

Meeting Date; 2/11/2025
Meeting of; Madison County Fiscal Court
Meeting Type; Regularly Scheduled

HONORABLE REAGAN TAYLOR COUNTY JUDGE EXECUTIVE PRESIDING

The Madison County Fiscal Court convened in regular session on the 11th of February 2025 at 11:30AM in the Council Chambers' Courtroom in Berea, Ky. Present was the Honorable Reagan Taylor in the chair presiding and the following members of the Fiscal Court: James Brian Combs, Stephen Lochmueller, Billy Ray Hughes, and Tom Botkin were present. Madison County Assistant Attorney Brooke Bowman, Madison County Sheriff Mike Coyle, Madison County Clerk Kenny Barger, and Jailer Larry Brock were also present.

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

Judge Taylor asked Pastor Stephen Hobbs of Berea Church of God, to lead the Court in prayer. Judge Taylor asked Sheriff Mike Coyle to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN RE: Approval of Meeting Minutes 1-28-2025:

Motion by James Brian Combs seconded by Stephen Lochmueller to approve the minutes from the regularly called meeting on January 28, 2025.

Motion carried on roll call vote as follows:

James Brian Combs-Yes Stephen Lochmueller-Yes

Billy Ray Hughes- Yes Tom Botkin- Yes

Reagan Taylor – Yes

IN RE: Berea-Laurel Ridges Chapter DAR Distinguished Citizen Medal and Certificate:

The Berea-Laurel Ridges Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution-Chapter Regent Melissa Jennings, the Chapter Vice Regent Patty Davis, and the Honorary Chapter Regent and Treasurer Linda Jennings were in attendance to award the DAR Distinguished Citizen Medal and Certificate to Sheriff Mike Coyle. A Distinguished Citizen is one who fulfills the qualities of honor, service, courage, leadership, and patriotism, and has contributed to the defense and security, and hereby the freedom of the community, state, or nation in an exceptional manner.

Sheriff Coyle thanked the Berea-Laurel Ridges Chapter of this recognition and expressed his appreciation for it.

IN RE: Madison County Emergency Communications Center (911) Year-end Statistics for 2024:

Wendy Lynch, Madison County Emergency Communications Center (911) Director, provided the 2024 annual report for the Madison County Emergency Communications Center (911). The total calls received to the center in 2024 was 114,902, with 84.34% of phone calls to 911 coming in on cellphones instead of landlines, they had 132,186 Computer Aided Dispatch calls, and 1,717,469 Radio Transmissions. She spoke on the 2024 achievements with the Emergency Communication Center being a 97.2% NENA Call Answer Standard Score (standard is 95% of calls answered within 20 seconds), their Criminal Justice Executive Development Training Program for staff and new hires, being part of the CSEPP Taskforce 911 Fee, establishing a Wellness Committee as many dispatchers suffer from PTSD, and they received two of the KY 911 Service Board Grants. For the goals that they set for 2024, she feels they have met and retained them. Their recruitment/retention is now staffed at budgeted capacity, the Employee Leader Academy internally is still a work in progress, the APCO Project 33 Training Program Accreditation will recognize them at the National Conference in July 2025,

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Text-to-911 grant was awarded in 2024 and is in progress now, and the employee Wellness Committee is growing.

Their goals for 2025 are to still focus on recruitment/retention, Employee Leader Academy, KY Association of Chiefs Re-Accreditation, PSAP Upgrade, and the 911 Fee Implementation will go into place.

Magistrate Combs stated that Representative Bill Wesley sponsored a bill for PTSD and asked if it extends to them as well. Wendy stated that it did, but it still didn't set them in the first responder category.

Magistrate Botkin stated that he is glad they are addressing the PTSD issue, and they will do all they can to help.

Judge Taylor stated that he is glad to have Wendy and expressed his appreciation to her for all her work.

IN RE: Resolution 2025-008—ASAP Harm Reduction Grant Application FY26:

Jill William, Deputy Judge Executive, presented Resolution 2025-008—ASAP Harm Reduction Grant Application FY26 for the Court's approval. This Resolution is confirming the Madison County Fiscal Court to serve as the applicant agent for the FY26 ASAP Harm Reduction Grant and authorizing the Judge Executive to sign on behalf of the County.

Motion by Tom Botkin seconded by James Brian Combs to approve Resolution 2025-008—ASAP Harm Reduction Grant Application FY26.

Laura Nagle with the ASAP Board was present for questions.

Magistrate Botkin stated that he is glad that they receive the application because that does help them.

