



FRANKLIN COUNTY TREASURER ANNUAL CITIZEN REPORT 2016

03/14/2016

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ONE SOLUTION GOES LIVE

On January 22nd, 2016, AS400, a 20 year old DOS based accounting software began being phased out. After years of preparation and testing, Franklin County went "live" with the Accounts Payable module of their new accounting software One Solution on February 1st 2016.

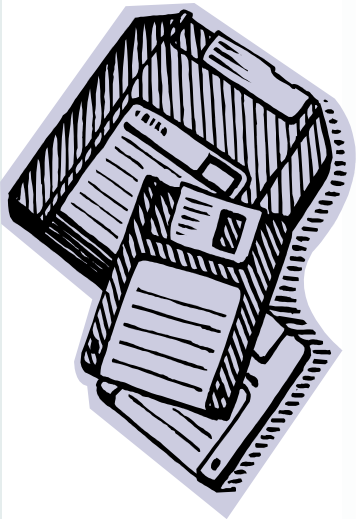
This is a big step forward for the County as it allows for more automated security measures.

Using an automated security process, checks must first be approved within each department before being electronically submitted to the Auditor. Once the Auditor's Office verifies the expenditures are within the approved budget, they are sent to the Treasurer for approval. When the Treasurer verifies there is sufficient funds to pay, the check is approved and sent back to the Auditor for printing.

The added security has been a

much needed upgrade to Franklin Counties accounting software. This deficiency was made apparent after Franklin County suffered a sizable fraud loss leading to the termination and imprisonment of their County Roads Finance Director in 2013.

This prompted another need for automated security surrounding the process of adding new vendors for payment. The system now requires multiple users to review and approve request for new vendor. Additionally any changes made to existing vendors information such as phone numbers, addresses, names all require approval by multiple employee's within the Franklin County Auditors office. All changes are tracked in One Solution by the individuals making the changes, leaving a digital footprint.



Now that Accounts Payable is off and running the County has turned its attention to their Payroll system. Payroll is scheduled to be integrated into One solution in the coming months.

TAX COLLECTION

- **2015 Tax Roll**
\$77,910,960.06 (includes Misc Assessments and Penalties)
 - **2015 Tax Collections**
\$77,023,795.92
 - **Parcel Count** *Real*

Property	29,258
Personal Prop	2,852
Mobile Home	1,569
State Assessed	509
Irrigation	4,439
 - **Office Budget** \$688,274
- Actual Expense for 2015 \$682,555*
- **Office Staff** 9

SAYING GOOD BYE TO A LEGEND

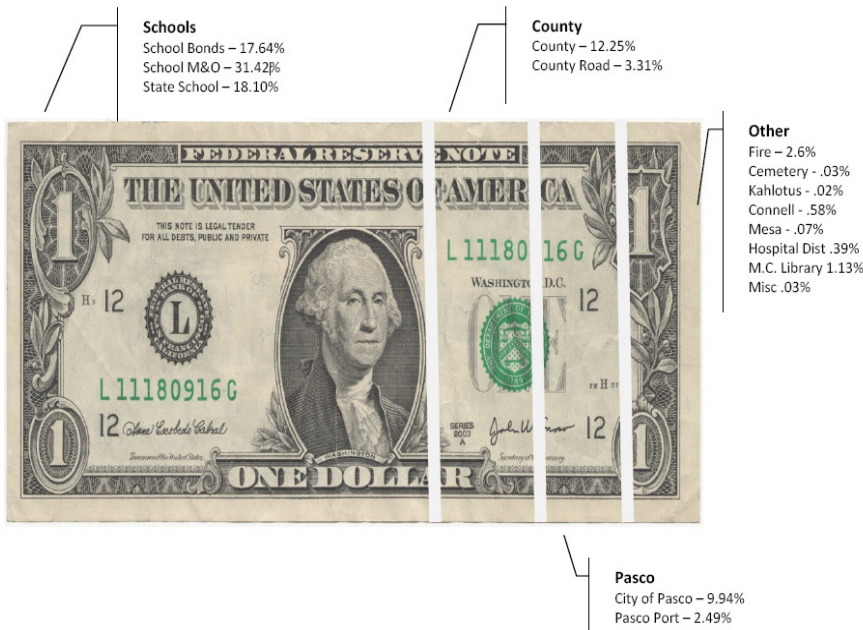
After 39 years of service to Franklin County, a legend has retired. Mrs. Shelley Larson started with the Franklin Counties Treasurer's office in 1977. The office looked significantly different then it does now. Type writers were in the place of computers and filing cabinets lined the walls. For many years Shelley served as the Mortgage

Clerk. Tax statements were manually sorted alphabetically and indexed by mortgage company. Through the years the times and technology has changed, but Shelley's love for her customers did not. Through five different treasurers, not a day went by that Shelley didn't laugh, cry, or joke with the tax payers in Franklin County. Many

asked for her by name because they had gotten comfortable with a familiar face. While Shelley will be missed by many, she was loved by all that knew her. From everyone at the Treasurers office we wish Mrs. Shelley Larson a wonderful and well deserved retirement.

