

PRESS RELEASE

February 24, 2010

**Fayette County Appraisal District
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La Grange, Texas 77045**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Texas State Comptroller of Public Accounts audited the valuations of the Fayette County Appraisal District (FCAD) and found the district's appraisals within accepted norms according to a report issued by the Comptroller's office dated January 26, 2010.

Chief Appraiser Karen Schubert explained that the State Comptroller's office audited FCAD to assure that the district's appraisals were done correctly. Next year, according to Schubert, the Comptroller's office will perform an audit of the office, looking to assure the office policies, procedures, and practices meet acceptable state standards.

Schubert explained she welcomed the new board member's concern that the office is being well managed. However, she has pledged FCAD will operate within legal guidelines and it is her intent to do so. Items not on the agenda cannot be discussed. Additionally, the latest edition (2006) of the Appraisal District Director's Manual published by The Texas State Comptroller of Public Accounts states the following:

The board's authority over appraisals is limited. The board does not appraise property or review values on individual properties. The law assigns these tasks to the chief appraiser and the appraisal review board, respectively. The board has no authority to review appraisal review board decisions. The board has no business reviewing exemptions, qualification for special appraisal or taxability determinations.

The board does have some authority over appraisal policy through its duties to contract, budget and plan reappraisals. Through its contracting authority, the board determines how appraisals are performed -- through in-house appraisal, a private appraisal firm or both. The district's operating budget reflects the board's decisions on handling appraisals. The board of directors also exercises its influence when it works with the chief appraiser to develop its biennial plan for the periodic reappraisal of all property in the district.

The board exercises some authority over appraisals when it grants the chief appraiser its approval to appeal appraisal review board decisions to district court. The chief appraiser must be granted permission from the board of directors to appeal an appraisal review board order, settle lawsuits and direct litigation.

Schubert added that an agenda item will be included in the next board meeting to allow board members to legally discuss concerns about whether the district is operating properly and allow the Board of Directors to consider a bid to review the operations of the district by an outside auditor.