Motion carried on roll call vote as follows:

James Brian Combs-Yes Stephen Lochmueller-Yes

Billy Ray Hughes- Yes Tom Botkin- Yes

Reagan Taylor – Yes

IN RE: Resolution 2025-009—General ASAP Grant Application FY26:

Jill William, Deputy Judge Executive, presented Resolution 2025-009—General ASAP Grant Application FY26 for the Court's approval. This Resolution is confirming the Madison County Fiscal Court to serve as the applicant agent for the FY26 General ASAP Grant and authorizing the Judge Executive to sign on behalf of the County.

Motion by Tom Botkin seconded by Stephen Lochmueller to approve Resolution 2025-009—General ASAP Grant Application FY26.

Laura Nagle with the ASAP Board was present for questions.

Motion carried on roll call vote as follows:

James Brian Combs-Yes Stephen Lochmueller-Yes

Billy Ray Hughes- Yes Tom Botkin- Yes

Reagan Taylor – Yes

IN RE: Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Presentation:

Judge Taylor stated that they wanted to provide this presentation due to some false information that was going around on social media. In order for Fiscal Court to be able to make decisions on anything concerning this topic, they wanted to provide the facts so the Court is best informed and can make decisions they feel are correct for the citizens.

Chris Iseral, Chief Information Officer, provided a presentation on Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Chris started out explaining that the City of Richmond, through their IT Director and Planning and Zoning Director, requested from the County an option to host the Richmond GIS System with the County. Chris made the proposal after their email request, and the City of Richmond passed a Resolution in February. He stated ESRI, the top GIS System provider in the world, says GIS is a "spatial system that creates, manages, analyzes

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and maps all types of data.” The City of Richmond doesn’t use ESRI, they use a third-party open-source system. A GIS System is comprised of hardware (server hardware, GPS Collection devices, PepWave GPS Transmitters, etc.), software (software to manage, store and manipulate locational data, like ESRI’s ArcGIS), Data (Actual location data showing the coordinates of a given asset), and people (who often hold a certification in GIS as part of a 4-year degree). The people that use GIS include Emergency Response, Emergency Communications Centers, Transportation and Public Works, and Administrative Governance (i.e., TRACKS, Elections, etc.).

Clerk Barger stated that when streets are added, they don’t have a single source of information to draw up the ballot list, because right now they are reactionary; they can’t be proactive because they don’t currently have the data.

As a timeframe outline, Chris explained that in 1999 the City of Richmond established a GIS System, and in 2002 there was an agreement between the City of Richmond and Madison County to provide GIS Services to Fiscal Court, but the agreement falls apart and each entity moves to build separate GIS Systems in 2004. In 2018 Madison County wins an ESRI SAG Award. In March 2022, the City of Richmond requests a meeting with Judge Executive Office and GIS leaders about working together, but in June 2022 all GIS personnel advocating for a GIS collaboration fall apart. In June of 2023, the 911 Board advocated for a change in GIS to all local governments, again it goes nowhere. In November 2024, the City of Richmond requested a proposal from the County, writes a Resolution, and passes it for GIS Hosting with the County in February 2025.

Chris stated that there have been several false or half-truths that have been circulating on social media. One is that there have been secret meetings, which is not true. Elected officials are not facilitating meetings about GIS, but there have been elected officials that have advocated for cooperation in GIS. The GIS meetings have been at the request of GIS professionals and first responders, and 911 has new Next GEN 911 requirements that have driven these meetings.

Another false claim is that the County is taking over the City’s GIS Department. The MOA is for GIS Data Hosting, and nowhere in it does it talk about taking over their department or merging their government.

Richmond’s GIS Department remains and will remain in the same location as it is today. By working together to host the data in one database, better accuracy is achieved for everyone. Richmond GIS will input their own data into the one database in which parameters will be put in place for accuracy.

A half-truth that has been circulating is that the City already shares data with the County, and it has for years. Richmond does share their data, but not accurately or in a timely manner; it is often incorrect, incomplete, and not to industry standards. Next Gen 911 has set requirements on GIS data and Richmond has not been able to meet those requirements. There have been numerous meetings to help correct the data and explain the need and the data is not provided timely and continues to be incorrect for the responders.

Another half-truth is that Richmond GIS Department would be housed at the EOC. The MOU provides the City with GIS data hosting only, not a department or facility. Richmond’s GIS data will be housed in the County’s Data Center on the Standardized Database, which is a secure and harden facility inside the EOC. Housing the GIS data for Richmond improves accuracy, timeliness, and reduces cost.

