

Fiscal court conducts first reading of 2025-26 budget

BY DEBORAH LUCAS ANGEL
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

At the June 17 Grant County Fiscal Court meeting, all members were present with Roger Humphrey attending via Zoom. The hefty agenda included the first reading of FY 25-26 budget.

ORDINANCES/FINANCING

- First reading conducted of Ordinance Number 0005-2025-0288, Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget. Second reading will be conducted on June 27, 9 a.m. at the Courthouse, 101 North Main Street Williamstown.
- Overall draft estimates of the budget is plus/minus \$22,000,000. Broken down in plus/minus: jail fund \$7,000,000; road fund 4,000,000 and general fund, \$9,000,000. These amounts will be finalized and a balanced budget discussed at the June 27 meeting.
- Second reading of Ordinance Number 0006-2025-0289 “Building Fees” was conducted. According to County Judge/Executive Chuck Dills, the ordinance modifies language in the ordinance concerning retaining walls and signage. Fees will be based “off construction costs” as well as “cleaned up text” of the ordinance. Approved unanimously.
- Incentive approval for Tonya Beagle, Grant County Jailer was granted for completion of a “40 hour training unit” per Kentucky House Bill 810; outlined in Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 64.5275. The incentive is in the amount of \$1,325.53.
- A surplus property list from the Grant County Detention Center, including vehicles, computer equipment, clothing, washer/dryer, sewing machine, miscellaneous plumbing, maintenance, heating/cooling, office supplies, was submitted for approval. According to Dills, most items are in such shape as to need to be destroyed; others will be sold at the County Surplus Auction. Approved unanimously.
- Salaries: while this item was

on the agenda, it was withdrawn by Dills and will be added to the June 27 agenda for any necessary discussion during budget action.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Bobby Callahan, appointed as a Grant County Road Department laborer, was approved effective June 23. Court unanimously approved.
- No member of the Grant County Attorney’s Office was on the dais with the Court however Deputy County Attorney Pete Whaley was in the audience.
- Court reviewed the “Grant County Conservation District Plan of Action for 2025-26” along with that entity’s annual budget. No action was necessary; review of the report by the Court is an annual occurrence.
- Fords Mill and Folsom roads will be opened Friday, June 20 with all limits lifted.
- Mowing and patching roads has begun.

PUBLIC HEARING

Immediately preceding the Court meeting, members held a “Public Hearing regarding the proposed use of County Road Aid (CRA) and Funds for Grant County, KY for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.” CRA funds are part of the “County and Municipal Road Aid” funding which, according to the Department of Rural and Municipal Aid, is “based on population as determined by the most recent Census.” Counties receive “18.3% of the state’s motor fuel tax receipts.” The monies “are to be used for the construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of county roads and city streets” and can apply in emergency instances. Funds are distributed typically as three payments of “about 60% of the total anticipated road aid available to the county or city” the second is “an additional 30% available” and the final “installment is the remaining balance based on the actual revenues, tabulated

after the end of the fiscal year” of June 30.

LGEA funds are part of the “coal severance funds” under House Bill 1 — the biennial budget of Kentucky. The program concerns “revenue sharing for Kentucky counties and cities.” It “returns a portion of state collected coal and non-coal mineral severance taxes to eligible local governments in accordance with KRS 42.450 — KRS 42.495.”

There is “no application” and “funds are automatically distributed to eligible recipients on a quarterly basis.”

LGEA funds can be spent for eleven categories: public safety, environmental protection, public transportation, health recreation, educational facilities, social services, industrial/economic development, vocational education, workforce training and secondary wood industry. Fifty percent of the funds go to the General Fund of the state and the other 50% goes into the LGEAF.

Dills noted the LGEA funds concerned coal hauled through the county as the basis of the fund for Grant County. According to the LGEAF — coal distribution formula, this would amount to “10%... distributed to each ‘impact county.’” Ten% of that would be distributed to the cities of the county. All is based upon population of the respective governmental entity. Dills scheduled two meetings for the remainder of June:

- The next meeting of the Grant County Fiscal Court is Tuesday, June 27 at 9 a.m. at the Courthouse, 101 North Main Street Williamstown. The topic of the meeting will be the second reading of the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget.
 - The July scheduled meeting of the Grant County Fiscal Court is Tuesday, July 1 at 6 p.m. at the Courthouse, 101 North Main Street Williamstown.
- For more information on either meeting, call (859) 823-7561.

