

Fairview Municipal Election – May 4, 2019

Bond Proposition Voter Information

Fire Station #1 Bond Proposal

Ballot Proposal: Borrow \$7.6M to build a replacement for Fire Station #1

History: A \$25M bond was presented to the voters in November of 2017 for a new fire station and municipal complex. This was rejected by 70% of the voters in a large turnout election. This new bond proposal is for a Fire Station only.

Note: The level of service will not be affected whether the bond is approved or rejected.

There is currently service, equipment, and housing at FS#1. The gain from the passage of the bond will be a replacement station with a hardened safe space, more bedrooms, offices, and better space for trucks and equipment. It will also provide space for a *future* ambulance.

DEBT - The primary concern against the bond is the increase in debt required. Fairview has a fairly high debt per capita (top 10% in the state) already. Some have argued that other debt is rolling off, but are there any projects coming up that will require additional debt? Some of the project funding is coming from the TIF and CDC, but some argue that a larger share should come from those funds.

People who are against the debt are not anti-firefighter. In fact, keeping our debt in check means there is a better chance that funds will be there for needed safety equipment and salaries of the fire fighters and other personnel. An overextended town has to reduce personnel during a downturn.

TAX RATE - The town claims there will be no tax rate increase to pay for the bond, but sales tax from the commercial district has been flat or falling – while the economy has been strong. If there is an economic downturn, then the property tax revenue will be forced to cover the debt and a rate increase could be required.

COST / VALUE - The cost of the fire station still seems high. After spending money for the land (\$1.6M?) and \$400K for design, the town will spend \$1.2M from existing funds and borrow another \$7.6M. That's approximately \$11M total - much higher than many neighboring community fire stations. The average new station cost in Texas is \$5M-\$6.5M total.

The town council did NOT unanimously vote in favor of the new fire station. The CRG did NOT vote unanimously for the new fire station and they were never provided all the needed information.

A new fire station:

- Will **NOT** improve response time
- Will **NOT** provide additional firefighters, EMS staff, or other services
- Will **NOT** provide an additional fully operational/staffed ambulance
- Will significantly increase our town debt