WHERE DO YOUR TAX DOLLARS GO

2016 FRANKLIN COUNTY
PROPERTY TAX DISTRIBUTION



When Property Taxes are collected every dollar is broken up by the levy rates in the districts they are collected in. As a whole the Franklin County Tax roll is \$77,910,960 for 2016. Just over \$52.3 million dollars of the \$78 million goes to pay for local and state schools. This means roughly 67.2% of every dollar collected for property taxes in 2016 will go to fund schools in Washington. In contrast Cities, Fire Districts, Library Districts, Ports, County Roads, and many other service providers receive the remaining 32.8% for Operations.

Franklin County received just over \$8.8 million of its general operating budget (which is

called Current Expense) from property taxes. With the Counties Current Expense budget of \$29,683,726 its easy to see what a large roll taxes play in running the County.

Franklin County provides many services to the public. The largest costs to counties are typically centered around law enforcement. In 2016 nearly \$11 million dollars will be spent from the Counties budget to pay for Sheriff service, Detention and Corrections, and Sheriff Communications. Franklin Counties other departments such as the Clerks office is part of the Courts and Criminal Justice system of Franklin County. The Clerks office also offers other services such as Passports. (Cont PG4)

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PAY TAXES ONLINE WITH POINT AND PAY

For added convenience you can now pay your taxes online at :

<http://terra.co.franklin.wa.us/TaxSifter/Search/Results.aspx>

The Franklin County Treasurer has partnered with Point and Pay so that you can conveniently pay your taxes online. You have the

ability to pay with Credit Card, Visa Debit Card or E- Check.

Convenience fees for using this service will be in addition to the taxes owed. Online payments fees for E-Check are \$1, Credit card fees are 2.5% of your total tax payments and Visa Debit cards can be used for a flat \$3.95.



LOOK ONLINE

The TaxSifter website allows the public open access to a wealth of information. Using the webpage you can access information about your property including basic appraisal information, legal descriptions, even aerial maps. You are even able to access property tax information for the past five years under the Treasurers tab. If you select your parcel number, address, or last name on this page you are able to locate and pay

your taxes online. If you want to access historical documentation surrounding the sale of your property you can use the REETSifter tab. If you know the buyer or sellers name, parcel number or even address you can lookup and view the original copy of Real Estate Excise Tax Affidavits online. For more information regarding the information at your finger tips contact the Office of the Franklin County Treasurer.




WHATS A ROAD SHIFT

A “Road Shift” occurs when property taxes collected for County Roads are diverted to the Counties General operating fund, or the “Current Expense Fund”. This occurs when there are extraneous circumstances that requires the additional funding to balance the current budget. In 2016 a Road Shift of \$650,000 was taken to balance the budget. Budget deficit was largely caused by

the need for additional correction officers at the Franklin County Detention and Corrections center. The jail which has struggled to find qualified corrections officers had to add five positions in 2016 to keep up with current standards.

While the current need is met, simply shifting money from County Roads to cover rising cost at the County is

not the answer. In the short run these funds would have been used to maintain roads within the County, complete new road projects, and pay for maintenance on equipment. With rising medical cost, and anticipation of additional Correction staff in 2017 it is uncertain whether or not a road shift will be needed again to balance the budget in coming years.

ONLINE EXCISE SHORTENS LINES IN TREASURERS OFFICE

The Treasurer’s office partnered with Simplifile this year to allow online processing of Excise Tax affidavits for title companies.

This is a “Win, Win” for all parties involved. Title companies had to drive to the Franklin County Courthouse in order to pay Excise Tax with the Treasurers office,

and record deeds in the Auditors office. Many times these could be lengthy transactions which could impact wait times for property tax payer coming to the county. Now title companies can submit their excise documents and deeds electronically.

Simplifile routes the docu-

ments through the Treasures office first so taxes can be verified and paid. Once the Treasurer stamps the documents, they are forwarded to the Auditor’s office for recording. Besides offering faster turn around times, reducing wait times, Franklin County did not have to pay for this service.



Were on the Web!!!

www.co.franklin.wa.us/treasurer

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
TREASURER**

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Becky Mulkey

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S E R V I N G F R A N K L I N C O U N T Y S I N C E 1 8 8 9

WHERE DO YOUR TAX DOLLARS GO (CONTINUED PG 3)

The Auditors office services Franklin County residents as well. Besides their responsibilities auditing the financial condition of the County, they also acts as an agent for the Dept of Licensing, changing titles for vehicles and issuing car tabs. The Auditors office also oversees Voting/Elections, and document recording for Franklin County. While there are many departments at Franklin County, the question of "Where do your tax dollars go" couldn't be answered without addressing where they come from.

While most people think the process starts with the payment to the Treasurer office, they would be incorrect. The Franklin County Assessor is the first department responsible for starting the tax collection chain. After determining the value of all the properties in Franklin County, they compile the levy rates. The levy rates are the per capita cost to the property owners for each service they receive within their Tax code area. Once the Assessor receives the budgets from the Fire Districts, Library, Schools

etc. The Tax amount is calculated then a tax payer list is sent to the Treasurer's office the first week of January. Once it has been reviewed and certified by the Treasurer, taxes are ready to be paid. At this point all the information is sent to the printer and the current years tax statements are complete and ready for mail. As payments come in, the Treasurer divides the payment by the levy districts and pays them out so the Schools, Libraries and Fire Departments can continue to serve the county.