READING

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- First Reading of “Ordinance #914-2025 Solid Waste Management (rate increase) contract renewal” was conducted. The increase will be for \$5.00 a month to begin on or after July 1. No vote was required as this is a first reading. Second reading will take place at the next scheduled meeting.
- Resolution #2025-02 “Michigan Avenue undeveloped Right of Way discussion with possible Resolution...” concerns a portion of Michigan Avenue which has a designated right-of-way (ROW). Owners request the ROW be withdrawn and returned to the property owner for development. Council unanimously approved the resolution.
- Resolution #2025-02 “authorizing mayor to enter in to revised Inter-Local contract for EMS services.” Due to an ambulance having “went down over the weekend,” Brockman was requesting Council to approve purchase of a used ambulance. However, the caveat to the purchase would be the City would purchase the vehicle on a five year contract with the inclusion of the Grant County Kentucky Ambulance Service District taking over the payments after year two.
- The Inter-Local contract is a two year agreement between Dry Ridge, the Grant County Ambulance District and the City of Crittenden Ambulance District for assumption of ambulance services by the County under the newly created Grant County entity. Council unanimously approved the resolution provided the GCKASD (GCKASD) would take over payments beginning year three.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- Fire Department Chief Alan Cammack reported the Dry Ridge Ambulance made 262 runs in May, up from May 2024; this makes year-to-date runs of 1,356. The Fire Department made a total of 52 runs with 22 in-city and 30 county making 283 year-to-date, up 83 from 2024.
- Police Department: Brockman noted Officer Matt Hicks had been signed for another year of service to the City. Hicks reported year-to-date responses of 1,924. He also noted the “less lethal” ammunition had been received. This is a “sock type” ammo vs the potentially more destructive rubber bullets. Personnel will be certified by the “end of the month” in usage. Hicks noted Dry Ridge is the only office in the county with this technology.
- Brockman noted the pick-up truck cruiser was received June 15. It will

be furnished with department equipment, which will take six to seven weeks to complete.

Code Enforcement Officer Bobby Webb is making progress, City Administrator Ken Little noted. “Word is getting around” that Webb is patrolling.

He has been responsible for seven more businesses filing paperwork for licenses, had cars removed from the ROW and has cited residents for mowing violations. (Apparently, Webb is being called the “grass nazi.”)

- Water / Sewer Department: Little reported about 10 water meters replaced and the Gibson and Dana pump stations are in process.
- The car show was a success and had about 75 vehicles on display.
- Planning and Zoning: Home2Suites has opened and has also applied for an Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) license for a bar in the location.
- Phillipo winery has applied for a business license in downtown Dry Ridge.
- “Peppers” a new “Tex Mex” restaurant, is moving into the old Frisch’s location on Fashion Ridge Road. They have applied for an ABC license.
- Parks and Rec: two juveniles who destroyed flower pots in City have been identified. The City camera system assisted in this. Both juveniles are under 16 and were turned over to Juvenile Court; no arrests were made.
- Lake Pollywog has been treated for fungal growth by Jones Lake Management.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Deep waterline replacement will be done near Toyota location. This will be to raise the 18 foot deep lines to a lesser depth and to improve lines. Activities will effect traffic.
- According to Councilmember Jessica Vincent, the Grant County Historical Society is sponsoring a “History Hunt” June 15 through July 12 for “all students in Grant County entering fourth and fifth grader in the fall.” Contenders “search for answers posted at location on plaques or clues pages, speak to a grandparent or neighbor, and maybe do a Google search or two.” Hints are available and the hunt “does not have to be completed in order. Packets “must be received by Saturday, July 12.” Questions can be directed to Vincent at (859) 308-2139 or contact the Society at grantcountyhistoricalsocietyky@gmail.com.

The next meeting will be held on Monday July 21, at 6 p.m. at the Dry Ridge City Building, 31 Broadway. For questions or more information, contact the City at (859) 824-3335.

