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INSIDE



Hutto ISD has filled an important vacancy. Read about it on Page 2.



Look for back to school photos in the Wednesday, Aug. 16 e-edition of the Taylor Press.

OBITUARIES

Helmer Woodrow William Dahl
William Lynn "Bill" Davis III
Rubie Mae (Machu) Loessin
John Matyssek
Donna Lynn Dickey Nemec
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MON	20%	79°	102°
TUE	10%	79°	104°

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TAYLOR PRESS

Hearings on council pay set for Thursday

NICOLE LESSIN
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A controversial plan to boost council members' stipends will be revisited again next week in two back-to-back public hearings at 5:30 and 6 p.m. Aug. 17, city officials said.

"The city attorney had to rewrite the ordinance, so instead of their being \$25, it has to read those new dollar amounts, so we have to have a first reading and a second reading," said At-large

Councilman Dwayne Ariola, who has voted against two previous attempts to raise compensation along with District 2 Councilman Mitch Drummond in a phone interview. "It's going to be a packed house next week, trust me."

At the July 27 meeting, the Taylor City Council voted 3-2 to increase their own stipends from \$25 to \$1,000 per month and to \$1,500 per month for



At the July 27 Taylor City Council meeting, Jose Orta, chair of the council compensation committee, answers questions from council members about the committee's recommendation.

Screen shot from Taylor City Council meeting

See **COUNCIL** • page 2

PIPELINE TO SUCCESS



Sam Dowdy Jr. (left), owner and operator for Coppera Plumbing and Commercial Services, signs apprenticeship agreement next to Lee Price (right) of the Department of Labor.

Photos by Hunter Dworaczyk

Local plumbing companies sign apprenticeship agreements

HUNTER DWORACZYK
hunter.dworaczyk@taylorpress.net

A pipeline has been formed that is designed to make plumbing a more attractive career path for young students.

S&D Plumbing and Coppera Plumbing and Commercial Services reached agreements with the Department of Labor to be able to offer pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships at local high schools. The signing day event was held at Taylor Independent School District Events Center Aug. 11.

The event was hosted by



Mayor Brandt Rydell (middle) signs an honorary pipe, which all guests were asked to sign to remember the occasion.

Texas Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area, a community partnership that provides employment ser-

vices to businesses and job seekers.

See **PLUMBING** • page 13

Library advisors back moving LGBTQ book

HUNTER DWORACZYK
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Whether or not to move "Gender Queer: a Memoir" by Maia Kobabe from the young adult section in the Taylor Public Library was the main agenda item for library's advisory board meeting Aug. 8.

The book, which recalls the author's personal story of dealing with gender identity, has led to conflict between LGBTQ+ advocacy groups and opposing parties concerning its content and importance.

See **LIBRARY** • page 2

County working on 2023-2024 budget

HUNTER DWORACZYK
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GEORGETOWN – A growing population allows Williamson County to consider having its largest budget ever.

The Commissioners Court heard a recommended budget for the next fiscal year from Ashlie Holladay, the county's budget officer, at its Aug. 8

See **COUNTY** • page 2

City OKs land redesignation at Thorndale, Gravel Pit roads

NICOLE LESSIN
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A controversial amendment to the Envision Taylor Comprehensive Plan's land-use designation for a parcel on the east side received approval from the Taylor City Council Thursday.

At the regular meeting Aug. 10, city leaders voted 4-1 to approve an amendment to the city's Envision Taylor Comprehensive plan on 70.2 acres at Old Thorndale Road and Gravel Pit

Road, making it easier to put in a future residential development with small-scale neighborhood services, despite the request being unanimously rejected by the Planning and Zoning Commission July 11.

"I have no issues with the substance, but as we all know P&Z refused this ordinance, all nine of them voted against it," said District 2 Councilman Mitch



(From left) District 2 Councilman Mitch Drummond discusses an amendment to the Envision Taylor Comprehensive Plan with At-large Councilman Dwayne Ariola Aug. 10.

Photo by Nicole Lessin

See **LAND** • page 13

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PLUMBING • page 1

Soon Craftsman College, a school seeking to redefine the way trades are taught, will launch and expand the apprenticeship agreements that were reached. The school is spearheaded by Sam Dowdy Sr. and Lindsie O'Neill Almquist, a former educator, who will be the college's president.

Dowdy Sr., owner and operator of S&D Plumbing, said students can walk out of high school with their first plumbing license and be eligible to make \$20 to \$30 an hour if the program progresses how he would like it to.

"This is a solution to a major problem," Dowdy Sr. said. "We now have a clear pathway to success for the students, for anybody that's wanting to get into the career."

Dowdy Sr. is the driving force for the agreements being reached. He was introduced to plumbing when he was in high school, so he has



Sam Dowdy Sr., owner of S&D Plumbing talks about what craftsman means, and how the Craftsman College will be beneficial to students.

first-hand knowledge of what programs like this can do for a person's life.

He passed his love of the trade on to his son, Sam Dowdy Jr., who owns and operates Coppera Plumbing and Commercial Services.

