

Commissioners Court picks Tatum for JP position

BY MONIQUE BRAND
DISPATCH RECORD

The Lampasas County Commissioners Court on Monday selected Lampasas High School law enforcement teacher Michael Tatum to replace Andrew Garcia Jr. as Precinct 1 justice of the peace.

Garcia, who has served in the capacity for 14 years, announced his retirement in early August, citing health reasons as well as a desire to spend more time with his family.

Prior to serving as a justice of the peace, Garcia worked as a Texas Department of Public Safety trooper for 32 years. His last day as an elected official is Sept. 30.

On Monday, the Commis-

sioners Court interviewed four candidates — Tatum, Heritage Funeral Home co-owner James Mercer, recent law school graduate Stephen McKinney and county court clerk Misty Wakeman — before selecting Tatum to fill Garcia's unexpired term.

The process took close to three hours, and the vote for Tatum was unanimous.

After the vote, Precinct 2 Commissioner Jamie Smart told the Dispatch Record the applicants were all "highly qualified candidates."

Other members of the



Michael Tatum

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HUNTER KING | DISPATCH RECORD

Lampasas High School announces Homecoming nominees

Nominees for Lampasas High School Homecoming queen are, from left, Katie Procter, Jara Stephens, Isabel Ybarra, Laurcy Bender, Vivian Gardner and Jordan Plummer. King nominees are, from left, Carson Bekker, Collin Martin, Dax Brookreson, Dylan Jones, Quinn Pace (standing) and Jaxon Tomme (on Pace's shoulders). The queen will be crowned at halftime of the Badgers' Sept. 17 game against China Spring. For a preview of the game, see page 6.



MONIQUE BRAND | DISPATCH RECORD

Members of the Kempner Volunteer Fire Department cleared out a camper that was engulfed in flames for close to 30 minutes Tuesday afternoon. No injuries were reported.

Fire in camper displaces Kempner-area family

BY MONIQUE BRAND
DISPATCH RECORD

A fire late Tuesday afternoon in the east end of the county destroyed a Sierra RV and displaced a family.

Multiple fire departments

responded to a structure fire in the 700 block of County Road 4804 shortly before 5 p.m.

The fire was contained just before 5:30 p.m.

According to eyewitnesses, the family that lived in the camper left an hour before

the incident.

One neighbor said she heard a loud boom before seeing smoke.

The Kempner Volunteer Fire Department reported no injuries and no impact on surrounding structures.

Copperas Cove Fire Department and Lampasas Fire Department aided in the effort.

The fire left the camper uninhabitable.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Ballots available for annual Best of the Best contest

The Lampasas Dispatch Record's popular Best of the Best Reader's Choice contest kicks off this month. This marks the sixth year the newspaper has offered balloting to recognize readers' favorite people and business services in Lampasas County.

A ballot appears on page 5 of today's edition.

Readers are invited to vote for their favorite restaurants, retail outlets, service providers and business people across a variety of categories. There is no limit to the number of times one can vote, as long as original newspaper ballots are used. No photocopies will be accepted.

Ballots will run in editions between now and early November, so readers will have multiple opportunities to select the people and places across

Lampasas County they would like to name as their Best of the Best.

As an extra incentive to participate in the contest, the Dispatch Record is offering a cash prize to three randomly selected entrants. Those readers whose names are drawn will receive a check for \$50, \$75 or \$100. The more times a reader votes, the more chances he or she will have to win.

Rules and voting deadline are listed on the Best of the Best ballot.

After the ballots are tallied later in the fall, winners will be announced, and Best of the Best award recipients will be featured in a special section of the newspaper.

Be sure to honor all those special people and businesses that make our county a great place to live and work and shop. Fill out a ballot today!

Lampasas City Council approves Fiscal Year 2022 budget, decides to decrease property tax rate

BY MONIQUE BRAND
DISPATCH RECORD

With little discussion Monday night, the Lampasas City Council unanimously approved its upcoming fiscal-year budget and tax rate.

Councilman Zac Morris was absent from Monday's meeting.

The Fiscal Year 2022 budget does not

include a utility rate increase, according to staff reports.

City officials adopted a \$30.6 million budget, slightly lower than the current budget of \$31.5 million. The new fiscal year will start Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30, 2022.

Of the total budget, \$11.3 million is dedicated to the general fund.

Staff reports show the base budget

includes the purchase of two police patrol vehicles; pool liner and upgrades at Hanna Springs Swimming Pool; a water/wastewater utility pick-up truck and haul trailer; and authorizes work on the Hostess House, along with upgrades at Campbell Park and the new skate park.

City Manager Finley deGraffenried gave an update on the budget during his

operations report.

"As discussed with council during the budget process, staff has requested a proposal for complete design and construction specifications for the Hostess House for consideration on Sept. 27," the report said, adding that the City Council

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WEATHER

Date	High	Low	Rain
Sept. 12	90	66	0
Sept. 13	85	68	0
Sept. 14	83	67	0
Sept. 15	87	70	0

Total rainfall for 2021: 20.49 in.

Data from the Lower Colorado River Authority (site 11 miles west-northwest of Lampasas, near Nix).

BRIEFLY

INDIAN ARTIFACTS, MINERALS & GEMS

The Indian Artifact & Mineral and Gem Show will be Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lampasas County Livestock Association's show barn, located at 283 North U.S. Highway 183.

The Indian Artifact & Mineral and Gem Show is sponsored by Vision Lampasas.

Admission is \$8, although children under 12 will be admitted for free.

A food truck will be on site.

FARM BUREAU CONVENTION

Lampasas County Farm Bureau will host its county convention Oct. 5 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lampasas County Livestock Association's show barn, located at 283 North U.S. Highway 183.

A meal and door prizes will be provided. The guest speaker will be Gary Joiner, director of

communications for Texas Farm Bureau.

Convention participants will craft policy resolutions to guide the organization in 2022, and they will elect leaders to represent Lampasas County farmers, ranchers and business owners. Also, voting delegates will be selected to represent Lampasas County at the Texas Farm Bureau annual meeting in December in Corpus Christi.



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