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To [redacted] <>, [redacted] <>
Date Wed, 14 Oct 2026 21:53:52 +0000
Subject Questions for Judge Lane and Commissioners Court on the Proposed $49 Million Jail and Justice Center

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To County Judge Lloyd Lane and the Freestone County Commissioners Court:

Thank you for holding the public discussion about the proposed $49 million jail and justice center and inviting citizens' questions.

The concerns described by the sheriff deserve serious consideration: deteriorating facilities, out-of-county inmate housing, transportation risks, and deputies spending time away from patrol. The courthouse space and restoration challenges also deserve attention.

You have explained that the proposed facility could reduce operating costs and that anticipated tax-base growth could help offset the expense. To evaluate those expectations, I respectfully ask that you publish the supporting documents and address these questions:

1. What are the estimated annual debt payments and total repayment, including interest and financing expenses?
2. What makes up the approximately $2 million in existing jail-related expenses discussed publicly? How much would the new facility eliminate, and what new annual costs would replace those expenses?
3. What is the projected operating budget for the new facility, including staffing, benefits, medical services, utilities, maintenance, insurance, and equipment replacement?
4. Does the financial plan work without revenue from housing other counties' inmates? What calculations support the statements that outside inmates could cover medical staffing and additional jailers?
5. What written analysis supports the 144-bed recommendation, and what alternatives were considered before selecting a combined jail and justice center?
6. What tax-base assumptions support the anticipated taxpayer relief? How would the plan perform if development is delayed or produces less taxable value or revenue than expected?
7. What agreements govern the proposed land purchase, water and sewer improvements, and responsibility for additional costs?
8. What written commitments govern the historic courthouse's restoration and future use, and what would the county's alternative plan cost if the bond does not pass?

Please also show construction-period investment earnings separately from the full debt repayment estimate. Those earnings depend on how much money remains unspent and for how long.

A lower tax rate does not automatically mean a lower individual tax bill. Residents need a clear explanation of the potential effect on their properties under the financial scenarios being considered.

Publishing the estimates, assumptions, agreements, and comparisons together would help citizens make an informed decision. Please identify which documents are already available and where residents can find them.

As organizer of the proposed Freestone County Good Governance Council, my purpose is to help build a shared, documented understanding of public spending and services. I welcome your answers and supporting records.

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