

Franklin Favorite

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Simpson County holds property tax rates steady for 2026-27

BY BEVERLY BRAGG
FRANKLIN FAVORITE

Simpson County property taxes will hold steady for another year, following a unanimous vote by the fiscal court to reject any tax increases in 2026-27.

The court voted at its Sept. 1 meeting to keep the 2026-27 real and personal property tax rate at 9.75 cents per \$100 of assessed value, matching the 2025 rate. Out of that total 9.75-cent rate, 2.25 cents is statutorily allocated to the local/district health department, making the effective county tax rate 7.50 cents.

The tax rates for motor vehicles and watercraft will remain unchanged at 16.1 cents per \$100 of assessed value, as well as aircraft at 10.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

A mandatory public hearing was held by the fiscal court on Sept. 1, which yielded no response or opposition from the public. Immediately following the hearing, the court conducted its first reading of the tax ordinance, which passed with unanimous approval. The second reading for the final passage will be held at a future fiscal court meeting.

Prior to setting the 2026 property

tax rates, the fiscal court discussed several rate options in August calculated by the Department for Local Government, including a compensating rate of 9.70 cents, before agreeing to keep the current rate of 9.75 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

According to Simpson County Judge-Executive Mason Barnes, the fiscal court felt it was best to leave the current tax rate unchanged. "I believe that was the right thing to do. Not that there is ever a good time for a tax rate increase, but that time is certainly not now," Barnes remarked, adding, "The county is currently in a very sound fiscal

condition and should continue to be for years to come, without a property tax rate increase."

Reflecting on the fiscal court's past 2025 policies, Magistrate Marty Chandler stood by the county's financial strategy for 2026. "We lowered the rate last year and I think keeping the rate the same was the right thing to do," said Chandler.

Magistrates Scott Poston, Myron Thurman, and Jeff Burr did not respond to requests for comments regarding the tax vote.

In addition to setting the property tax rate, the fiscal court addressed several other county matters during

its Sept. 1 meeting, including the second reading and approval of a budget ordinance for FY 2026-27 amending unbudgeted receipts. Budget transfers were also approved, as well as a slate of bills and claims.

Additionally, the court authorized two separate cash transfers to reallocate county funds. These actions included a cash transfer of \$11,827.34 from the federal grant fund to the general fund, as well as a second cash transfer of \$94,460 from the general fund directly to the jail fund to support ongoing

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Patriotic theme announced for 2026 Simpson County Hay Bale Trail

BY BEVERLY BRAGG
FRANKLIN FAVORITE

Simpson County is kicking off its annual fall Hay Bale Trail with a patriotic twist this year, honoring America's 250th birthday.

The theme for the 2026 Simpson County Hay Bale Trail honors the nation's semiquincentennial milestone. Simpson County Tourism Commission Executive Director Amy Ellis encourages participants to weave red, white, and blue into their displays to showcase local pride and honor the country.

There is no entry fee for the contest, and the deadline to submit an entry is midnight, Oct. 16.

For Ellis, the competition is a definitive marker of the changing seasons. "We have some very creative people in our community and they have embraced the spirit of ushering in the fall season with the hay bale trail decorating competition," Ellis said, noting that the event offers a perfect opportunity for families to drive around and take in the

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CERT hosts 2nd annual dinner honoring first responders

BY BEVERLY BRAGG
FRANKLIN FAVORITE

The Simpson County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) hosted its second annual Emergency Responders Recognition Dinner on Aug. 29 to honor local police, fire, sheriff, and EMS personnel for their continued community service in Franklin-Simpson County.

The event was held in the AG building at Jim Roberts Community Park and featured a welcome address by CERT Chief Mickey Craus, a dedicated "Table of Honor" tribute to fallen responders, and a dinner entirely donated by local businesses.

The CERT program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team

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A COLORFUL DISPLAY



Beverly Bragg/Franklin Favorite

Fiery red and orange lantana blooms brighten Main Street on the historic Franklin square, part of the downtown beautification efforts managed by the Franklin-Simpson Renaissance.

Wreaths Across America returns to Franklin Cemetery

BY BEVERLY BRAGG
FRANKLIN FAVORITE

For the second consecutive year, approximately 500 local veterans buried at a local Franklin Cemetery will be honored with holiday remembrance wreaths on their graves.

The annual National Wreaths Across America Day ceremony and wreath-laying event will take place on Dec. 19 at 11 a.m. at Greenlawn & Shady Rest Cemetery, located at 420 Cemetery Street in Frank-

lin. A pre-ceremony will be held beforehand at the American Legion on Legion Drive.

The 40-acre municipal cemetery, established in the late 1800s and managed by the City of Franklin, features a dedicated veterans' section offering complimentary gravesites to American service members.

The Wreaths Across America Day event is being coordinated by the Civil Air Patrol's Bowling Green Senior Squadron in Warren

County, which first brought the program to Franklin last year.

The tribute event is free and open to the public.

Organizers are in the early stages of planning and are actively inviting local veteran groups, community organizations, and civic leaders to participate.

Civil Air Patrol Major Harvey Diven emphasized that this year's theme, "Remember Me" is a call to action during the busy holiday season to actively remember the sacrifices of

all veterans.

"I know people get busy around the holidays, but this year, as a veteran, I would like to ask people not to forget to remember," said Diven. "Our veterans served in both times of peace and war, and regardless of when they served, they made sacrifices. Whether it was the ultimate sacrifice of giving their life for their country and what it stands for, or just lengthy periods of time away from

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What's Inside

A—Obituaries, Columns, Features, Sports

Weather Forecast



THURSDAY

50% Storms

high 90°
low 68°



FRIDAY

40% Storms

high 86°
low 68°



SATURDAY

30% Storms

high 90°
low 70°

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