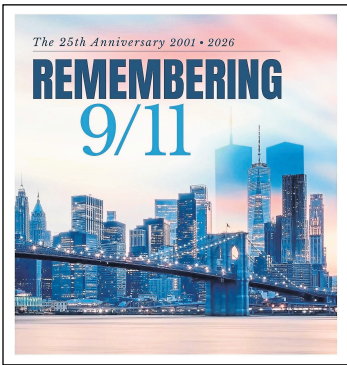






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Court proposes new data center regulations

Tax rate kept the same by 8-1 vote

BY GRANT GERSTNER
EDITOR

After having voted down the original set of regulations on data centers and subsequently attempting to conduct a new first reading on the same regulations, the Oldham County Fiscal Court conducted another first reading on a new set of

regulations that is more restrictive on Sept. 1. As previously reported, the court voted to deny their original regulations on data centers in a 5-4 vote on Aug. 18. Less than one week later, Judge Executive David Voegelé hosted a special-called meeting to conduct a new first reading on the regulations, saying that the court's moratorium — i.e. pause — on data center development had expired. When brought up on Sept. 1, Voegelé said that the court failed to approve its meeting agenda at the court's Aug. 24 special-called meeting, which he deemed meant it "didn't occur as a meeting and we're basically going to forget it and try to start over again," he said. Voegelé then called on Magistrate Kevin Woosley, who asked the court to reconsider his motion he made on Aug. 18 regarding hiring a consultant to help the court make further updates to the regulations, for which the court voted unanimously.

SEE COURT/PAGE A2

School board to allow input on tax rate increase

BY GRANT GERSTNER
EDITOR

After fielding several complaints on social media, the Oldham County Board of Education has reversed their plans to exclude public comment from their Sept. 17 special-called meeting, where they plan to take a final vote on their proposed tax rate increase. As previously reported, the board's proposed tax rate for real estate and personal property is 82 cents per \$100 of assessed value — a less than 1% increase from the board's current rate at 81.2 cents per \$100. The proposed rate was chosen in a 4-1 vote, with Board Member Adam Springer opposed, at the board's Aug. 26 special-called meeting. If approved, the proposed rate will net the district's general fund approximately \$800,000 more than if they were to keep the rate the same as last year, and approximately \$3.2 million more if they were to adopt the compensating rate — the rate that projects the same amount of tax revenue as last year. Initially, the board did not plan to include a

public comment period on their Sept. 17 meeting agenda. In an Aug. 28 email to the Era, Board Chair Carly Clem said the Sept. 17 meeting "is a public hearing meaning it is open to the public, but because it is a special called meeting it will not have public expression." In a post on Facebook, Clem initially maintained that notion, but later updated the post to read: "the Board has decided to add public expression to this special called meeting." "Unchanged from the past, public expression is generally not included in special called meetings but given the nature of this topic, we have decided to move forward with adding it to the agenda." Though Kentucky law forces school boards to have a "public comment period" during regularly-scheduled meetings, it does not prohibit school boards from including a period to hear from the public at any special-called meeting. Look for coverage of the Sept. 17 meeting at oldhamera.com and in future editions of the Era.



Photos courtesy of Baptist Health La Grange
A Baptist Health La Grange staff member writes "The best chapter's ahead" during the Sept. 4 Chalk the Walk event in recognition of September as Suicide Prevention Month.



Baptist Health team writes positive messages for Suicide Prevention Month

BY ERA STAFF

Bright messages of hope and encouragement covered the sidewalk outside Baptist Health La Grange's Behavioral Health unit Friday morning, Sept. 4, as staff and community members gathered for the hospital's annual Chalk the Walk. Chalk the Walk, held annually in recognition of September as Suicide Prevention Month, aims to reduce the stigma around mental health issues with uplifting messages and drawings on the sidewalk in chalk. Irfan Afaq, MD, medical director of Behavioral Health at Baptist Health La Grange, said events like this help open the



A Baptist Health La Grange staff member draws a sun next to blue chalk writing that reads, "Your feelings are valid," at the Sept. 4 Chalk the Walk.

door to care. "Anyone can have a mental health issue, and the more openly we talk about it, the easier it becomes for people to reach out for help," Dr. Afaq said. "When someone is going through a crisis, getting them back on track means helping not only the patient but their family and the community. That's why coming together like this matters."

SEE COLORING/PAGE A8

Court temporarily halts county voter reassignments

Legislative leaders form workgroup to find solution

BY GRANT GERSTNER
EDITOR

Hundreds of voters in Oldham and Bullitt County that received a letter saying they would now be registered in Jefferson can breathe a sigh of temporary relief, as a court order signed Sept. 3 says that they will be automatically reregistered in their original home county — for now. As previously reported, 211 Oldham County voters received a letter this summer notifying them that their voter registration was being moved to Jefferson County. Releases from the Jefferson County Clerk's office revealed the change occurred due the Kentucky State Board of Elections new guidance to use an updated Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping framework, which was

spurred by a state law change in 2022. After public outcry over concerns of property values, school enrollment and more, Jefferson County Clerk David Yates took action in Franklin Circuit Court, which led to the agreed order signed Wednesday morning. Though the restorative change will allow those affected to vote in their original county for the upcoming General election, the order does not promise a permanent solution: "This Order is a temporary measure entered solely for the duration of this litigation and does not constitute a final determination of any voter's county of residence, a final resolution of the underlying boundary disputes, or a final determination of the Parties respective rights and obligations ... "This Order shall remain in effect until further order of this Court, upon dismissal of this action, or upon subsequent agreement of the Parties, whichever occurs first."

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