

Commission votes to continue contract

Written by Ty Albin, The Lawton Constitution
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Comanche County commissioners voted to continue the county's relationship with Total Assessment Solutions Corporation (TASC), a company that compiles data about energy-producing sites for property value assessments, during their regular weekly meeting Monday.

Western District Commissioner Don Hawthorne said the county has had a contract with TASC for about two years. The company visits producer sites, such as oil and gas wells, compressor stations and wind turbines to create a detailed estimation of their value for tax purposes.

Comanche County Assessor Richard Strickland said Monday that the contract renewal is good for the county because TASC has helped increase the tax revenue from energy producers. Strickland said the county does not have the means or expertise to assess production sites independently, so it hires contractors like TASC for the job.

He said the company that had the contract before TASC charged \$17,000 annually and the county received about \$80,000 in revenue from taxing energy producers.

Strickland said he believed the county could get a better return for its money, so he started looking for another contractor. The TASC contract cost an initial fee of \$85,000, plus a \$20,000 annual fee. Strickland said that in the first year of using TASC's services the county billed about \$240,000 in energy-producer property taxes.

This year, with only the \$20,000 fee, the county expects to clear about \$220,000 in property taxes from energy-production sites, the assessor said.

The commissioners also approved the purchase of two John Deere 672G motor graders from the best and lowest bidder, C.L. Boyd, on a 36-month leasepurchase plan for an individual cost of \$233,878.68 each.