

STONEWALL COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

Introduction:

Stonewall County Appraisal District was established in 1980. Appraisal Districts were created by the Texas Legislature and approved by Texas voters in 1979. Stonewall County Appraisal District is a political subdivision of the State of Texas and is governed by the Board of Directors who:

1. Establish the Appraisal District office
2. Adopt the Appraisal District's annual budget
3. Contract for necessary services
4. Hire the Chief Appraiser
5. Make general policy regarding the operation of the Appraisal District and develop and implement policies on reasonable access to the board
6. Prepare information describing the board's functions and complaint procedures.
7. Determine Appraisal Review Board size and terms
8. May remove an Appraisal Review Board Member once learning of potential grounds for removal
9. Provide advice and consent to the chief appraiser concerning appointment of an agricultural advisory board and determine the number of members and terms
10. Adopt a biennial reappraisal plan

Stonewall County Appraisal District presents the Appraisal Records to the Appraisal Review Board who:

1. Hear property owner protests
2. Hear taxing unit challenges
3. Issues change order to the Appraisal District
4. Approves/Certifies the Appraisal Records to Roll

Stonewall County Appraisal District property values are certified to each taxing entity. The Stonewall County Appraisal District appraises property in Stonewall County for ad valorem tax purposes for each taxing unit that imposes ad valorem taxes on property in the county:

1. Stonewall County

2. City of Aspermont
3. Stonewall Memorial Hospital
4. Aspermont ISD
5. Rotan ISD
6. Rule ISD
7. Haskell CISD
8. Hamlin CISD

Goal:

Our goal is to provide effective service of the highest quality to the Appraisal District taxpayers and ensure fair and equal treatment while maintaining patience, courtesy, and professionalism while responding to questions and concerns that may arise.

Objective:

Develop educational and serviceable information to inform taxpayers about Stonewall County Appraisal District and the Property Tax System.

Target Audiences:

- Citizens of Stonewall County
- Taxpayers who are property owners in our county but live outside of the county
- Potential taxpayers of Stonewall County considering to move to, invest in, or provide services within Stonewall County

Research:

Make an inquiry of areas of improvement by speaking with or conducting surveys concerning the thoughts and attitudes of residents, businesses, taxing entities, and media within Stonewall County.

Strategies:

- Develop Stonewall County Appraisal District Public Relations Procedures
- Maintain good customer service that ensures courteous, professional and congenial atmosphere
- Identify Stonewall County Appraisal District Accomplishments
- Passing Property Value Study and Map Review by the State Comptroller's office
- Providing area maps for the public and our entities
- Providing general information to the public as requested

- Maintain Stonewall County Appraisal District website
 - Provide news releases and publications to taxpayers by either newspaper publication, media broadcast, the Stonewall County Appraisal District website or Texas State Comptroller's Website.
1. News Releases published by Texas Comptroller should be distributed within time frame for each publication such as: Exemptions, Renditions, etc.
 2. Publication of Board of Directors and Appraisal Review Board meetings' agendas
 3. Publication of Property appraisal protest and Appeal Procedures - form 50-195
 4. Publication of Stonewall County Appraisal District annual budget - 6.062 tax code
 5. Maintaining Stonewall County Appraisal District website for public use which will be updated periodically through the year.

Specific Plan Action:

The Stonewall CAD must remain flexible to changes/needs as they arise. The timeline below will be followed but the timeline can and should be altered to respond to individual and special circumstances, with additional customer service and public relation needs as they are identified.

January - December

- The chief appraiser shall attend commissioner's court, city council, school board, and other governmental body meetings, as invited, to provide information on matters related to property tax policy.

January

- Review and develop public information brochures and other materials related to property exemptions, renditions and special appraisals.
- Publish notices in local newspapers about requirements and availability of applications for deferrals, homestead exemptions, renditions and agricultural appraisals.

February - March

- The CAD will have training available for staff through online classes, in person, and/or within our office.

- Public Relations is addressed in the Stonewall County Appraisal District Employee's Handbook and will be reviewed/updated periodically.

April - May

- Prepare press release for notices of appraised values and protest process.
- Publish notice in local newspaper about property owner protests and ARB procedures once approved will be sent to the comptroller's office, placed on the CAD website and mailed to the protesting property owner.

June - July

- The chief appraiser shall provide updates to staff, Appraisal Review Board, the taxing entities - status updates on the CAD's certification efforts.
- Place preliminary budgets on CAD website and send to each taxing entity.
- CAD financial audit is sent to each taxing entity and made available for the general public in the office.

July - August

- Hold planning sessions to evaluate, review, planning/implantation of customer service and communication recommendations.
- Cyber Security training for staff.

August - October

- Provide public notice of hearings for reappraisal plan and annual budget and on CAD website.
- Publish notice in paper regarding field activities and on CAD website.
- Update Truth in Taxation websites as the information becomes available from taxing entities on tax rates.

November - December

- Review, update and development of website content, specifically explaining appraisal district policy and procedures to include but not limited to frequently asked questions, tax information, forms, district statistics and property information.

Evaluation:

Conduct follow-up surveys of residents, businesses and taxing units to determine attitude shifts. Review media coverage annually to identify areas of improvement.

Jurisdiction Contact:

Stonewall County Appraisal District Chief Appraiser is the spokesperson for the office and is responsible for dealing with the media, both in verbal and written

format. In the absence of the Chief Appraiser, the Deputy Chief Appraiser may provide information as requested.

Response to Emergencies:

If a minor emergency occurs, the Chief Appraiser will handle the emergency as it arises by identifying the problem, develop a strategy to respond, seek *staff/ employee input, respond quickly and completely, and follow up to ensure the problem has been resolved. If a disaster crisis should occur, the Stonewall County Appraisal District has a Disaster Recovery Plan in place to handle these occurrences.

Conclusion:

This plan utilizes resources available to the Stonewall County Appraisal District to heighten the public's awareness of the property tax system and our office without added budget requirements. It is a Stonewall County Appraisal District priority to maintain effective relationships with the officials of the various governmental entities the Appraisal District serves, taxpayers, and the general public.