Harmony ISD drops tax rate by 30 cents to 1.11896
By JOHN SPARKS

Meeting in regular session, Monday, August 20, the board of trustees of the Harmony Independent School District approved a reduction of 30-cents in the tax rate which translates to a reduction of $252.92 in property taxes on an average residential home in the district.

Properties in Holly Lake Ranch account for more than 80 percent of the district's appraised property tax collections on residences.

The proposed tax rate of $1.11896 is based on a budget of $7,765,369 with $1.04005 going to Maintenance & Operations (M&O) and 0.071 going to Interest & Sinking (I&S). The I&S debt was restructured resulting in the savings of more than a penny on debt payments.

Trustees deliberated whether to raise prices for student food services. Last year the cafeteria operation fell short by $30,000. They opted for no increase in the prices to students and will cover the shortfall with reserve funds.

Trustees also approved the proposed student handbook and the code of conduct for students. Superintendent Jed Whitaker told trustees that both documents have few changes. "Two of note," he said, "are a prohibition on field trips as a consequence for misbehavior, and tighter description of ear décor."

The board also adopted a policy requiring those who wish to speak out on religious viewpoints must register within a three-day period at the first of school.

The resignation of Lynne Perryman, elementary teacher, was accepted. Haley Johnson was hired as an elementary teacher.

Whitaker reported no change in the trustee election dilemma created by legislative action in this past session. The legislature moved the election of trustees to November from May, but Harmony and several school districts are not located within an incorporated city complicating

the coordination of elections of local officials.

The next regular meeting of the Harmony Board of Trustees will be Monday, September 17. A special meeting of the board can be called with 72-hours notice.