Thank you to sponsors



Submitted by Joe Dupuy

The organizers of the Scroungers Car Club Cruise In wish to thank their biggest sponsors, Dry Ridge Auto Parts and Grant County Tourism. Here, Tammy Shively seats in the driver’s seat of the coffin car, Dragula, from the Munsters. Posing as Grandpa Munster is Steve Reinig from Ossian, Indiana.

BUDGET

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- He also reported on the proposed dive dredging at Williamstown Lake, saying he’d talked with Lake Association President Mark Moser. A certificate of insurance will be required from the vendor as well as a letter indemnifying the City of Williamstown of any responsibility and a written plan of action stating where and how the dredged earth will be dumped, to be signed by both the property owner and vendor.
- When all are in place, dredging may begin. The anticipated start date is the week of July 11.
- Mayor Henson announced that stripping on the parking lot behind the courthouse has begun. The area has been cleaned up, and all old vehicles are gone except for one car.

The lot on Johnson Street will also be striped. There are drainage issues that are being addressed as well, he said.

“A piece of street ... between the amphitheater and the lot” will be dug up and a grass strip planted to improve that area.

Some work has been completed on poles on Johnson Street that were hit by a snow plow during the winter.

“Kudos to Joe [McComas, superintendent of the Williamstown Electric Department] and Derrick [Holland, superintendent of the Williamstown Street Department] and their teams!”

- Mayor Henson announced a meeting would take place with Jerry Keith, District 6 highway superintendent, to discuss crosswalks by Tony’s Barbershop and caution lights as well as the water main repairs on “Route 36” and how that

will go.

- Mayor Henson is also going to meet with Summit, the company building the new fire truck. He is going to take a look at it with Williamstown Fire Chief Todd Alexander at Councilmember Kim Crupper’s suggestion.
- The City is signing up for the Reverse 911 system to get emergency information out to everyone. This will reach households that don’t use social media or have the app, Mayor Henson said.
- Reverse 911 relies on a database of phone numbers and addresses to send automated voice or text messages to target areas.
- Councilmember Gina Austin Smith reported on the progress made by the Marigold Day committee, which she said has met a couple of times.
- There is now an event website, www.marigold-

day.org/, she announced.

A pageant is planned for the Sept. 20 event. There will also be a parade and a car show. As of now, there is not a vendor/food truck list, she said.

- Councilmember John Coleman gave an update on the newly formed Webb Park Committee, saying “a considerable amount of funds” have been committed.
- Phase One is going to include work on the tennis courts and sidewalks.
- Coleman also suggested the removal of two small brick buildings at the top of the hill, which are empty and unused.
- “The way they’re sitting, you’re not going to be able to do the dirt work for the tennis courts because it’s just a steep hill and it’s just gonna wash and go down onto the new tennis courts,” Coleman explained.
- He asked the Council’s blessing to remove the

building to accommodate a slope grade that won’t wash down onto the courts.

Coleman said the playground is okay, but “Everything else in not worth having it [the park] open.”

He also urged the Council to pursue making a master plan for Williamstown, inviting the public to give their input.

Henson said he would set up a “caucus” to get started.

OTHER ACTIONS

- Council tabled Municipal Order 2025-05, an amendment to the Personnel Policies and Procedures Plan. As written, the municipal order raises the pay grade of city superintendents, who are at or near their maximum pay grade. However, he has since learned there are city employees who are also at or near the maximum limit. Mayor Henson requested it be

tabled until both could be addressed at once.

- Mayor Henson explained that Local Government Economic Assistance (LGEA), which gives municipal aid to cities, asked for a list of the city’s streets that “we acknowledge that we own.” (LGEA’s list is different from the City’s.)
- Council conducted the first reading of Ordinance 2025-10, which consists of a list of streets located within the city limits of Williamstown that are maintained by the City.
- Crupper noted the existence of a 300’ long unnamed street that was adopted by the city in 1990 and runs near his shop and GSI. It was not listed, but he indicated it is heavily used.
- The next regular meeting of the Williamstown City Council will be Monday, July 7 at 6 p.m. at 400 North Main Street, Williamstown.