

Webster County Chamber Hears Workforce Solutions Presentation

The Webster County Chamber of Commerce met September 23, with Melanie Tapp, Director of Madisonville Community College Workforce Solutions as the guest speaker. Tapp shared information related to how Work Force Solutions brings the college to the community and the community to the college.

Highlights of her talk included information regarding how MCC Workforce Solutions partners with local employers to

- * Build a talent pipeline through career fairs, company tours, guest speakers, apprenticeships and work-based learning
- * Develop and upskill current employees
- * Provide technical, customer-service and leadership training
- * Create career pathways and promote from within
- * Improve employee retention

- * Connect employers with emerging talent
- * Access funding and valuable partnerships

This program and Tapp bring valuable resources to Webster County and its businesses and organizations. The programs helps local agencies explore training opportunities, work force development and partnership opportunities.

During the meeting, local mayors also shared information about activities, events and programs in their communities.

The next meeting of the Chamber of Commerce is planned for October 28. DeeAnna Sowa from the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development will provide the program. On December 2, the chamber will hear updates and membership information from Judge/Executive Steve Henry.



MELANIE TAPP FROM Madisonville Community College is pictured here as she spoke at the monthly meeting of the Webster County Chamber of Commerce last week.

County Native Is Chairman Of State Bankers Association

First United Bank is proud to announce that J. Jason Hawkins, President and CEO, has been named Chairman of the Kentucky Bankers Association (KBA). Hawkins officially began his term at the close of the KBA's annual convention in Washington, D.C., which concluded Monday, September 21.

The convention brought bankers from across Kentucky together to connect, share ideas, learn from one another, and look ahead to the future of the banking industry. As Chairman, Hawkins will lead the KBA's mission of advocacy, promotion, and enhancement of the banking industry across the Commonwealth while representing the interests of Kentucky's financial institutions.



"I am honored to serve as Chairman of the Kentucky Bankers Association and grateful for the opportunity to represent our industry," said Hawkins. "The banking community in Kentucky is the foundation of economic growth and prosperity of our communities, and I look forward to working alongside my fellow bankers to strengthen our industry and better serve the people and businesses across the Commonwealth."

This is a wonderful leadership opportunity for Hawkins and one that allows him to represent First United Bank and the banking community across Kentucky. First United Bank is confident he will bring the same commitment, dedication, and leadership to his role as Chairman that he brings to the bank every day.

er and Vice Chairman before assuming the role of Chairman. His commitment to leadership and service also extends to the broader community, where he currently serves as a board member of Baptist Health Deaconess Madisonville, the Madisonville-Hopkins County Economic Development Corporation, and the Salvation Army, a member of Madisonville Noon Kiwanis, and finance chairman for Southside Baptist Church.

Webster County Fiscal Court

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the county. According to both Hammack and Henry, work is beginning on road layout at the site and some contractors are already talking about building in the development. Henry also thank the IDA for their support on this project.

In personnel matters, the court approved a one-year anniversary increase for Bobby Hashfield at the road department; okayed the hiring of part-time bailiffs Jacqueline Nance and Shirley, and the fulltime hiring of Katie Riggs at the 9-1-1 center.

Two transfers were approved by the court. A transfer in the amount of \$223,942.42 from the road department to the general fund was approved and a transfer of \$45,000 from the general fund to the jail fund was approved. Purchases and claims also received court approval.

Magistrates okayed a request for Mandy Fambrough to attend the Barren River Mental Health and Aging Conference on October 15 at Bowling Green.

In her report Toal told the court that the bathroom project at

Canaan Ridge Park is underway and siding installation on the welcome center began Monday. She continues to work closely with Kim Humphrey on economic development and has been meeting with industry leaders and is working on grant writing initiatives.

In his comments to the court Henry noted that plans for the farmer's market pavilion have changed and the structure will now be built on the south end of the parking lot behind the court house rather than the north end. He noted that the cost for a retaining wall at the original planned site was instrumental in the site change.

OEA Investigation

Continued from Page 1

requested by principals. The conversation included details of employment status and salary of two individuals who were awaiting approval to continue in their current positions as well as the necessity and prioritization of the additional positions for each school. The issue of positions had just been raised in public at the earlier regular board meeting, but continued away from the public at the impromptu meeting. As board members who participated in the follow-up meeting, Amanda Coomes, Melony Hobgood and David Asher were determined by OEA to be in violation of the state's Open Meeting Law.

A second complaint against Coomes alleges she has a Kentucky High School Coaches Association membership that provides her with benefits beyond her role as a board member. Coomes stated she has had a

KHSCA membership for two years provided by the athletic director. Athletic Director Zach Lagrange confirmed he provided Mrs. Coomes with a KHSCA membership card. The report notes that nay district administrator, board member or central office employee may request a card. The \$30 fee is paid with district funds. No violation was found regarding this allegation.

In regard to the opening meeting violation, Coomes, Hobgood and Asher are each to obtain two hours of training on the topic of "Kentucky Open Meetings Law." The training is to be provided by an OEA approved trainer and to be completed with proof of training to OEA by December 1, 2026.

Information for this article was obtained through an open records request by The Sebree Banner.

-- PUBLIC NOTICE --

NOTICE OF BOND RELEASE

In accordance with KRS 350.093, notice is hereby given that Hopkins County Coal, LLC, 1146 Monarch Street STE:350, Lexington, Kentucky 40513, has applied for Phase II and III on increments 13 of permit 917-0034, which was last issued on September 9, 2026. The application covers an area of approximately 83.80 surface acres.

The permit area is near the intersection of Slover Creek Road & Bruce Road.

The bonds now in effect for the mentioned increments are surety bonds in the amount of \$108,000. 100% of the original bonds receiving Phase III release in the amount of \$108,000 is included in the application for release.

Reclamation work performed includes: backfilling, regrading, top-soil replacement, and drainage control including soil preparation and initial seeding and mulching in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and a report for the area has been submitted to the cabinet in accordance with 405 KAR 16:200, Section 8 or 405 KAR 18:200, Section 8. revegetation has been established in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and the standards for success of revegetation, successful completion of all surface and reclamation operations in accordance with the approved reclamation plan such that the land is capable of supporting the post mining land use of cropland and pastureland approved pursuant to 405 KAR 16:210 or 405 KAR 18:220; compliance with requirements of KRS Chapter 350, 405 KAR Chapters 7 through 24, and 405 KAR 10:020 and release of 83.80 acres.

Written comments, objections, and requests for a public hearing or informal conference must be filed with the Director, Division of Field Services, 300 Sower Boulevard Frankfort, Kentucky, 40601 by Friday November 20th, 2026.

A public hearing on the application has been scheduled for 10:00 AM on Tuesday, December 1st, 2026 at the Department for Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's Madisonville Regional Office, State Office Building, Third Floor, 625 Hospital Drive, Madisonville, KY 42431. The hearing will be cancelled if no request for a hearing or informal conference is received by Friday November 20th, 2026.

10/21c

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