

Meeting Date: 2/6/2024

Meeting of: Madison County Fiscal Court

Meeting Type: Special Called

HONORABLE REAGAN TAYLOR COUNTY JUDGE EXECUTIVE PRESIDING

The Madison County Fiscal Court convened in a special called work session on the 6th of February 2024 at 9:30 AM in the Madison Room of the Courthouse Annex in Richmond, Ky. Present was the Honorable Reagan Taylor in the chair presiding and the following members of the Fiscal Court: James Brian Combs, Stephen Lochmueller, and Billy Ray Hughes were present. Madison County Sheriff Mike Coyle, Madison County Attorney Jennie Haymond, Madison County Clerk Kenny Barger, Deputy Judge Executive Jill Williams, Chief Deputy Anthony Terry, and Administrative Director Mary Margaret Young were also present.

It being determined a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order.

IN RE: Madison County Sheriff's 2024 Budget Work Session/County Financial Position:

Sheriff Coyle presented a breakdown of the 2024 Sheriff's Budget showing all the services that they provide and how they determined this budget. He stated that a big part of the budget deals with Court Security in which they provided 3,870 transported, traveling 82,419 miles in 2023. The Madison County Sheriff Deputies responded to 92 DUI arrests, worked 286 non-injury accidents, 594 injury accidents, 392 animal control, 2,040 attempted to local calls, 12 animal welfare checks, 40 burglaries in progress calls, 38 burglaries worked, 929 warrants served, 807 assists with other law enforcement agencies, 48 K-9 activation calls, 333 processed and served court directives, 63 criminal mischief cases, 105 disturbances calls, 188 dispute calls, 185 domestic violence calls, 57 emergency mental detention calls, 1,581 harassment calls, 368 general investigations, 92 missing person calls, 70 noise complaint calls, 35 protective order calls, 27 found property calls, 462 business or residential alarm calls, 1,895 complaint calls, served 5,627 summons or court documents, 37,640 service calls, 1,046 eviction notices, 1,426 vehicle inspections, 1,061 protective order investigations, and 684 welfare checks all through 911 dispatch. Through the Kentucky OPS, there was 59 court documents served, 55 motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol and drugs calls, 39 terroristic threatening calls, plus extra patrol for speeding in 2023.

Magistrate Lochmueller expressed his appreciation for what the Sheriff's Department does, and all the duties they serve. He asked what is being done to manage the budget and what is being done once they realize they have gone over that budget.

Sheriff Coyle explained that there are some line items on the budget that are out of their control, such as fuel costs, vehicle maintenance, etc. The budget is a fiscal year budget, but they don't get most of the information from November and December until January and February.

Mary Margaret Young provided an overview of how they operate as a fee county organization, in which they operate at least a month behind.

Magistrate Lochmueller asked about the possibility of prisoners appearing online instead of in-person. Mary Margaret Young stated that it is at the discretion of the judges. In Madison County, the Circuit Judges want the prisoners to appear in-person, therefore, the Sheriff's Office has to go to the county or even state that prisoner is housed in to bring them to Madison County. Then they have to deliver that prisoner back to where they were, once they are done with court. It

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can be very expensive to transport those prisoners. Magistrate Lochmueller suggested that the Fiscal Court try to talk with the judges to see if it would be possible to do some cases online. Major Terry stated that they try to keep costs down by doing things such as not leaving the vehicles idling when possible and trying to minimize vehicle maintenance costs. He also spoke on some of the most expensive and time-consuming cases they work on. In the past year, they have worked on 28 sex abuse case investigations, 40 misdemeanor assault cases, 31 violent felony offenses, and 33 death investigations. Regarding the number of drug cases and the number of lives that have been saved in the past five (5) years, as a team working with the Richmond Police Department, Kentucky State Police, Berea Police, ECU Police Department, and the Bluegrass Army Depot, they have seized \$2.6 million worth of "heavier" drugs. That breaks down to 3.88 pounds of Methamphetamine, 2,929 dosage units of Oxycodone, 8.5 pounds of Cocaine, 10 pounds of Heroin, and 8.38 pounds of Fentanyl. The DEA has said that 2.2 pounds of Fentanyl is enough to kill 500,000 people. He stated that they would work on doing a better job of informing the Court and the public of what is being seized. Over the past five (5) years, the amount of money all the organizations have gotten back from HIDTA due to the seizure of those drugs has been \$915,964, but that can take a very long time to receive.

