridays only
21 1st St. NE, Mayville
701-430-7059

Will You Miss Out On VA Healthcare?

QUESTION: What is the deadline for the free open enrollment for VA Healthcare?

ANSWER: The one-year open enrollment period began on Oct. 1, 2022, and will end on Sept. 30, 2023.

QUESTION: What happens once the free open enrollment closes?

ANSWER: Once the open enrollment period has closed, eligibility will be processed through a phase-in process based on discharge date.

QUESTION: Who is eligible for the free open enrollment?

ANSWER: As a part of the PACT Act, veterans who were discharged after Sept. 11, 2001, and before Oct. 1, 2013, are encouraged to enroll. Eligibility will depend on dates and locations of service, regardless of disability claim status.

QUESTION: How has the PACT Act helped veterans access VA Healthcare?

ANSWER: The PACT Act of 2022 (PL 117-168) and VA initiatives led VA to revise its presumption decision process to ensure it was scientifically based, fair, consistent, transparent, timely and veteran centric. The revised presumption decision allows veterans to be eligible to receive health care and benefits without having to prove that their disabilities or medical conditions are the result of their military service.

QUESTION: What are 3 ways to apply for VA Healthcare?

ANSWER:

- 1) Online: Sign up online at- <https://www.va.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction>
- 2) In person: Traill County Veterans Service Office 114 West Caledonia Ave Hillsboro ND 58045
- 3) By phone: Call the Eligibility Office at 701-239-3700 Ext 3428

Don't wait until Sept. 30. Enroll In VA Healthcare today !

Honoring our veterans,
Sheri Pearlstein
Traill County Veterans Service Officer
Hillsboro Office: 701-636-4414
Mayville Office: 701-430-7059
Fax: 701-636-4415
sheri.pearlstein@co.trail.nd.us
www.trailvso.com

VETERANS CORNER Sponsored by Vets Club ■ Hillsboro

Kelly's Chrysler Center, Inc.

Highway 200 West ~ "Since 1981"

(218)784-2002 www.kellyschryslercenter.com



2022 Chrysler Pacifica Touring L
Heated Leather, Power Seat, AutoStart, Adaptive Cruise, Stow-N-Go, 66K



2019 Jeep Gr. Cherokee Altitude X
Heated Leather, Power Liftgate, AutoStart, Tow Pkg, 1-Owner, 59K



2017 Toyota Avalon XLE Touring
Heated Leather, Sunroof, AutoStart, Backup Camera, Local Trade, 26K



2012 Ram 1500 Crew Big Horn 4x4
HEMI, Power Windows/Locks/Seat, Cloth, Tow Pkg, Local Trade, 171K



2017 Ram 1500 Crew Longhorn 4x4
Heated & Ventilated Leather, Sunroof, NAV, Tonneau, Boards, 1-Owner, 38K



2017 Ram 1500 Crew Limited 4x4
Heated & Ventilated Leather, Sunroof, NAV, Tonneau, Boards, 1-Owner, 24K

THE AUTO DEALERS OF ADA



Lee Bros. Sales

Highway 9 North ~ "Since 1975"

(218)784-2000 www.leebrotsadamn.com



2020 Chevrolet Colorado Crew 4x4
V6, Power Windows/Locks/Seat, Apple Car Play/Android Auto, 74K Miles



2019 Chevrolet Suburban 4x4
V8, Heated Leather, Backup Camera, Running Boards, 120K Miles



2022 Chevrolet Equinox AWD
Cloth Seats, Aluminum Wheels, Backup Camera, 22K Miles



2021 Chevrolet Traverse AWD
Heated Leather Seats, Backup Camera, Aluminum Wheels, 61K Miles



2021 Chevrolet Malibu
4Cyl Turbo, AutoStart, Wheels, Power Windows/Locks/Seat, 75K Miles



2020 Chevrolet Silverado Crew 4x4
Aluminum Wheels, Cloth Seats, Backup Camera, 40K Miles



Owner - Triple VVV, 407 Broadway, Buxton, ND (701) 847-2153
"I waited 50 years to have a kid and now I have cancer."

PONYTAIL TOM BENEFIT

Meal and Silent Auction
 Saturday October 7, 2023 4:00 - 8:00
Meal at Buxton Fire Hall & Silent Auction at Triple VVV

Dart Tournament
 Sunday October 8, 2023 starting at 11 am
Triple VVV, Barn-n-Grill, A&R Bar

Tom "Ponytail" Gerstenberg was recently diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer. Proceeds from the benefit will help with Tom's cost of care and lost income during treatment, as well as establishing a fund for his daughter Izzy's future.

A free will donation meal will be provided at the Buxton Firehall October 7, 2023 from 4pm-8pm, all ages welcome! There will also be a silent auction at Triple VVV from 4pm-8pm. Items include a booze wagon raffle, a Twins neon sign board, and numerous baskets of goodies!

A dart tournament and free will potato bar will be held October 8, 2023 between Triple VVV, Barn & Grill, and Hillsboro's A&R. Pre-registration begins Oct. 6 at Triple VVV; sign-in begins Oct. 8 at 11am at Barn & Grill.

Additional details will be posted on **Triple VVV Facebook page** as the events near. If you would like to donate an item for the silent auction, drop them at Triple VVV/A&R or call to schedule a pick up. Monetary donations can be made at Goose River Bank to "Gerstenberg Benefit" account.