

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026
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 24th of February 2026 at 9:30 AM in the Fiscal Courtroom of the Courthouse Annex Building 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, Billy Ray Hughes, and Tom Botkin were present. Madison County Attorney Jennie Haymond, Madison County Sheriff Mike Coyle, and Madison County Clerk Kenny Barger were also present.

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

Judge Taylor asked Virgil Gardner, Pastor at Pleasant Green Predestinarian Baptist Church, to lead the Court in prayer.

Judge Taylor asked Sheriff Mike Coyle to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN RE: Approval of Meeting Minutes 2-10-2026:

Motion by Billy Ray Hughes seconded by Brian Combs to approve the minutes from the regularly called meeting on February 10, 2026.

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	

Treasurer's Report:

Sarah Stewart, Treasurer, addressed the Court to give the monthly treasurer's report (see on file).

Magistrate Botkin stated that it appears the Health Fund is really doing well this year.

IN RE: Proclamation — Hunger Awareness Month (Empty Bowls):

Judge Taylor proclaimed the month of March 2026 as Madison County Hunger Awareness Month and urged all citizens to support efforts to end hunger in the County of Madison, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the United States of America, and the World.

Lora Danley; Karen Lynn, Volunteer; Jennifer Brewbaker, God's Outreach; and Justin Woosley, Homes Meal Delivery were in attendance to accept the Proclamation. Lora stated that this year will be the 27th year for the Empty Bowls project, which will be held on Friday, March 20th at First Baptist Church from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The minimum donation of \$20 will cover a handmade pottery bowl and vegetable soup with hoe cakes and a drink. They will also have quart jars of soup that can be taken home for \$10 or a pint jar for \$5. This event is fully donated, so 100% of the proceeds go to help fight hunger in Madison County.

Also, the ceramics professor at ECU will be hosting a Bowl-a-thon, this Saturday at the ECU Ceramics department, which allows community members to make a bowl, which will then be fired and glazed, and donated to the Empty Bowls project.

Judge Taylor asked how long it takes to make the bowls at ECU. Lora said it depends on how detailed they would like to make their bowl, but it will serve like an open house so that citizens can come and go.

Karen thanked the Court and the community for their support, as it allows them to help feed the hungry within Madison County.

Magistrate Botkin thanked them for their time, talents, and effort to help end hunger.

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IN RE: 1st Reading Ordinance 2026-001 — Land Use Change 165 & 167 Charlie Norris Road from UC-7 Agriculture to UC-4 General Business:

Bert Thomas, Planning and Development Director, presented 1st Reading Ordinance 2026-001 — Land Use Change 165 & 167 Charlie Norris Road from UC-7 Agriculture to UC-4 General Business for the Court's approval. This is an Ordinance of the Madison County Fiscal Court, Kentucky, approving the zone change of 165 & 167 Charlie Norris Road, Richmond, Kentucky, and authorizing the amendment of the official zoning map of Madison County, Kentucky.

The 1st Reading Ordinance 2026-001 — Land Use Change 165 & 167 Charlie Norris Road from UC-7 Agriculture to UC-4 General Business was read and acknowledged by the Court.

Magistrate Hughes stated that this section of Charlie Norris Road, which is a State Road, is 16-foot wide whereas other areas are 19-foot, making it very narrow. Bert stated that the attorney representing the applicant hinted at widening that section of Charlie Norris Road. Judge Taylor stated that he has had some discussions with KU, and they are leading the charge of getting that road widened.

Bert stated that this property is a preexisting, nonconforming commercial use property, and the landowner is wanting to expand on it and clean up the property.

Magistrate Botkin asked if there were any objections. Bert stated that there was none.

IN RE: Resolution 2026-010 — Support House Bill 557:

Jill Williams, Deputy Judge Executive, presented Resolution 2026-010 — Support House Bill 557 for the Court's approval. This is a Resolution of the Madison County Fiscal Court urging the Kentucky General Assembly to pass House Bill 557.

Motion by Tom Botkin seconded by James Brian Combs to approve Resolution 2025-010 — Support House Bill 557.

Magistrate Botkin stated that this is a good bill. They all have spoken with the legislators and Senator Carpenter about this Bill, and he is glad to see it coming out.

Magistrate Lochmueller concurred with Magistrate Botkin. This bill is needed all across the Commonwealth and is hopeful that it will pass.

