



Lawrence County  
**BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Date:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 | **Time:** 5:30 – 7:20 p.m.

**PRESENT: County Executive** David Morgan. **Commissioners:** Phillip Heatherly, Tammy Wisdom, Sandy Newton, Barry Luffman, Shane Eaton, Travis Cauwels, Scott Franks, Randy Brewer, Dave Ray, and Rick Skillington. **Assistant Library Director** Marie Brennan, **Library Director** Teresa Newton, **EMS Assistant Director** Kane Watkins, **EMS Director** Michelle Ayers, **Sheriff** John Myers, **Chief Deputy** George Barturen, **County Attorney** Charlie Holt, **Juvenile Magistrate** Ashley Dunkin, **General Sessions Judge** Mike Harris.

**ROLL CALL:** David Morgan, **Commissioners** Scott Franks, Randy Brewer, Phillip Heatherly, Barry Luffman.

*Proposed agenda and details of agenda items are in the folder. Resolutions are noted by number if they were discussed/changed.*

**Mid-year review materials were distributed.**

**MORGAN:** Overall, in fund 101 we have realized 46% of our revenue, five months reporting. In Solid Waste, 49% revenue realized, bills just went out last week. This information will serve as a baseline for all other discussions tonight.

**JUDGE MIKE HARRIS** spoke about the need for a new position in General Sessions – there are currently three employees, two YSOs and Chief Deputy Clerk, Gemma Hill. There is a need for a “utility” person. Two to three days a week Gemma Hill is in court and cannot answer the phone. Filing is a problem because they have more than ever to handle. YSOs are serving as clerks but need to be doing work they are statutorily required to do, getting out in the community and following up on youth who are in juvenile court. The new person would answer phones for both general sessions and juvenile offices and would fill in when others are out of the office on vacation or sick.

**ASHLEY DUNKIN** states that she has seen an enormous increase in General Sessions and Juvenile cases since she started in 2011. Both offices are required to be in court 3-4 days a week, and the offices are unstaffed at times., since 2011, increase in General Sessions and Juvenile. Both in court 3-4 days a week.

**Motion to approve the addition of a new Deputy Clerk Position in General Sessions/Juvenile offices**

**Motion:** Brewer. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Motion to add to the budget amendment list**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Brewer.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

6. Ambulance Service 5<sup>th</sup> truck –

Population is 46k plus, standard is one truck per 10,000 population, so an additional ambulance is needed on the road. Last added a unit in Lawrence County in 2012. Estimated 25-28% rise in call volume since then. Options detailed in folder.

**MICHELLE AYERS** – Discussed the need for mutual aid from Giles and Wayne County EMS.

**KANE WATKINS** – EMS had to request aid 37 days September – December 2024. Majority of those days were fully staffed, but unable to cover all calls without help. Six times mutual aid could not come.

**AYERS:** 74% of calls are Medicare calls.

**MORGAN** - Transports are billable calls, doctor rules what kind of care a patient needs. \$2.3 million budgeted, running 43% collection of that currently. New EMS billing company should increase that.

**Motion to approve Option 2 for a 24-hour truck and 6 new employees, based on new revenue.**

**Motion:** Brewer. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**RICK SKILLINGTON** – can we staff it?

**AYERS** - We don't know but are fully staffed right now. Some PRN staff expressed a desire to apply for a full-time job becomes available. WATKINS adds that it will be much easier to staff a 24-hour truck than a 12 hour.

**Motion to add to the budget amendment list**

**Motion:** Heatherly. **Second:** Brewer.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Motion to approve 6% rate increase for EMS**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Brewer.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

8. Station 3 (Ethridge) Utility Payment Request, represents a 30% increase in that charge.

Generator recently put in in Ethridge, rate to go up to \$1,000 month. Agreement is to pay the utility bills but we never get a bill from Ethridge. The charge is being handled like rent. Will not approve until the City agrees to provide actual utility receipts.