"Learn how to do plumbing, and you can change the course of poverty in a family for generations to come," Dowdy Sr. said. "I am one of those guys. It

affected and changed my life."

Frank Denton, chairman of Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners, said the plumbing industry is in desperate need of young plumbers in Texas.

He said there were 12,299 master plumbers in Texas, but the average age for a master plumber is 54 years old.

"What you are doing is critical to our mission," Denton said during his remarks.

Increasing the number of people in apprenticeships started to become a major priority in 2014 when the public began worrying about who was going to replace the Baby Boomer generation in fields of trade, said Lee Price, the Texas state director for the Department of Labor.

There were only 375,000 apprentices

across the country at one point, a number that Price says has doubled in the time since.

"For years and years, back when we had that number, we told everybody they had to go to college," Price said. "In a lot of cases that's true, but not all cases.

Photos by Hunter Dworaczky



Sam Dowdy Sr. sits with grandkids as his son gives his remarks.

LAND • page 1

Drummond, who cast the lone dissenting vote. "If we keep going against our boards and commissions, they are going to quit volunteering ... There was a reason they did this. There is no hurry on this piece of property. The owner he can certainly go back to P&Z again."

The amendment, which was requested by Mike Herzog, of Yupell LLC & Jona Enterprises LLC, changes the parcel from a more restrictive Future Growth Sector to Control Growth Tier II, which includes infrastructure that is planned but not yet installed or lacks capacity. The amendment also includes Neighborhood Greenfield, which would become new communities with mixed residential uses and neighborhood services.

At previous meetings, residents near the site said they were not against development in general, but expressed concerns about traffic, flooding and inadequate infrastructure, although the land currently sits at the cusp of city limits and has existing roadways and utility connections nearby.

tions nearby.

But city officials, including at the Aug. 10 meeting, have said the main reason the commission rejected the request was due to Herzog not attending their meeting, and that as there is no immediate plan for development, all concerns will be addressed during the planning process.

"I totally understand Mr. Drummond's discussion on going against committees that we established," said At-large Councilman Dwayne Ariola, who recently voted with

Drummond against a previous meeting's agenda item regarding increasing council's pay after a compensation committee's recommendation was not heeded. "But, on this particular topic, it is one of 15 steps. Redesignating the growth sector and future land use is all we are doing. I know the owner has reached out to everybody that was here last meeting and has kind of mended those fences in the understanding that he may not know what is going to happen, but it's only step one."



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
AUGUST 23, 2023
AT CITY OF THRALL
104 S. MAIN STREET
THRALL, TEXAS 76578
AT 7:00 P.M.

CITY OF THRALL
2023-2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
This budget will raise more total property taxes than last year's budget by \$15,319.00, 4.179%, and of the amount \$9,607.43 is tax revenue to be raised from new property added to the tax roll this year.

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Statements required in notice if the proposed tax rate exceeds the no-new-revenue tax rate and the voter-approval tax rate but does not exceed the de minimis rate, as prescribed by Tax Code §§26.06(b-1) and 26.063(c).

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of \$0.100000 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of Williamson Emergency Services District #3.
PROPOSED TAX RATE: \$0.100000 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE: \$0.092815 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE: \$0.096891 per \$100
DE MINIMUS RATE: \$0.101093 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2023 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for Williamson Emergency Services District #3 from the same properties in both the 2022 tax year and the 2023 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Williamson Emergency Services District #3 may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate, unless the de minimis rate for Williamson Emergency Services District #3 exceeds the voter-approval rate for Williamson Emergency Services District #3.

The de minimis rate is the rate equal to the sum of the no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate for Williamson Emergency Services District #3 the rate that will raise \$500,000, and the current debt rate for Williamson Emergency Services District #3.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Williamson Emergency Services District #3 is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2023 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON 08/17/2023 12:00 PM at Hutto Fire Department, 501 Exchange Blvd., Station 1 Training Room, Hutto, TX

The proposed tax rate is greater than the voter-approval tax rate but not greater than the de minimis rate.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE TAX RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount = (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property) / 100

(List names of all members of the governing body below, showing how each voted on the proposal to consider the tax increase or, if one or more were absent, indicating absences.)

FOR the proposal: Bill Brown- President, Todd Robison- Vice President, Anne Cano- Treasurer, Dan Hejl- Secretary

AGAINST the proposal: None

PRESENT and not voting: None

ABSENT: Butch Miller- Vice Treasurer

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by Williamson Emergency Services District #3 last year to taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by Williamson Emergency Services District #3 this year.

	2022	2023	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.100000	\$0.100000	0% increase
Average homestead taxable value	\$308,119	\$337,643	9.58% increase
Tax on average homestead	\$308	\$337	9.41% increase \$30 increase
Total tax levy on all properties	\$6,926,198	\$8,235,695	18.9% increase \$1,309,497 increase

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for Williamson Emergency Services DISTRICT #3 AT (512) 943- 1601 or propertytax@wilco.org , or visit <https://www.wilcotx.gov/taxoffice> for more information.