

Plot Good?

“There’s no positive spin on this.”

Andrew Exum, analyst with the Washington-based Center for a New American Security

bul. He said the number of Afghan insider attacks has risen beyond what can be explained as isolated incidents.

That’s bad news for the U.S. exit strategy for Afghanistan, which has seen Washington spend more than \$20 billion on training and equipping a nearly 340,000-member Afghan security force on the assumption that it would eventually be strong enough to fight the Taliban on its own.

The coalition has downplayed the insider attacks as anomalies and mostly a result of personal grievances, even as their numbers soared from 11 last year to 29 so far in 2012. The alliance says only about 10 percent of the attacks were related to infiltration by the Taliban insurgency. But that analysis was done before the latest furious spate of seven attacks in 11 days, a frequency that suggests some type of coordination.

Cardenas has run as a Democrat for county commissioner in the past, but had considered running as a Republican before deciding in March to mount an independent candidacy. He had hoped to run with a message of fiscal conservatism.

Now the Nov. 6 race will feature incumbent Republican Ralph Hoelscher, who twice defeated Cardenas, and Democrat Jesse Martinez, a former Precinct 1 justice of the peace.

Hoelscher said that with Cardenas off the ballot, the race may become more of a challenge.

“With Cardenas being in the race, it probably would’ve split the vote between him and Jesse Martinez, particularly the Hispanic vote,” Hoelscher said.

Neither candidate said they would be adjusting their campaign strategy.

Martinez said the split in the vote might have affected him, but he said he never considered Cardenas his main opponent.

Voters to decide on jail for McCulloch County

■ New facility would require \$6.8M in bonds

By Jane Jeschke
Special to the Standard-Times

McCulloch County voters will go to the polls in November to decide whether they want a new jail. The Commissioners Court voted Monday to call for a bond election.

The proposition would authorize the issuance of up to \$6.8 million in bonds to pay for the construction and equipping of a jail and the acquisition of a site.

The proposed facility would be named the McCulloch County Law Enforcement Center and Jail.

The current jail, built in 1974, has a capacity of 22 beds. As of Wednesday, there were 20 prisoners at the facility and 15 prisoners housed outside the county. The new jail would have more than twice the current capacity.

The cost of housing prisoners out of the county is one of the reasons commissioners looked at building a new jail, said County Judge Danny Neal.

“We spend a lot of mon-

ey each year housing out of county,” he said. “Deputies have to go and retrieve prisoners, and it puts a stress on transportation costs and time management. There’s also the liability when you have prisoners out on the road, and there are safety concerns for the deputies.”

There are additional medical costs when a prisoner in another county’s jail has to go to a physician or hospital, and expenses for court-appointed attorneys increase when they have to travel to consult with their defendants.

“It’s just a growing expense,” Neal said.

The county sends prisoners to Comanche County, 75 miles northeast of Brady, a 150-mile round trip, Neal said. They also are held in Brownwood in Brown County, 50 miles away, and Ballinger in Runnels County, which is 64 miles northwest.

The proposed jail would hold 48 prisoners and have between 20,000 to 25,000 square feet. It also could be expanded.

“The way the plans were drawn for it, it was designed to be expandable if the need occurs,” Neal said. “With the floor plan,

we could add more beds to it.”

The court has a parcel of land under contract and will purchase the property if the bond passes. The 5.56-acre site is north of downtown Brady at the intersection of Highway 377 and County Road 301, outside the city limits.

A jail-needs analysis noted that the jail contains one detoxification cell and no holding cells, making it difficult to process inmates.

The county operates the facility with six variances granted by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards and without them, the jail could not remain in operation, the report noted.

One of the variances is for insufficient square footage in some of the combination day-rooms and cells. The jail also only has one exit door, and remote control of doors is not provided.

A jail review committee, formed in 2010, found that the jail is showing signs of age, and there is not enough room to expand outward. Adding a second floor also would not be financially plausible, the committee noted.

NOTICE TO IRION COUNTY TAXPAYERS
 Irion County ISD Board of Trustees is adopting a tax rate of \$1.309702 per \$100 of value for 2012. This tax rate is .000698 of a cent per \$100 value less than the 2011 tax rate. Because Irion County ISD is a Chapter 41 school, approximately \$4,389,168 was sent to the Texas Education Agency from our local 2011 tax revenue by the state mandate, and in 2012 the figure that will be sent to Texas Education Agency is approximately \$5,237,976. The cost to publish this state required ad is \$1035.45.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE
 The Irion County ISD I&S will hold a public meeting at 6:30 pm, August 27, 2012 in Irion County ISD Boardroom. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district’s budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.

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