

# THE DAILY SIFTINGS HERALD



## County receives its first 1/2-cent sales tax check

By Dawn Hixon

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Clark County received its first economic development sales tax check in late December, Clark County Treasurer Judy Beth Hutcherson said. The check was for \$101,498.64, which reflected collections for October.

The revenue comes from a 1/2-cent sales tax, approved by voters last

June, for economic development. The vote also approved the formation of the Economic Development Corp. of Clark County, or the EDCCC. Under state law, the five members of the EDCCC are appointed by the county judge.

Clark County Judge Ron Daniell appointed Eudias Goza, Corner Eldridge, Becky Jester, Francis Nelson and Randy Sorrells to the board. Daniell also appointed 15 peo-

ple to serve as an advisory board to the EDCCC.

Each of the five board members expressed their enthusiasm at the amount of the first tax check.

"That amount is in line with our budget for the year," Goza said. He serves as the president of the EDCCC. The corporation's budget for 2008 calls for a total of \$1.35 million in tax collections.

Eldridge, treasurer for the board,

said he is pleased with the initial check and feels it will help the board reach its goal of expanding current and attracting new industries and economic development to Clark County.

Jester said she was excited about the amount of the first tax receipt check. "It is only a small portion of a much larger amount." The first check includes enough funds to begin planned activities, she said, such as

hiring an executive director. Once that person is hired, "things are going to start happening fast."

Nelson said she felt encouraged when she was told of the amount of the first tax payment. "I know this only reflected a month and I'm sure the big money should start rolling in," she said.

Nelson referred to the fact that the

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first check was for collections in October, before the traditional beginning of the holiday season. "With all of the holiday shopping that people did, I feel very encouraged about our future checks," she said.

Goza also spoke of the first check as being from a "slow" month, and said that the receipts will be higher from holiday months than it will from others. "I think we'll be right on target" with projections for funding, he said.

Sorrells said that he was happy with the amount of the first tax check. "The money will be put to good use to get the ball rolling to improve the economic condition of Clark County," he said.

Nelson also expressed her appreciation for area businesses for being patient with the EDCCC. "We had already accumulated bills," she said, referring to rent on office space and furnishings.

The EDCCC is now in the process of deciding which banks in the county will handle its money. During the board's November meeting, it was decided to solicit "bids" from area banks.

Once a bank is selected, the EDCCC will request their funds from the county, Goza

said. Until the funds are requested, the money will remain in the county's coffers, Hutcherson said.

Eldridge is also leading the committee that will help choose the executive director of the EDCCC. "We continue to work to find the right person to lead this effort," he said. He said he hopes to be able to introduce the candidates to the board soon.

Goza said he was pleased to see that Clark County is getting a new industry. Drumco of Memphis, Tenn., and Bauxite announced this week that they are relocating their

Arkansas operation to the Clark County Industrial Park. "We hope others will make decisions to come here," he said.

Based on the first check received, Goza said he feels the EDCCC and its executive director can operate as set forth in the corporation's budget. "We're going to stay within the guidelines we've established," he said. It is important for the board members and members of the advisory committee to do what has been promised. "We want to be good stewards of the tax payers' money."