



Office of the Will County Board
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Board sets 2013 estimated tax levy

Average homeowner will see minimal \$3.11 annual increase

JOLIET, IL- The Will County Board has approved the 2013 estimated annual aggregate levy and will collect no more than \$900,000 in new property tax revenue next year or 0.8 percent more than 2012. The Board will set the final levy amount and adopt its an annual budget next month.

"Will County is a growing county, and we need to keep up with the growth we are experiencing," said Speaker Herbert Brooks, Jr. "The reality is we have fairer and more attractive tax rates when compared to surrounding counties, and I believe this levy does not change this fact. Moreover, these additional dollars will help to address some important public safety capital projects that have been in the planning stages for many years."

The 2013 levy of no more than \$112,773,680 is projected to raise the annual taxes of a \$200,000 home by only \$3.11. In adopting the estimated levy, the Board approved only capturing the amount of tax revenue generated by new construction in the county.

"The Board has held the levy constant for the past four years," said Steve Wilhelmi (D-Joliet), chair of the finance committee. "We have capital projects that need to be funded, and the additional dollars we receive by setting the levy at this level will go towards those and ensure we can continue providing essential services to our residents."

Capital projects include work at the Sheriff's Laraway Road campus to prepare the campus for future renovations and additions, including new evidence storage and training buildings as well as a new administration building with space to consolidate public safety offices, such as the Coroner's Office and Emergency Management services. Additional priorities include the acquisition of the First Midwest Bank building at 50 W. Jefferson St. and programming a new courthouse there. A new courthouse could eventually be built on the First Midwest property, which is across the street from the existing courthouse at 14 W. Jefferson St.

"We have heard from our constituents that these projects should move forward, and we have and will continue to make efficient use of every dollar going towards them," said Democratic caucus chair Diane Zigrossi (D-Crest Hill). "We are always mindful of how taxpayer dollars are spent and only levy what is absolutely necessary. This levy is no exception."

Republican caucus chair Jim Moustis (R-Frankfort) along with most members of his caucus would have preferred a levy that did not increase taxes.

"I believe the government is not entitled to other people's money," said Moustis. "There are other ways to fund our operations instead of increasing taxes. It doesn't matter how small the increase when a resident is out of work or barely making ends meet."

The Board is set to finalize the levy and approve the 2014 budget at its November 21st meeting.

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