Madison County Attorney Jennie Haymond stated that the Sheriff's Department does a very good job. When you look at the amount of lethal dosage units of each drug, the amount they have seized is staggering. In the past, these drugs were not even thought of as having to deal with. There is always something new that is coming up and with no end in sight as progression of drugs are becoming more harmful.

Sheriff Coyle stated that the county has a lot of overdoses, people get jail time, but still keeping doing the same thing. Every time there is an overdose, he feels like he has let someone down, and he believes that with the number of drugs that are coming in from the cartel in other states makes them in the worst shape they have ever been in.

Magistrate Combs asked how much enforcement is involved with these drug cases. Major Terry said that mostly the Task Force deals with the drug seizures. The Street Crimes unit addresses the complaints they receive concerning drugs coming into the office before the Task Force takes over.

Mary Margaret Young stated that if there is any cash found on an individual that was arrested during these drug seizures, that is deposited into a seized account and they have to hold on to that until a court order stating whether they have to return the funds to the individual or they get to keep a portion of it.

Magistrate Combs asked if these funds are put into an interest earning account. Major Terry explained that with Federal seizures, they were not allowed to put the funds into an interest-bearing account because it is part of the evidence for that case.

Judge Taylor stated that as a Court, they have to decide what kind of law enforcement they want to provide for the citizens. He provided a spreadsheet to help paint a realistic picture of the budget. The three services the Sheriff's Department doesn't have a choice in providing due to KRS are to collect taxes, serve papers, and provide court security; the SROs (School Resource Officers) and Law Enforcement isn't something that is mandated that they have to do.

Judge Taylor explained that the Sheriff's Department budget goes through the State Finance Cabinet. They have a term-end audit, and at the end of that term (which for the Sheriff is a 4-year term) they will be getting money back because they have paid too much in or too much was spent and Fiscal Court has to cover it. In the past, they didn't have a spreadsheet or financial

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system to be able to look at actual revenues/expenditures, so they were basing the budget off of the previous year's budget.

He explained that the main revenue stream for the Sheriff's Office is from the collection of taxes because there are minimal costs associated with the revenue they receive. In comparison, they are losing \$252,824.26 in court security. Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) reimbursed the County \$15 per hour for the hours those court security officers work in the courtroom only. They don't reimburse for any of the benefits that are associated with a full-time position, the equipment used for transportation, the hours they are working that aren't inside the courtroom, etc.

Madison County Attorney Jennie Haymond explained that the Sheriff's Department and the County Attorney's Office live both the County and the Court System rules. It makes it more difficult to balance because they have to follow both rules.

Judge Taylor stated that it is figuring out what side would be better to take a hit on. The Sheriff's Department is requesting funding for two more full-time court security officers because they are having a hard time keeping part-time officers. However, the expense is greater for full-time employees on the County. If the Judges don't feel like there is enough security in court, they can cancel court, and all those inmates would be housed in the jail which increases the jail expenses. They have to look at the bigger picture for the County as a whole.

Judge Taylor stated that this spreadsheet tells him that the Fiscal Court needs to go to the state legislature. Twelve years ago, the Fiscal Court was not subsidizing the Sheriff's Department at all, but over the years, with the decrease in Kentucky State Police officers and other things that have transpired, the Sheriff's Department is having to cover those losses.

Mary Margaret Young asked about the School Board giving back more than one and one-half percent (1.5%) to the Sheriff's Department, other counties get four percent (4%); that is the only revenue they can change. Judge Taylor stated that they have to give one and one-half percent (1.5%). To request more from the school system, the Sheriff's Department has to prove that it costs them more than one and one-half percent (1.5%) to collect the taxes.

Judge Taylor stated that they can't just look at this as a Sheriff's Department problem only. Over the next three (3) years with post-CSEPP, the County expenses will go up about \$3.5 million due to an increase in insurance and healthcare premiums, detention center health coverage increases, salary increases, PVA increases, loss of occupational tax due to the end of the de-milling process with the BGAD, etc.

Magistrate Lochmueller asked how other counties are dealing with this issue because not every county is able to afford to fund law enforcement. Judge Taylor stated that in talking with other counties, it is becoming more of a trend because of the shortage of manpower with the Kentucky State Police. Right now, the Sheriff's Department covers third shift for the Kentucky State Police with no additional funding or offset cost. Judge Taylor asked how many employees are working to cover that shift.

Major Terry stated that he has six (6) deputies scheduled to work third shift from 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM, not that there are six (6) deputies that work every third shift. He explained that when an officer is called to a domestic or to work an accident, they are required to send out two (2) officers. In regard to a patrol schedule, they have six deputies on first shift with one part-time, on second shift they have nine (9) deputies, and six (6) for third shift. They also have detectives that work the high-profile cases, road detectives, etc.

