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Fiscal Court adopts budget that may offer raises in December

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After little discussion, Oldham Fiscal Court approved a spending plan on June 16 for the next fiscal year that withholds any immediate salary increase for county employees.

The budget reserves \$100,000 that Fiscal Court will consider using for pay increases in December, Judge-Executive Duane Murner said. That would amount to a 1.5 percent increase for county employees for the last six months of the fiscal year.

Murner said officials decided to hold the money because there are too many questions, including how much the federal government will contribute for the ice and windstorms.

Last year, employees received a 2.5 percent increase. The county now has 89 employees.

Raises for Murner, Jailer Mike Simpson and Sheriff Steve Sparrow are mandatory under state law, and they will get one-tenth of 1 percent.

County officials expect to get \$212,000 in federal funds for the January ice storm, and they're expecting a \$200,000 budget surplus.

The budget was developed keeping the property tax at 9 cents for every \$100 worth of property, but county finance officer Shawn Boyle said officials won't know until July whether the rate can change under state law.

The budget also includes about \$3.5million from the tax on insurance premiums — \$100,000 less than last year.

Boyle said the county last year received 4 percent of the 10 percent tax from La Grange residents because the city was late notifying the state of its rate increase to 10 percent, up from 6 percent. That allowed Oldham County, which had already raised the rate for all residents to 10 percent, to collect the additional 4 percent.

Also, insurance premiums are decreasing because people aren't buying new property, and insurance companies are lowering their rates in this economy, Boyle said.

The budget also predicts receiving \$150,000 in building permits, down from \$280,000. Also, road paving has been beefed up to \$1.5million, from \$1.2million.

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