Magistrate Combs thanked Representative Meredith for taking the leadership in getting the Bill out there. There are some State Representatives that have already co-sponsored this bill, and he thanked the co-sponsors as well. He is hopeful that this Bill will have some positive traction and will make a difference, because having to help fund the jail holds Madison County back.

Judge Taylor expressed his appreciation of KACo and their leadership for helping with this. He stated that across the state, counties have been subsidizing the jails. In the past 6 years, the general fund subsidies have gone up 76%, and they cannot continue to subsidize a State-mandated issue.

Magistrate Combs encouraged the public to call their representatives and encourage them to support House Bill 557.

Magistrate Lochmueller stated that it is encouraging to have the support from local legislators. Judge Taylor stated that the legislators know how important this bill is to the counties across the Commonwealth as there are currently 49 co-sponsors.

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

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IN RE: Resolution 2026-011 — Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Project Second Amended Agreement:

Tim Gray, EMA Director/Fire Chief, presented Resolution 2026-011 — Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Project Second Amended Agreement for the Court's approval. This is a Resolution to approve a second amended agreement between John Wade of 12 Perkins Ashcraft Road, Richmond, KY and the Madison County Fiscal Court in connection with a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Project, as set forth in Resolution 2024-41, and amending same.

Motion by Billy Ray Hughes seconded by Tom Botkin to approve Resolution 2026-011 — Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Project Second Amended Agreement.

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 2026-012 — Kentucky 911 Services Board Grant Application:

Chris Iseral, Chief Information Officer, presented Resolution 2026-012 — Kentucky 911 Services Board Grant Application for the Court's approval. This is a Resolution for the application and administration of 2026-2027 Kentucky 911 Services Board Grants.

Motion by Billy Ray Hughes seconded by Stephen Lochmueller to approve Resolution 2026-012 — Kentucky 911 Services Board Grant Application.

Magistrate Combs asked if this was where the cell phone fees go to. Chris stated that he was correct, the cell phone fees go to this board, which gets put back out into grants to be distributed out to the counties that apply for those grants.

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 2026-013 — Professional Planning Services Agreement for Comprehensive Plan Update:

Bert Thomas, Planning and Development Director, presented Resolution 2026-013 — Professional Planning Services Agreement for Comprehensive Plan Update for the Court's approval. This is a Resolution of the Madison County Fiscal Court relating to the approval of a Professional Planning Services Agreement for the Madison County Comprehensive Plan update.

Motion by James Brian Combs seconded by Stephen Lochmueller to approve Resolution 2026-013 — Professional Planning Services Agreement for Comprehensive Plan Update.

Magistrate Botkin explained that the first steps of the Comprehensive Plan task force are for community involvement, and he encouraged the public to voice their input.

Bert explained that by statute they are only required to review the goals objectives every five years, however they are asking for the public's input through surveys, social media posts, opportunities for the public to engage in public meetings/work sessions, etc. He explained that the Planning Commission will look at the Comprehensive Plan that is in place now, update outdated information, and get the public's input, then the Planning Commission will additionally hold a public hearing to look at adopting the plan, and the goals and objectives will be brought back to Fiscal Court for the final approval.

Motion carried on roll call vote as follows:

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James Brian Combs-Yes Stephen Lochmueller- Yes
Billy Ray Hughes- Yes Tom Botkin- Yes
Reagan Taylor – Yes

IN RE: Personnel:

Jessica Coffey, HR Director, recommended the hiring of Lucas Martin as CDL Truck Driver/General Laborer, at a rate of \$20 per hour, effective February 25, 2026; the hiring of Sean Davis as CDL Truck Driver/General Laborer, at a rate of \$20 per hour, effective February 25, 2026; and the hiring Ricky Foster as Part-Time Mechanic, at a rate of \$26.29 per hour, effective February 25, 2026.

Motion by Billy Ray Hughes seconded by James Brian Combs to approve the hiring of Lucas Martin as CDL Truck Driver/General Laborer, at a rate of \$20 per hour, effective February 25, 2026; the hiring of Sean Davis as CDL Truck Driver/General Laborer, at a rate of \$20 per hour, effective February 25, 2026; and the hiring Ricky Foster as Part-Time Mechanic, at a rate of \$26.29 per hour, effective February 25, 2026.

