



Lawrence County
BUDGET COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 | **Time:** 5:00-5:52p.m.

PRESENT: County Executive David Morgan. **Commissioners:** Chris Sutherland, Shane Eaton, Phillip Heatherly, Tammy Wisdom, Dave Ray, Travis Cauwels, Scott Franks, Barry Luffman, Rick Skillington, Steve Hagan, and Randy Brewer. **Sheriff** John Myers, **Director of Accounts & Budgets** Brandi Williams, **Chief Deputy** George Barturen, **Clerk & Master** Kristy Gang, **Library Director** Marie Brennan, and **County Purchasing Agent** Kelly Odom.

ROLL CALL: Chairman David Morgan, Vice-chair Scott Franks, Randy Brewer, Phillip Heatherly, and Barry Luffman.

Executive Morgan called the meeting to order. Requested to move agenda item #9 to #2. **(Agenda available in the committee folder).**

Motion to Swap Agenda Item #2 with Agenda Item #9.

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

Vote: Motioned passed unanimously 5/0.

LIBRARY EXPANSION DISCUSSION:

- **Commissioner Skillington** discussed naming the new library addition after Mr. Hill, at the request of John Ferguson. He noted the city of Lawrenceburg has shown an interest in assisting the construction.
- **Library Director Brennan** shared expansion ideas, noting the current facility is outdated (last expanded in 1990) and does not meet state standards.
- **Library Usage:** 28,000 people used the library last year, with circulation increasing annually.

Motion to Approve Purchase of the Parcel of Land Adjoining the Lawrence County Public Library in Partnership with the City of Lawrenceburg for \$40K each:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

LIBRARY FINANCIAL DECISIONS:

- **Book Write-Off:** Williams explained the audit recommendation to remove library books from the fixed asset system and maintain a spreadsheet for compliance.

Motion to Approve Write-Off of Library Books from the Fixed Asset System and Maintain a Spreadsheet to Comply with the Current Capital Assets Policy:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

- **Gift from Estate:** Commissioner Skillington explained the library received \$25,000 from an estate, designated for expansion.

Motion to Designate a Gift to the Lawrence County Public Library to Be Placed in a Special Interest-Bearing Fund and Which Interest Will Accumulate, and Be Designated for Capital Projects:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT SURPLUS:

- The committee approved the disposal of surplus property from the Highway Department.

Motion to Declare Certain Property of the Lawrence County Highway Department to be Surplus Property and Approve Disposal of Such Surplus Property:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

WATERLINE PROJECT FUNDING DISCUSSION:

- A contractor is asking the county to fund the water line for a subdivision in Loretto.
- The committee debated funding the waterline project.
- **Commissioner Heatherly** and others raised concerns about setting a precedent of county-funded infrastructure for developers.
- **Commissioner Ray** recommended waiting for the results of the water study before considering any plans for a water project.

Motion to NOT Approve Funding for Waterline Project for City of Loretto Water Department:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

COMMISSIONER PAY INCENTIVES:

- **Williams** explained the \$600 incentive for commissioners completing CTAS training, costing approximately \$12,000 annually.
- **Commissioner Ray** discussed how the CTAS continuing education works and its benefits.

Motion to Discuss the Commission Incentive Pay for the 2025-2026 FY Budget in an Upcoming Budget Committee Meeting:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

LIBRARY GRANT:

- The library received a \$20,000 TOPS grant requiring a \$2,222 match, which will be funded from the library budget and private donations.

Motion to Accept TOPS Grant for the Lawrence County Public Library Requiring \$2,222.00 from the Library Budget and Further Match from Private Donation:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

LITIGATION TAX INCREASE:

- **Williams** explained the Barrett Group recommended increasing the litigation tax from \$18 to \$28.45 to generate additional county revenue.

Motion to Increase Litigation Taxes for General Sessions Court:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

EXCESS INTEREST REVENUE USAGE:

- **Williams** reported an excess of interest income, with **\$562,216.00** budgeted but **\$1,627,354.09** collected to date, resulting in **\$1,065,138.00** in surplus. An additional **\$200,000.00** is projected by year-end, bringing the unbudgeted total to **\$1,265,138.00**.
- **Maintenance Department** requested a service truck with a service bed and tools for **\$68,000**, but only **\$60,000** is really needed for the truck itself. The truck costs **\$64,000**, with an additional **\$4,000** for tools.
- **Sheriff's Department** requested 7 vehicles costing **\$322,000**, plus **\$84,000** for vehicle equipment, totaling **\$406,000**.
- If these purchases are approved, along with the **\$40,000** for the library property purchase, the county will still have **\$759,000** in excess interest revenue. This surplus could help offset the negative impact on the fund

balance from previously approved expenses, such as the 5th ambulance shift and Sheriff's Department raises.

Motion to Approve the Purchase of a Maintenance Truck and Sheriff's Department Vehicles and Equipment, and Add them to the Budget Amendment List:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

ETHRIDGE EMS UTILITIES:

- **Williams** explained that Ethridge EMS shares its building with Ethridge Fire & Rescue and is requesting \$1,000 per month to cover all utilities for the year, plus half the generator cost, totaling \$12,000 annually.
- **Commissioner Heatherly** noted that the EMS in Loretto has its utilities paid by the county, but the facility is used exclusively by EMS.
- The Committee discussed the Ethridge EMS request, agreeing that the county should pay part of the utilities since they use the facility. However, members were hesitant to approve the full amount, as it would be unfair to other fire departments.
- **Commissioner Heatherly** pointed out that the county had allocated significant funds to county fire last year and emphasized the need for fairness. He also noted that the City of Ethridge does not contribute any funding for the facility.
- **Williams** clarified that the county had previously been covering the utilities but had not paid them this year.
- The committee continued to discuss Ethridge EMS utility payments, agreeing to cover \$4,500, reducing the requested cost in half.

Motion for the County to Pay Ethridge Fire & Rescue \$4,500 for Utilities.

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

CIRCUIT COURT RAISES:

- **Williams** reviewed each amendment. Circuit Court Clerk Tommy Lee Kidd requested a 5% raise for two of his employees, funded from the Jury Expense line and retroactive to July 1, 2024. Technically the raises do not require approval or a budget amendment, as he has extra funds in his budget. The increase will be recurring next year.
- **Executive Morgan** supported the raises, noting this was the third time Kidd has requested them. This time, the raises will be covered by extra money already in his budget.
- The committee approved a 5% raise for two Circuit Court employees, funded through extra money in the Jury Expense line.

Motion to Approve 5% Requested Raise for Two Employees in the Circuit Court:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

COURTROOM MICROPHONE UPGRADE:

- The committee approved upgrading from 2 to 8 microphones for better sound quality, costing **\$2,735**, and included an already **\$16,600** maintenance agreement that failed to get put in last year's budget.

Motion to Approve Upgrades for Microphones for Courtroom:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

BUDGET AMENDMENT LIST APPROVAL:

- The committee approved the full budget amendment list.

Motion to Approve Budget Amendment List:

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn.

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously 5/0.

Minutes Submitted By: Christian Tyree