



*Happy New Year from the Taylor Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center, our Board of Directors and our Ambassador group.*

Thank you, Taylor, for your continued support!

# Sales tax revenues up in 2012

MIKE EDDLEMAN  
publisher

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs announced state sales tax revenue in November was \$2.34 billion, up 13.1 percent compared to November 2011, meaning December sales tax disbursements also increased.

December local sales tax allocations

totalled \$552 million to cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts, up 15.5 percent compared to December 2011.

In Taylor, December allocations were \$250,488, up 13.22 percent over December 2011. That brings the calendar year total to \$3,213,443, an increase of 9.08 percent. In 2011 Taylor received \$2,945,826 in sales

tax disbursements.

This year was only the fourth for Taylor to exceed \$3 million in sales tax revenues, the other three being 2006-2008 before ERCOT gained its tax exempt status in 2008, four years after applying for it.

City staff did not budget for sales tax increases during the last budget cycle which began in October,

but told the council it may come back following the first quarter – which ends in December – with some items that some of the extra revenues can be used for. Capital items mentioned throughout the budget process included vehicle purchases as well as computer needs.

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Roy Carroll, Paul Schlesinger, and Bill Dowdy accept their "stars" as the newest members of the Country Music Hall of Fame in Gatesville on Nov. 16. In addition to being inducted to the Hall of Fame, all three were recognized as "Entertainers of the Year."

## Schlesinger inducted into Hall of Fame

CHRISTINE BOLAÑOS  
staff writer

Paul Schlesinger, who plays fiddle, rhythm guitar and sings and lives in Taylor, was inducted into the Gatesville Country Music Hall of Fame on Nov. 16. The honor is a culmination of a huge portion of his lifetime that has been dedicated to what he refers to as "old" country music.

"I'm very proud of it. There are certainly a lot of musicians that are deserving of recognition. It's just my good fortune and those of the others that were inducted on the same night that it was our time to happen. I think it's a blessing. I just hope that I and my musical companions can continue to grow and achieve in the music business," said Schlesinger.

Rhythm guitarist Bill Dowdy of Lexington and steel guitarist and vocalist Roy Carroll of Round Rock were also inducted at Gatesville City Auditorium the same night.

"They exemplify country music in a way that's truly outstanding. They've paid their dues, and have given many, many people lasting memories," explained Roger Vierser, director of the Hall of Fame, of the selection of the three musicians.

Vierser discovered them while watching them perform at the Thorndale VFW Jamboree.

Fellow band members bassist J.C. George of Buda and drummer Jim Bowles of Austin were installed as honorary members.

### The journey

The journey to eventually landing a place in the Hall of Fame is in large part due to networking.

While earning his photojournalism degree at the University of Texas at Austin in the early 1990s, Schlesinger became immersed in the world of traditional western swing and Texas honky-tonk music.

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Photos courtesy of Rita Baughman  
Paul Schlesinger performs one of his signature fiddle tricks during the stage show prior to the induction ceremony.

## Hutto alters YMCA plan

ELIZABETH PAGE  
staff writer

A revised design option for the new Hutto Family YMCA was approved by the city Dec. 20, after construction cost estimates came in higher than expected.

Council members chose a design that maintains the exterior integrity of the original KA Hickman Architects design, yet has a smaller overall square footage due to the elimination of a 3,750-sq. ft. mini gym.

Cutting out the mini gym should not hinder Y programming or discourage membership, according to Sheri Yerrington, district executive director of the Chasco Family YMCA. She is on the project team to complete the Hutto facility.

"I believe this community has a great relationship with your school district," Yerrington told the council earlier this month. "If it was not for that, that would probably bring us more concern that we could not operate programs. I will tell you right now, we are already operating programs in the gyms with your local school district, so that is not as much concern to the YMCA because there's those established relationships that are already there. In some of our communities, we're not as fortunate to have those great relationships with the school district."

Harsh soil conditions and a lack of infrastructure are driving up costs for the facility approved by voters in 2009 with a \$5-million price tag. That cost was based on an initial 25,000-sq. ft. building.

The council approved spending \$550,000 more than the \$5 million in voter approved bonds to cover unanticipated site development work, such as infill of the site and extensive utility and concrete work.

Of the additional \$550,000 that will be allocated to the project, the council specified \$400,000 to be issued as certificates of obligation and the remainder will come from city reserves.

Bonds for Y construction will be issued as part of an estimated \$9.8-million bond issue likely to take place in February 2013, according to Assistant City Manager Micah Grau.

Grau gave details of the bond issue at the Dec. 20 meeting. About \$5.7 million in new bonds will be issued and the remainder likely will be refinanced 2003-4 series bonds.

These bond funds will pay for a variety of projects, including: Construction funds for the YMCA facility and paving of CR 165, the road leading to the YMCA facility; FM 685 road and bridge improvements; a variety of utilities infrastructure projects; and \$509,000 to purchase the Hutto Economic Development Corporation's offices.

The tax impact of moving forward with these projects, including but not

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