

Chamber Foundation leads effort to renovate Anderson-Dean Park playground restrooms

April Ellis
Herald Staff

Families visiting Anderson-Dean Community Park will soon have improved access to child-friendly restroom facilities thanks to a fundraising effort spearheaded by the Mercer Chamber Foundation and its Friends of Anderson-Dean Community Park program.

The project focuses on renovating the public bathrooms located beside the playground near the Harrodsburg Lions Club Shelter, providing families with convenient restroom access while children enjoy one of the park's busiest areas.

The renovation is part of a larger effort to improve the playground area through a combination of grants, donations and volunteer work, including murals painted by Mercer County Arts Council members.

According to Chamber Foundation officials, the project represents years of collaboration between nonprofit organizations, the Mercer County Fiscal Court, City of Harrodsburg, Harrodsburg Mercer County Tourist Commission, businesses and volunteers dedicated to enhancing one of Mercer County's most-used recreational spaces.

"This total project included the crumb rubber grant for the playground that Mercer Fiscal Court worked on with the Friends of Anderson Dean, bathroom renovations with a grant from Lowe's and help from the Mercer Art Council," said Mike Sanford, Mercer Foundation vice president. "The LG&E and KU Foundation was brought on to complete everything the area needed. Many volunteer hours were also put into landscaping. It is thrilling to have an entire area done at once. All the workers, volunteers and donors made this a huge success."

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Judge Sarah Steele noted, "This is what happens when different organizations across a community come together, improvements are made for its citizens, and I thank everyone who made this possible."

The Friends of Anderson-Dean Community Park, which operates under the Mercer Chamber Foundation, was established after community volunteers who participated in Earth Day cleanups wanted to take a more active role in improving the park.

The Foundation granted the new organization nonprofit status under 501(c)(3), allowing the group to quickly begin seeking grants and accepting tax-deductible donations.

Sam Carr, Foundation president, said the Friends group has worked closely with Mercer Fiscal Court, the City of Harrodsburg and the Anderson-Dean Park Board while expanding opportunities to secure funding for park improvements.

Researching and applying for grants is a lengthy process, they said, with persistence being one of the keys to success.

"There are more misses than hits when applying for grants," Sanford said. "Perseverance is necessary when seeking grants, as well as having good grant writing skills."

The Foundation has previously received grants from the LG&E and KU Foundation to support Anderson-Dean Park beautification and arts programming, while continuing to pursue additional funding opportunities for other community initiatives.

Officials say the renovated bathrooms and improved playground will make the park safer and more welcoming for families.

"Child-friendly bathrooms and a safer playground is all a parent wants," said Stephen Ransdell, Anderson Dean Park Executive Director. "It also speaks to how visitors perceive our community."

They added that quality parks benefit both residents and economic development. "Such spaces are free and open



The Harrodsburg Herald/April Ellis
Front row, left to right, Gabby Greenwell, Julianna Rainey, Ivy Steele and Easton Burgess were joined by members of the Mercer Chamber Foundation Jill Cutler, Linda Honnald, Sam Carr, Mike Sanford, Kathy Carr, April Burgess and Brian Staples at the ribbon cutting for the renovated restrooms at Anderson Dean Community Park.

to all," Sanford said when discussing investments in parks and recreation. "That provides a healthy outdoor activity level and increases the quality of life."

"Demonstrating that our community pays attention and cares to keep housekeeping well ordered makes a welcoming environment not just to visiting families, but provides a sign we are a great place to live," said Ransdell.

Harrodsburg-Mercer County Tourist Commission Executive Director Daarik Gray said Anderson-Dean Community Park remains one of Mercer County's greatest assets.

"Anderson-Dean Community Park is one of the most important assets our community has," Gray said. "It serves as a gathering place for local families, provides countless recreational opportunities, and attracts visitors from across the region."

"We are incredibly grateful to the Mercer County Chamber Foundation and the Friends of Anderson-Dean Park for their unwavering commitment to the park over the past two years. Through grant funding, volunteer efforts, and countless hours of hard work, they have played a tremendous role in the significant improvements we've already seen."

"We sincerely appreciate their investment in the future of Anderson-Dean Park and look forward to partnering with them as we continue working together to make the park an even greater destination for both our residents and visitors."