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: Judge's Report:

- Citizen shout-out to Kim Kincer.
 - Kim Kincer sent an email expressing her sincere appreciation of the outstanding job the County's snow removal staff did on clearing the roads after the recent snow and ice storm.
- This week we celebrate National FFS Week February 21-28th. Please take a moment to show your support for the FFA students at Madison Central & Madison Southern High School.
- The 44th District High School Basketball Tournament began February 23rd and will continue through February 26th, beginning at 6:30 PM at Eastern Kentucky University's Alumni Coliseum. Please go out and support these young athletes during this exciting tournament.
- 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's Occupational Tax Department received an encouraging email about their online portal. The email stated that Madison County has the best online system and that she would be interested in getting other counties that she works with to use the same system.
 - Chris stated that he contacted the individual that sent the email, informing her that the online system is one that Madison County developed. These collaborations are important to all parties because Madison County is continually learning new ideas or ways to make the system better while also helping other counties.

Comments from Magistrates:

Magistrate Botkin stated that the things that are happening today are a direct result of decisions that were made in the past, like using LGA funds years ago to finance new snow trucks. He thanked the Road Department for

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their snow removal and road patching, the Sheriff's Department for providing rides during the snow event, and the Fire Department for their assistance. He also stated that the State Road Department is out patching holes and asked the public to use caution as they travel. Also, on February 25th -27th, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, the State Road Department will be working on the Interstate shoulders on Exit 93 to Exit 104. He also wanted to remind the public that candidates will be starting to get out to knock on doors and asked them to use caution.

Magistrate Combs thanked all the County Employees and Department Heads for the great job they do every day.

Magistrate Lochmueller expressed his appreciation to the Court for their understanding due to his recent eye surgery.

Magistrate Hughes stated that Warren County had talked about an AI program they used for public comments during their Comprehensive Plan virtual town hall meetings. He also stated that this Saturday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, the Waco Elementary School will be having a Pottery Festival, and he encouraged the public to attend.

Comments from Department Heads:

Jill Williams recognized the 2026 Kids Mall Madness for Children's Champions, on Saturday, March 7th at the Richmond Mall from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM. There will be a petting zoo, a fire safety event, music, face painting, etc.

Tim Gray provided a Heat Map that shows where their service calls have been at and the timeframes it takes to get to those calls. He stated that Chris will be putting the map on the website and can send it out to the Magistrates as well.

Magistrate Hughes stated that they don't respond much within city limits. Tim said they do some but not a lot due to the mutual aid they have with the City of Richmond Fire Department and City of Berea Fire Department. He also stated that whoever responds depends on how the call comes in and where the address pings from. He also thanked the IT Department, Jill, and the 911 team for their help with getting the map done.

Public Comments:

Mary McMahan asked what measures Madison County will be taking about Data Centers coming. Magistrate Lochmueller stated that he made a post concerning inquiries about Data Centers and had contacted Madison County officials about potential Data Centers and determined that there has not been any information about Data Centers coming to Madison County.

Bert Thomas stated that the Land Use Regulations doesn't specifically address Data Centers, but does address industrial uses, which he believes Data Centers would fall under. There is very limited industrial zoning, due to the lack of land available for that kind of use and he believes it would be difficult to get one of those within the county.

Judge Taylor stated that he is not in favor of Data Centers, as they are a drain on resources and don't give a great benefit financially. They haven't had anyone come to the County to ask about Data Centers, but they could look into their perimeters for if it does come up in the future. He also stated that there were discussions of Data Centers going into the Blue Grass Army Depot several years ago, but he hasn't heard anything about that in a while, as they don't control what goes on within the confines of the Depot.

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Magistrate Hughes stated that his understanding is that Data Centers require a tremendous amount of energy and need to be close to power generating stations, which will put Madison County out of that market.

Judge Taylor stated that they want industries that will be a positive and beneficial to Madison County, and Data Centers don't do that.

Magistrate Botkin stated that he has had some interest in learning about the Data Centers and how they affect communities.

Jenny Stephens stated that it is great that they will be putting a Fire Department in Northern Madison County but feels that they will be doing a disservice to those that live in the Tates Creek/Newby area to lose the station that is on S Keeneland Drive.

IN RE: Pay Claims and Approve Transfers:

Motion made by Stephen Lochmueller seconded by Billy Ray Hughes to approve to pay claims and transfers.

ANNOUNCE NEXT COURT DATE:

Judge Taylor announced the next court date for March 10, 2026, in 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 adjourned at 10:55 AM.



REAGAN TAYLOR, MADISON CO. JUDGE/EXECUTIVE