

Johnson County released a first of its kind smart phone application geared to provide residents with easy to use tools to communicate with government public safety. The application, developed by the Emergency Management Department, focuses on delivering to citizens a situational awareness of public safety incidents around them such as structure fires or road closures, but also allows them to report non-emergency incidents such as street flooding.

And finally, the County began the installation of four (4) significant software applications. The new payroll system was completed and the first phase of the courts system is up and running. The court software meets the new e-filing requirement mandate issued by the State. Our records management software, completed early in the year, has added efficiency and convenience. The law enforcement project was just begun in January, 2015. The goal with this is to create a regional law enforcement system that will allow all agencies in Johnson County to share information.

### **For the Future**

The growth experienced by the county requires our elected officials to be forward-thinking to address issues before they become problems. As in most Texas counties, the need to accommodate the law enforcement and administration of justice functions is truly a challenge.

Johnson County has begun plans to renovate and add space to the County Jail. This project will ensure that the County will be able to meet the mandated requirements of the State to appropriately house our inmates in a manner that will keep risk as low as possible for those incarcerated and those charged with the safekeeping of prisoners.

## **FINANCIAL CONDITION**

**Current Condition.** Johnson County currently has large fund balances even though we have used cash for recent capital projects as mentioned. The unencumbered General Fund balance has grown for several consecutive years and it was a prudent decision to use some cash to finance the projects. The County is still well positioned to fund all services into the near future while maintaining a tax rate which is acceptable to taxpayers.

**Long Range Financial Planning.** Johnson County has a determination to manage growing fund balances in a conservative and judicious manner. Fund balances will continue to exceed the popular rules of thumb. In addition, the County includes a separate "Contingency" line-item in the budget which ensures that unexpected situations do not diminish our projected fund balances; keeping them at a healthy level. The County also maintains a fund that is considered for capital projects or other, large, one-time expenditures. From time to time, the County will transfer funds that represent some of the tax revenue derived from mineral properties into this fund. For a few years, all mineral royalty received was deposited into this unbudgeted, separate fund. However, for reporting purposes, it is considered part of the General Fund. With the knowledge that these revenues will fluctuate with the price of natural gas, the County will not use such funds for things which demand ongoing commitments such as additional personnel. Therefore, the significant fund balance in the General Fund will be used to avoid some future debt by using cash at times when, otherwise, issuing new debt would be the norm.