Organizations and businesses contributing to the project include the LG&E and KU Foundation, Harrodsburg Lions Club, Mercer Chamber Foundation Lean 2 Green, MercerChamberofCommerce, Friends of Anderson-Dean Community Park, Family Wealth Group, Art Council of Mercer County, Lowe's, Ruth Webb and Joseph Kelly, Combination Construction, Hayslett Mechanical, Mercer Stone Company, the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet, Mercer County Fiscal Court, the City of Harrodsburg and the Harrodsburg-Mercer County Tourist Commission.

Chamber Foundation

What began as a conversation about expanding fundraising opportunities has evolved into an organization supporting educational, cultural, environmental and community improvement projects throughout Mercer County.

The Mercer Chamber Foundation was created following discussions that began in 2021 between then-Chamber Board President Sam Carr and Chamber Executive Director Jill Cutler about establishing a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

The goal was to create new fundraising opportunities for Chamber-sponsored programs that previously relied solely on individual fundraising efforts.

After nearly two years of legal preparation, the Foundation officially became operational in early 2023 and received final IRS approval as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization in August of that year.

Foundation officials said creating the nonprofit dramatically expanded opportunities



The Harrodsburg Herald/April Ellis
Front row, left to right, Gabby Greenwell, Julianna Rainey and Ivy Steele were joined by members of park and local government. Stephen Ransdell, Dennis Holiday, Bob Williams, Sara Steele and Daarik Gray.



The Harrodsburg Herald/April Ellis
Above is one of the murals painted by the Mercer County Arts Council in the newly renovated restroom at the Anderson Dean playground at the Lions Shelter.

to pursue grants and accept tax-deductible donations.

"Our mission was to support educational, historical, artistic, cultural and community enhancement events and programs in Mercer County," Carr said. "Our long-term vision was to expand the Foundation beyond the original legacy Chamber programs and events."

Today, the Foundation oversees a growing list of initiatives, including Pioneer Days Festival, the Kentucky Heritage Jazz Festival, Lean To Green environmental programming, Mercer Youth Leadership, Mercer Adult Leadership, the Ruth Ann Bryant Scholarship, the Gail Chambers Brown Scholarship, the Mercer County African American Historical Society, the Kiwanis Backpack Program and Friends of Anderson-Dean Community Park.

Foundation officials said the organization works alongside, but separately from, the Mercer County Chamber of Commerce.

The Foundation has its own governing board, although some members also serve on the Chamber board. Donations made to the Foundation are tax-deductible, providing another avenue for residents and businesses to invest in local projects.

One of the Foundation's newest and most visible partnerships is Friends of Anderson-Dean Community Park, which has helped secure grants and coordinate volunteer efforts to improve the county's largest recreational facility.

The Foundation has also secured multiple grants supporting Lean To Green environmental initiatives and the Kentucky Heritage Jazz Festival while continuing to pursue new opportunities

aligned with its mission.

Officials believe organizations like the Foundation play an important role in strengthening communities by providing resources that government alone often cannot. The Foundation encourages residents interested in volunteering, supporting its programs or learning more about its work to visit its website, follow its Facebook page or contact the Mercer County Chamber of Commerce office.

BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE 2026 - 2027	
An Ordinance relating to the annual budget and appropriations for the City of Burgin, Kentucky for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027.	
WHEREAS , an annual budget proposal has been prepared and delivered to the City Council; and	
WHEREAS , the City Council has reviewed such budget and made necessary modifications; and	
Now therefore be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Burgin, Kentucky that the following is adopted for the fiscal year 2026-2027 and the amounts stated are appropriate for the purpose indicated.	
APPROPRIATIONS:	
General Fund	\$ 823,979.43
Water Dept	\$ 411,989.71
Rumpke	\$ 150,000.00
Sewer availability	\$ 305,000.00
Cemetery Fund (Perpetual Care)	\$ 55,000.00
Street Fund	\$ 25,000.00
ABC Fund	\$ 25,000.00
TOTAL:	
\$ 1,795,969.14	
Given First Reading – June 01, 2026	
Given Second Reading – June 09, 2026	
Jamie Keebortz, Mayor City of Burgin	
ATTEST: Angela Stewart City Clerk/Treasurer	

