



For Immediate Release
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Smith County Commissioners Approve Sale of Road Bonds

The Smith County Commissioners Court on Tuesday voted to approve the sale of the fourth tranche of voter-approved road bonds at a lower-than-expected interest rate after receiving five competitive bids.

Specialized Public Finance Inc. bid general obligation bonds, which will net the county \$7.75 million towards the fourth and final year of the first phase of the County's Road and Bridge Bond package. Steven Adams, managing director of Specialized Public Finance Inc., gave a brief presentation to the Commissioners Court, and reaffirmed that Smith County's very high rating of AA+ helped the interest rates on the 10-year maturity bonds. He also noted that the \$7.75 million in bonds will be deposited into the County's project fund in July.

Smith County received five bids on the bonds, with Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Inc. submitting the winning bid at a true interest cost of 1.07 percent.

"It is good to see that the County's strong financial position and conservative approach to budgeting and spending has resulted in a AA+ bond rating and the ability to save tax payers even more money by selling bonds at such an incredibly low rate," Smith County Judge Nathaniel Moran said.

Commissioner Terry Phillips agreed and said, "This is the lowest we've ever paid." The bonds are rated AA+ by Standard & Poor's Rating Services, which is equivalent to that of the United States federal government.

"Everything the County can do is being done by the County," Adams said. "It's a very good financial rating."

In November 2017, Smith County voters approved a \$39.5 million bond package to improve county roads. That bond package was the first of two phases to significantly upgrade the County road system over a six year period of time.

The second phase of the bond program is expected to be approximately \$45 Million and will likely be presented to the voters for approval in November of 2021.

The money received from this bond sale will fund continued Road and Bridge Department construction projects in accordance with the County's six-year Road and Bridge Bond Program.

Under the direction of County Engineer Frank Davis, the County has been steadily working to complete the planned projects over the past few years. In the first three years of the bond program, more than 170 miles of roadway have been reconstructed or completely overlaid or are under construction under this program.

For more information about the Smith County Road Bond Program, visit: <https://www.smith-county.com/i-want-to/view/county-road-projects>