**Motion to defer until City of Ethridge provides utility receipts.**

**Motion:** Heatherly. **Second:** Brewer.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

9. Recycling Equipment Grant, includes conveyor belt “pick line” and 16 four-yard roll-off dumpsters.

**Motion to accept grant**

**Motion:** Luffman. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

10. Archives surplus property – two court records cabinets

**Motion to deem these surplus.**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

11. City of Loretto asks for help with industrial park expansion, utility and wastewater program extension. **MORGAN** states that we have purchased industrial property in Lawrenceburg, which has helped that city.

**Motion to give \$100,000 to the City of Loretto**

**Motion:** Luffman. **Second:** Franks.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

12. Mid-year bonuses – Does not include Sheriff’s Department and Jail. We did a 3% rate increase at FY 24-25 for all employees except in those departments. We said we would consider a mid-year bonus.

**SHERIFF JOHN MYERS** – In 2023-24 got SRO grant from the state. Asked to keep that; was not allowed. This year, got a 5% raise instead of 8% as requested. Now asking for 3% raise

**BRANDI WILLIAMS:** Interest income collected so far in FY 24-25 is \$470,000, \$60k-80k a month.

Discussion of growth: there will be a 260-home development behind Doss Bros. on the upcoming extension of Springer Road.

**DENNY GILLESPIE** – I don’t mind sharing growth with our employees.

**MORGAN** - Sheriff is allowed to spend money left in his salary budget at the end of the year on bonuses, etc., but he has not. This has been income for Lawrence County.

**DUNKIN** and **HARRIS** compliment officers.

**MYERS** spoke of efforts to save taxpayer dollars through military equipment program. Just bought a couple of new patrol cars with the funds.

**WILLIAMS**: 3% raise for Sheriff's Department and Jail would be an additional \$150k annually.

**Motion to give 3% raise to Sheriff's Department and Jail, retroactive to July 1**

**Motion:** Brewer. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Motion to add to the budget amendment list**

**Motion:** Heatherly. **Second:** Luffman.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Motion to add to approve Option 3, a \$1,000 bonus for other employees.**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Luffman.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

13. County maintenance budget – Budgeted \$96,000 in FY 24-25, has spent \$87,000 so far. Recommendation of \$40k, one need is for a backup generator for \$20k.

**Motion to add \$40,000 to Maintenance Budget**

**Motion:** Brewer. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

14. Commissioners were given Opioid Abatement Council recommendation of where to spend first round of funding. Has to be allocated by March 2025. Ten applicants. **MORGAN** states that grantees will have to report back to OAC about grant work, which will increase their transparency.

**Motion to approve grant decision of local OAC and add to budget amendments.**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

16. Other business

**Library parking lot** – Highway Department cannot use their equipment because it's too large. A tree will have to be removed. **MORGAN** suggested speaking to the City of Lawrenceburg about using its equipment. **TERESA NEWTON** states that existing asphalt will have to be removed to avoid drainage problems.

Estimate of cost is \$60,000

**Motion to repave library parking lots with funds not to exceed \$60k.**

**Motion:** Brewer. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Estimate for engineering for Sheriff's Department** entrance repair came in at \$32,000.

**Motion to approve no more than \$35k for engineering this project.**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Brewer.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Food insecurity grant: Nancy Brewer** explained that this grant will provide appliances, and in some cases vehicles, to five food banks in Lawrence County. Lawrence County will be purchasing all because it is a reimbursement grant, and local food banks do not have available funds to spend, then wait for reimbursement from the state. Proposal is to establish fund of \$119,304 to cover all costs.

**Motion to add \$119,304 to budget amendments for reimbursable purchases.**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**MORGAN** distributed a sample letter that would be sent from him/County Commission urging the Airport Board to raise hangar rate to state average. Franks stated that hangar fees vary widely according to location to airport (urban/rural). He feels local fees are about average, all voiced concern about stepping into a decision that should be left to Airport Board. No recommendation.

**Motion to approve additions to budget amendments: Food Insecurity grant, Sheriff's Department raise, agenda numbers 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, Library parking lot, Sheriff's Department façade.**

**Motion:** Franks. **Second:** Heatherly.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Motion to adjourn.**

**Motion:** Heatherly. **Second:** Franks.

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously, 5/0.

**Minutes Submitted By:** Nancy Brewer