Another false claim being circulated is that the County is trying to take over. The County is not taking over the City’s GIS Department. The City of Richmond Planning and IT Directors requested the County provide the service, and the County was trying to be a good partner and best serve roughly 98,000 citizens and first responders. Hosting GIS data for Richmond improves accuracy, timeliness, and reduces cost.

Austin Bate, GIS Coordinator, talked about some examples of where errors could cause dangerous issues with dispatch due to multiple geocoding and being out of range. They should be working together to set data standards and combining data into one database, i.e. the GIS System. Sharing data is a terrible practice because the roads could not match up or not connect within the system. When EMS is on an ambulance call and the GPS shows that a road doesn’t connect, it would redirect them through “connected” roads that could waste valuable minutes getting to a medical emergency.

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There are also regulatory compliance guidelines they must meet for Next Gen 911; if they don't meet the standards, they don't get the money.

In conclusion, Chris stated that this agreement doesn't merge GIS Departments with the City of Richmond and the County, it doesn't merge governments, doesn't raise taxes, and doesn't mean the County is taking over. It does allow each agency to retain its own GIS employees, allows everyone to input their data into a standardized GIS database, allows for taxpayer savings, and allows for an efficient and effective government. He stated that even though there has been plenty of misinformation about this topic, they still recommend considering this agreement and would even suggest that they expand it to include as many agencies as possible in the County. One Standardized GIS Database is what is best for all Madison Countians. It removes data silos, improves the data, and could mean the difference between life and death.

Clerk Barger stated that for decades the people that work for these governments have asked for a tool to do a better job for their customers, i.e. citizens, but for decades they have been told no by one government body or another for political reasons. As a leader, if your people come to you and say they need something to do a better job for their customers, then they need to do it.

Magistrate Hughes asked if this presentation was in response to the misguided information of one individual. Chris stated that the person brought it to life, but for four decades they could not seem to get something accomplished, and it needed to be brought to awareness.

Judge Taylor stated that the City of Richmond's Order stated that the County has a MOA with Berea, which they don't. There was a lot of misinformation they needed to clarify and since it hadn't been brought to the Court yet, that they wanted to provide this information to the Court so they could make an informed decision.

Magistrate Lochmueller stated that he would want to make sure they get clean data before it goes into the system. He agrees that the citizens shouldn't suffer because officials don't do what is right, and it should lead to a safer environment for all Madison Countians by helping the first responders respond.

Judge Taylor stated that if it is done right, it goes beyond helping just the first responders; it would save construction workers from hitting water lines or sewer lines, as well as other things.

Magistrate Combs expressed his appreciation for the presentation and there were a lot of things that he wasn't aware of, as far as how it interacts with the first responders. Their primary charge as government is life, and this affects the timing of the first responders being able to get where they need to be; it is common sense. He stated that it is important for them to move forward and for them to collaborate with the Cities of Richmond and Berea.

Judge Taylor stated that he believes if there is false information being circulated, there needs to be a place that has a truthful message for people to go to in order to understand what is actually happening. He also stated that in the future they will be going to other governmental entity meetings to present on any service they might potentially be providing before that entity votes on it.

Magistrate Combs asked if other counties collaborated this way. Chris stated that other counties do collaborate with each governmental entity within that county.

Clerk Barger stated that there is only one Madison County; the City of Richmond, City of Berea, and Madison County is all one area, so why wouldn't all the data be in one spot and everyone use the same data.

Magistrate Botkin stated that his concern is how they are going to get clean data. Chris stated that in this model there wouldn't be any more sharing, it is on the County server. Austin stated that as of right now they have gotten confirmation with 911 that the data is correct, and he hasn't received a batch from the City of Richmond, so now would be a good time to start the collaboration. Chris stated that they can put in place parameters for when they input data so that it can't be submitted without all the information being input into the system.

Magistrate Botkin thanked Chris for the information and update.

IN RE: Personnel:

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Jill William, Deputy Judge Executive, recommended the change of status for Matthew Webb from CSEPP Logistics Officer to Firefighter Recruit, at a rate of \$18.50 per hour, effective February 12, 2025; the hiring of Dominique Nunez as a 911 Administrative Assistant, at a rate of \$14 per hour, effective February 11, 2025; and the hiring of Chelsey Holland as an Animal Control Officer, at a rate of \$16.50 per hour, effective February 19, 2025.

