

KYTC: Pikeville Bypass Rockfall Mitigation Project may be finished by end of month

Special to the News-Express

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet District 12 announced in a statement July 7 significant progress has been made on the Pikeville Bypass Rockfall Mitigation Project, with work now expected to be completed by the end of July, which is ahead of the original projected completion date of mid-August.

Crews have made excellent progress across all phases, the statement said. Work is now focused on higher elevation and more challenging sections of the rock face, including the area near the intersection of Summit Drive, according to the statement.

Beginning later in the week, contractors will begin preparing the Summit Drive corner for shotcrete application. Motorists should expect approximately two more weeks of intermittent flagging operations near the Summit Drive traffic

signal while this work is completed. Drivers are encouraged to slow down, remain alert and anticipate brief delays, the statement said.

Once work on the Summit Drive side is complete, crews will shift their attention to the Harolds Branch side of the project. Although drilling has already been completed in this area, crews must still prepare the rock face for steel stabilization and reinforcement and then apply shotcrete. Intermittent flagging will also be necessary throughout this last phase of the project, according to the statement.

Following completion of the rockfall mitigation work, crews will perform final project activities, including ditching operations, flushing drainage structures, and addressing pavement conditions along the bypass to ensure the roadway is ready for normal traffic operations.

“KYTC appreciates the public’s patience and cooperation throughout construction,”



The statement said. “As always, caution in work zones, obey all traffic control devices, and watch for workers and equipment.”

Fiscal court discusses increase in stray animals

By Olivia Morgan Staff Writer

The Pike County Fis-

cal Court met in regular session on July 7, during which a discussion developed regarding concerns

about a county-wide stray animal issue.

During the meeting, District 3 Commission-

er Freddie Lewis raised a conversation about the overwhelming number of stray animals in the coun-

ty. He said it has become a major issue, and a solution needs to be considered.

“I love animals, but it’s filtering out into the county, and it’s a major problem,” he said. “Somebody’s got to step up.”

Lewis said that although no-kill shelters are ideal, they are only a temporary solution. He said that while some animals are held in shelters, others are left hungry and displaced.

“You have to weigh it out and ask which one is worse,” he said. “Do you euthanize them in a respectful manner at a shelter, or do you watch them starve to death and get run over by cars?”

Lewis proposed an open discussion about possible answers to the problem, such as encouraging local residents to adopt from the shelter. However, some animals spend long periods of time without being adopted.

“If we can’t get them adopted out, we’re going to have to put them to sleep and make room so we can continue to pick up other dogs,” he said.

During the discussion, Pike County Judge-Executive Ray S. Jones said he is opposed to euthanizing adoptable animals.

“I am not for killing a healthy animal,” he said. “For every animal we have at the shelter, there are probably 10 or more running around on the streets.”

Jones suggested to the members of the court that a spay-and-neuter law be enacted, requiring pet owners to have proof of their animals’ spay or neuter status.

“People buy these animals, they can’t take care of them, then they turn them loose,” he said. “They don’t have them spayed or neutered, and it creates a bigger problem.”

“You need to adopt them, you need to require people to have them spayed or neutered, and you need to have some kind of licensing to make sure that happens,” he continued. “As long as I am judge, I am not for euthanizing healthy animals.”

Jones said there are currently no animal licensing or spay-and-neuter requirements in place.

In other business, the fiscal court also:

- Acknowledged the receipt of the Pike County Public Library District Budget Overview for July 2026 through June 2027;

- Approved the appointments to the Mountain Water District Board of Commissioners; and

- Adopted a resolution approving the execution of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Pike County Fiscal Court and the Commonwealth of Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s Department of Highways for up to \$362,000 in Local Assistance Road Program funding for Jones Fork and Big Card Road Projects.

The Pike County Fiscal Court will next meet in a special session at 10 a.m. on July 16, according to Fiscal Court Clerk Christine Damron. Originally, the court was to hold its regular meeting on July 21; however, scheduling conflicts have forced the date change.

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