Magistrate Hughes stated that his concern is being able to sustain the growth in the budget that the Sheriff's Department is requesting.

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After a break, Mary Margaret Young went through the budget and what had changed from the previous year's budget. The revenues have been kept on the lower side, so there wasn't an increase in revenue from last year's budget. With the expenses, they had to show the overtime on the budget due to the new finance system they have, but that will change once they get the reimbursement from the State. The health insurance, vehicle maintenance, uniforms, fuel, and vehicles are what was increased, which was less than a \$100,000 increase without the increase in salaries.

Judge Taylor explained that local government requires the Sheriff's Department to use a certain format when submitting their budget, but it doesn't allow for a more in-depth breakdown. The County purchased FiscalSoft for them to have financial software that allows them to break down the budget in more detail and be able to run reports to help with future budgets.

He explained that they are requesting a \$600,000 increase from last year, but \$200,000 of that increase is lessening the revenue that was over projected on last year's budget.

Sheriff Coyle explained that AOC allots how many court security officers they can have, which is 10 full-time and nine (9) part-time deputies.

Magistrate Lochmueller asked what happens if they are not able to provide all the court security due to financial limitations. Judge Taylor stated that the judges could cancel court and keep the prisoners in the jail. Major Terry stated that the judges have requested that they bring in deputies off the road, which can jeopardize situations that occur within the county.

Judge Taylor asked if they had to cut back on the number of deputies, what would happen.

Sheriff Coyle stated that he would probably cut out a shift, possibly third shift because he couldn't jeopardize the safety of his officers. They couldn't do the first shift because they are required to serve papers only during a certain time frame plus, they have office work that has to get done.

Judge Taylor stated that they have been creating a standard of what the Sheriff's Department does without collecting a revenue stream for it. His opinion of the budget is that they are only asking enough money for raises and additional court security officers.

Magistrate Combs stated that they can see a shift in numbers with the Kentucky State Police already because Madison County is providing the coverage.

Madison County Attorney Jennie Haymond stated that this is just not a Sheriff Department issue. She will be having the same issue for not having funding with the addition of a new judge, and the Richmond Police Department is having the same issue. The legislature doesn't understand what having unfunded mandates does to the counties.

Magistrate Hughes stated that he was in favor of a three percent (3%) increase for the salary increases, but looking down the road that may not be possible.

In answer to the increase in the vehicle maintenance funding, Sheriff Coyle stated that they put a lot of wear and tear on their vehicles. He is hoping that as they get newer vehicles, they can use the older vehicles as parts for other vehicles to help lower the maintenance cost.

Judge Taylor reminded the Court that CSEPP has paid for the radios the Sheriff's Department uses. When CSEPP leaves and those radios have to be replaced, the Sheriff's Department will have to pay for them.

Judge Taylor asked out of all the calls they responded to that they spoke of earlier; how many were in the unincorporated area of the county. Major Terry responded that those calls came from 911 who dispatch according to the location of the call, so the majority of the calls were in the unincorporated area of the county. Mary Margaret Young explained that even when someone

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comes in to speak with a deputy, the first thing they ask is where the individual lives so they can direct them to the City of Richmond if needed.

Magistrate Lochmueller stated that anything they can do to be more efficient in their services needs to be looked at.

Major Terry expressed his appreciation of the Court for their help with the budget and believes the FiscalSoft program will be helpful to them in the future.

Judge Taylor expressed his concern that without an increase in revenue, they will not be able to sustain law enforcement long-term.

Magistrate Combs stated that he is fine with a three percent (3%) raise for deputies, but they will need to look at everything as a whole in the future. He explained that he had calls from the public thanking them for taking a closer look at the budget, because the perception is that the County is wasting money. When looking at the numbers, there isn't a waste of money. The Sheriff's Department provides a service, but it comes at a cost. He believes they will all need to go to Frankfort together to speak with the legislators.

Magistrate Hughes stated that the trend needs to be changed across all county departments.

Judge Taylor stated that they have worked on finding different ways to save money throughout his term.

ANNOUNCE NEXT COURT DATE:

Judge Taylor announced the next court date for February 13, 2024, in the Council Chambers' Courtroom in Berea, Ky at 9:30 AM.

IN RE: ADJOURNMENT

Motion from Billy Ray Hughes to adjourn, seconded by Stephen Lochmueller. Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 12:19 PM.



REAGAN TAYLOR, MADISON CO. JUDGE/EXECUTIVE