

The Board of County Commissioners, in and for the County of Otero, State of New Mexico, met in a Special Meeting at the Otero County Courthouse in Alamogordo, County and State aforesaid. Meeting called to order by the Chairman at 8:30 a.m., September 26, 2000; and he announced that reasonable notice for this meeting was given to the Alamogordo Daily News, Mountain Monthly, and to Radio Stations, KPSA, KINN and KYEE.

Present:

- Richard Zierlein Chairman
- Timothy McGinn Vice-Chairman
- Virginia Fletcher Assistant County Administrator
- Kim Chavez Deputy Clerk

**DRAFT**

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**I. Approve Resolution No. 09-26-00/89-08, Re: Property Tax Rate-Setting**

**Order 2000 Tax Year.** Wayne Bennett, County Assessor stated that there is only one protest left and that is in Mayhill. Mr. Bennett stated that the property owner will not allow the Appraiser's form the Assessor's Office on his land to appraise it, therefore it has to be appraised from the road.

Mr. Bennett stated that the big problem he has is that the owners of some apartment complexes want the status of **the property changed** to residential. Mr. Bennett stated that the definition of residential does not exclude **apartment complexes** in the State rules and regulation. There are three different apartment complexes that are going to be placed on residential if the owners get their choice. Elyse Beckman, County Treasurer stated that now that the rate has been set for this year the County has

over budgeted approximately \$481,000.00 and the PILT money came in about \$63,000.00 more than last year. Commissioner Zierlein stated that the \$63,000.00 in PILT would not do any good for pay raises or bonuses for employees. Mrs. Beckman reminded the Commission that the amount over budgeted is also going to have to be compounded with what was over budgeted last year. Mrs. Beckman stated that she wanted to let the Commission know up front so that at the end of the fiscal year it does not come down to not being able to pay employees. Commissioner Zierlein stated that the Community Service projects have been sent a letter that if funding is not available they will be cut out. Dianna Duran, Chief Deputy Clerk asked Commissioner Zierlein what the Commission plans on doing for this year's budget because if the Community Service projects lose their funding it will be for next year's budget not this year's? Commissioner Zierlein stated that there is still some money in the emergency reserve fund and maybe with the freeze on hiring those two things may help the budget. Mrs. Beckman stated that the Commission can't count on those things. There is \$410,000.00 that is over budgeted to be given out, added to the over budgeted amount for last year. Commissioner Zierlein stated at this point in time he is not willing to go back in and do another budget, he is going to watch the budget that has been budgeted very carefully. Cathe Prather, Deputy Treasurer, stated that the County can't ignore this matter. Commissioner Zierlein stated that come next year if the budget does not get any better there is going to have to be lay offs. Mrs. Duran stated that Commissioner McGinn informed her that Otero Counties budget had a lot of fat in it. Commissioner McGinn stated that this past budget session most of the fat was cut out of the budget. Commissioner Zierlein stated that what has hurt the budget is the Sheriff's Department and the Detention. This is the first year the Sheriff's Department was not allowed to hire new employees. When you put a new employee in the Sheriff's Department it cost about \$50,000.00 per employee

because not only do they get a new employee but they also have to get that employee a car. Commissioner Zierlein stated that there is not too many employees because we still have crime, but the County has allowed it to grow more than the County can afford. The Detention has also hurt the budget and we can't freeze the hire there because of State Laws. The only way Otero County is going to get out of this is to impose the one-mil property tax increase that the County has not imposed yet. There is also a 1/8 percent gross receipt tax the County can impose. The County can also start charging for trash to be dumped at the convenience centers. Commissioner Zierlein stated that the compensation plan has put the County in the financial position it is in now. Mary Quintana, Otero County Clerk asked the Commission when they are planning on working on the cut backs now or at the end of the budget year and not be able to pay employees? Commissioner Zierlein stated he is doing everything he can to try and create revenue. Mrs. Quintana asked the Commission if they have considered taking away all the capital outlay from each department? Commissioner Zierlein stated that if the Commission took away all the capital outlay it would only total between \$250,000.00 and \$300,000.00. Commissioner Zierlein stated that the first cut is going to be from the Road Department, for maintaining roads. Commissioner Zierlein stated that there are also some employees that may be retiring this year that will help the budget. Commissioner Zierlein stated that he is looking into charging for dumping trash. Mrs. Beckman stated that the reason the budget is over, is when the budget was done the wrong rate was used to figure it. Commissioner McGinn asked why we can't go back to the budget and cut out more line items. Commissioner Zierlein stated that to redo the budget now will be a mess with DFA. Commissioner McGinn asked that on the next regular meeting agenda the Commission would have to go back in and look at the budget. Commissioner McGinn made a motion to approve Resolution No. 09-26-00/89-08, Re: Property Tax

Rate-Setting Order 2000 Tax Year. Commissioner Zierlein seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. See pages \_\_\_\_\_.

There being no further business before the Commission, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

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**Chairman**

**ATTEST:**

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**Mary D. Quintana**  
**Otero County Clerk**