ORDINANCE 2026-15	
An Ordinance amending Ordinance 2026-11 of the City of Harrodsburg related to Non-Recurring Charges in the Water Department, and also \$51.02 Water Deposit.	
Ordinance of the City of Harrodsburg, Kentucky, that relates to the business of the Water Department.	
WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the City of Harrodsburg desire amend Ordinance 2025-05 so that the following Non-Recurring Charges may come into effect.	
NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained by the City of Harrodsburg, Kentucky, that Ordinance 2026-11 be amended to read as follows:	
Non-Recurring Charges:	
Connection fee (new service)	\$25
Reconnection charge for non-payment	[\$50] <u>59</u>
<i>*Reconnection only performed during regular business hours</i>	
North Mercer charge for non-payment (NM charges city)	[\$50] <u>59</u>
Customer requested turn off/on	\$25
Customer requested meter re-read	\$25
Meter Test	\$40*
<i>*Fee waived if meter is found to be faulty</i>	
Leak Check (after first request)	\$50*
<i>*Fee waived if leak is on the utility side of the meter</i>	
Late Fees	10%
<i>*Applied to any balance due after the 10th of the month</i>	
Unauthorized Turn On or meter tampering + damages	\$150+
Lock damage/cut fee	\$50
<u>Customer Deposits</u>	
Residential	\$100.00
Commercial	\$150.00
Restaurant/Hotel	\$300.00
Industrial	\$400.00
Returned check/ACH fee	\$50.00
Fees apply to services performed during regular business hours (M-F 8am-4pm). Emergencies (outside of regular business hours) will be evaluated on a case by case basis and may incur additional overtime fees.	
This Ordinance shall become effective upon its passage, approval and publication as required by law.	
Robert O. "Bob" Williams, Mayor City of Harrodsburg	
ATTEST: Shavonna Huffman, City Clerk	
Given 1 st Reading: June 22, 2026 Given 2 nd Reading and Passed: July 13, 2026 Published: July 16, 2026	

TRIPLE HEADER!! ABSOLUTE REAL ESTATE AUCTION With On-Line Bidding

LIVE SALES SATURDAY, JULY 25TH AT 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 12:00 NOON
(ALL 3 HOUSES WILL BE SOLD FROM 208 BEECH STREET, DANVILLE, KY 40422
ONLINE BIDDING LIVE NOW @VIPAUCTIONKY.HIBID.COM

We have been authorized to offer at PUBLIC OUTCRY by the Mr. Donald Haydon Estate this Triple Header Absolute Real Estate Auction Which Includes:

208 Beech Street (10:00 AM) – This 2 Bedroom, 1 Bathroom home situated on a large Partially Fenced lot includes Living / Dining Room, Kitchen, Breakfast Nook, Enclosed Back Porch, Central Heat & Air Conditioning, Single Car Attached Garage, Single Car Detached Garage w/ Large Workshop.

130 Nichols Street (11:00 AM) – This 2 Bedroom, 1 Bathroom House Situated on a Large Pass-Through Lot Includes Living Room, Eat-In Kitchen, Foyer, Enclosed Back Porch, Central Heat & Air Conditioning, Outdoor Storage Building.

211 Nichols Street (12:00 Noon) – This 2 Bedroom, 1 Bath Home includes Living Room, Eat-In Kitchen, Central Heat & Air Conditioning, Enclosed Back Porch.

Open Houses – Sunday, July 19th, 2:00 - 4:00 PM

NOTICE: Potential bidders may conduct a Lead Based Paint Test; the successful bidder must sign a waiver at the auction. Announcements made at the sale will take precedence over any prior oral or written statements. Not responsible for accidents. Sold AS IS-WHERE IS with no warranties expressed or implied. TERMS: 10% down at auction, balance and possession with deed on or before August 28th, 2026. TAXES- The 2026 real estate taxes will be prorated to the day of closing. There will be a 10% Buyers Premium added to the winning bid to determine the final sale price.

**REMEMBER: TIME- 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 12:00 Noon
DATE- Saturday, July 25th, 2026
PLACE- 208 Beech Street, Danville, KY 40422**

V.I.P. AUCTION CO.
317 West Main • Danville, KY • (859) 236-1852
www.vipauctionky.com
George Coomer, CAI - Principal Auctioneer • Nina Kirkland - Principal Broker
Jerry Asbery - Auctioneer • Robert Hignite - Apprentice Auctioneer
"We'll Do The Crying and You Do The Buying"