Motion by Billy Ray Hughes seconded by Stephen Lochmueller to the change of status for Matthew Webb from CSEPP Logistics Officer to Firefighter Recruit, at a rate of \$18.50 per hour, effective February 12, 2025; the hiring of Dominique Nunez as a 911 Administrative Assistant, at a rate of \$14 per hour, effective February 11, 2025; and the hiring of Chelsey Holland as an Animal Control Officer, at a rate of \$16.50 per hour, effective February 19, 2025.

Motion carried on roll call vote as follows:

James Brian Combs-Yes Stephen Lochmueller-Yes

Billy Ray Hughes- Yes Tom Botkin- Yes

Reagan Taylor – Yes

IN RE: Employee Spotlight:

Jill William, Deputy Judge Executive, spotlighted Aaron Spurlock, a Heavy Duty Mechanic since 2023. A colleague stated that Aaron is a critical player in keeping all the fleet, especially the emergency response vehicles, up and running. His knowledge and troubleshooting skills not only ensure the vehicles are safe but also create substantial savings for the County. Recently, he was able to rebuild a motor saving the County as much as \$30,000.

RE: Judge's Report:

- The Madison County Emergency Communications Center (MCECC) (911) team received National Agency Training Program Certification (APCO), a Project 33 Initiative, from the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International. This national certification is a big deal and shows how committed our MCECC (911) team is to provide high-quality emergency response services to our community. Congratulations to the team. I'm proud of each and every one of you. Thank you for your dedication and service.
- Visit our website at www.madisoncountky.gov/community-events to see a list of some of the events happening throughout our community. If you have an event you would like to feature on this page, simply click on the "Submit an Event" button and complete the form.
- Madison County Government and its related offices will be closed on Monday, February 17, 2025, for the Presidents' Day holiday. Offices will re-open on Tuesday, February 18th at 8 AM.

Comments from Magistrates:

Judge Taylor thanked Berea Mayor Bruce Fraley and the City Council for allowing them to use the Council Chambers. Judge Taylor also stated that Scott Shepherd had not put any salt down for this snow event because it would have just wasted it with the rain, and they don't want to waste taxpayer money. They did push snow but stated if there is an area that is shaded and not melting to give him a call.

Magistrate Hughes stated the Kentucky Farm Bureau, and the Madison County Farm Bureau is sponsoring a Kentucky Farmland Transition Initiative Program, which is focused on how to keep farmland in the hands of

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active farmers, and educate local farmers on preserving agricultural land. It will be at the Extension Office on Monday, February 17th at 6 PM.

Magistrate Botkin thanked Scott Shepherd and the Road Department, as well as Brandon and the State Road Department for their work on clearing the roads this morning. He stated that there were a couple of projects that he has spoken with Brandon over the past couple of weeks, which have been completed, and he thanked him for his work on those projects.

Magistrate Combs thanked the City of Berea as well for the great job on the roads this morning. He stated that he was able to attend the Operation Unite event yesterday. This is a great opportunity for Madison County, and they will be a great partner to help with the fight on the drug epidemic.

Magistrate Lochmueller stated he had nothing to report.

Sheriff Coyle stated that on Tuesday, January 14th, he presented the Sheriff's Department Budget to the Court and announced at that time there would be a surplus of \$109,000 they would be returning. Since the Sheriff's Department operates from January to January, it is difficult to determine their totals at the end of December, but he announced that they would actually be returning a total of \$331,367.60 for the 2024 budget. He explained this surplus was due to a couple of factors. In December 2023, Captain Sam Manley passed away and they decided not to re-staff his position, and they have staffed road deputy positions with existing court security officers after they completed their training at the academy, thus saving money on the personnel side of the budget. In July 2024, the legislatures passed new laws on the fees for their collection processes they had, like vehicle inspections, vacates and evictions, serving court documents, etc., that have brought in more revenue as well.

Jailer Brock stated that they are still working on some of the issues at the Jail. He has had some discussions with the District Court Judges and the clerks about making sure paperwork is completed properly by the staff. They are struggling to maintain staff, especially ones on the floor in the cell block area, so they are working on recruiting individuals. Right now, there is a lot of turnovers, which creates overtime expenses.

Comments from Department Heads:

No Comments from Department Heads.

Public Comments:

No Comments from the Public.

IN RE: Pay Claims and Approve Transfers:

Motion made by Stephen Lochmueller seconded by Tom Botkin to approve to pay claims and transfers.

ANNOUNCE NEXT COURT DATE:

Judge Taylor announced the next court date for February 25, 2025, in the Emergency Operations Center in Richmond, KY at 9:30 AM.

IN RE: ADJOURNMENT

Motion from Billy Ray Hughes to adjourn, seconded by Stephen Lochmueller. Hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 1:02 PM.

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