

London mayor’s donations to help Beshear in 2023 still under investigation

TOM LOFTUS
KENTUCKY LANTERN

FRANKFORT — The Kentucky Registry of Election Finance continues to investigate hundreds of thousands of dollars in excess campaign contributions that London Mayor Randall Weddle gave through “straw donors” to help Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear win reelection in 2023.

But the matter is not expected to be discussed at Wednesday’s meeting of the registry’s board of directors.

John Steffen, executive director of the registry, told the Kentucky Lantern Tuesday that the agency continues to investigate the Weddle contributions, “but we’re not ready to bring it back to the



The Kentucky Lantern

Supporters gather around Randall Weddle after the city council removed him as London mayor on Sept. 5.

board yet.”

At issue are hundreds of thousands of dollars listed as having been contributed to Beshear’s campaign com-

mittee and the Kentucky Democratic Party by Weddle’s family members, employees of his company WB Transport, and close business associates.

The large bundles of contributions from Weddle’s family, friends and associates were first revealed in an April 2023 story in the Lantern that concluded the Weddle group was the single largest group of donors to Beshear’s reelection.

Weddle has said that days after publication of that article he reported directly to Beshear that much of the money was actually donated on Weddle’s personal credit card.

Beshear’s campaign and the Kentucky Democratic Party then refunded \$202,000 in contributions that had been made on Weddle’s credit card.

Later in 2023 the registry began its investigation. In February the registry staff recommended the case be brought to a close with a finding that Weddle had

committed numerous unintentional violations of the law and be fined up to \$5,000 per violation.

Weddle’s attorney, Guthrie True, of Frankfort, told the board at that meeting that the recommendation was a fair settlement of unknown violations of civil law.

True did not return a phone message left at his office on Tuesday by Kentucky Lantern.

But several board members in February said there were far too many unanswered questions about how the huge and unusual bundles of contributions came about and did not want to surrender its ability to refer the matter to a prosecutor for investigation of possible criminal violations.

The board voted 6-0 to send the matter back for further investigation.

Trump allies, undeterred by setbacks in courts

JULIE CARR SMYTH
ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — A documentary proof-of-citizenship requirement for voting in U.S. elections hasn’t been able to pass Congress and has been blocked by the courts, so allies of President Donald Trump’s administration are pursuing another avenue to try to impose the idea — asking a little-known federal agency to do it.

By a deadline earlier this week, the independent U.S. Election Assistance Commission had received more than 380,000 public comments reacting to a petition to add the requirement.

The group is asking the commission, composed of two Republicans and two Democrats, to add the mandate to the federal voter registration form. It says requiring people to produce documents proving their citizenship is “essential to enhance the integrity and reliability of voter registration processes, ensuring that only eligible U.S. citizens are permitted to register and vote in federal elections.”

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PUBLIC NOTICE

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION
COLUMBIA GULF TRANSMISSION LLC,
DOCKET NO. CP26-11-000**

Columbia Gulf Transmission, LLC (“CGT”) has submitted an application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”) under Docket No. CP26-11-000, for approval to construct and operate the Pulaski Project (“Project”) located in Lincoln and Pulaski Counties, Kentucky.

About Columbia Gulf Transmission:

The Columbia Gulf Transmission System, operated by TC Energy, is a crucial component of the interstate natural gas pipeline system in the United States. It spans approximately 3,340 miles and connects to major pipelines in the U.S. Gulf Coast and additional Midwestern lines. The system is governed by the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and is regulated to ensure the safety and integrity of the pipeline and facilities.

Purpose of the Pulaski Project:

To help meet increasing market demand, Columbia Gulf is proposing the Pulaski Project, which is designed to supply natural gas to support the planned expansion of the East Kentucky Power Cooperative’s John Sherman Cooper Power Station. The Project is expected to strengthen the availability and resiliency of the region’s energy infrastructure and support southern Kentucky’s electric grid, contributing to system stability and reliability for local communities. It will also contribute to regional economic development and growth in the region, including the creation of new job opportunities, increased labor income, and a boost in local spending.

Project overview:

The proposed Project includes the construction of approximately 41 miles of 30-inch diameter pipeline, beginning at Columbia Gulf’s existing Main Line System in Lincoln County and continuing through Pulaski County to a new delivery meter station interconnect with the John Sherman Cooper Power Station. Once in service, the Pulaski Project will deliver natural gas to the power station, providing a reliable and cost-effective energy source for the region.

Project map and additional information:

A map indicating the general location of the Project is shown. More information on the Pulaski Project can be found on the project website:
www.tcenergy.com/operations/natural-gas/pulaski-project/

For more information:

A copy of the application CGT filed with FERC is available at:

- Pulaski County Public Library - Main Library
304 South Main Street
Somerset, KY 42501
- Lincoln County Public Library - Main Library
201 Lancaster Street
Stanford, KY 40484
- Online: go to www.ferc.gov, click on eLibrary (upper right-hand corner of screen) and perform a search using Docket No. CP26-11-000

