



Lawrence County
BUDGET COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday, June 25, 2026 | **Time:** 5:00 p.m.-9:11 p.m.

PRESENT: County Executive David Morgan. **Commissioners:** Scott Franks, Barry Luffman, Phillip Heatherly, Travis Cauwels, Chris Sutherland, Shane Eaton, Sandy Newton. **Director of Accounts & Budgets** Brandi Williams, **Veterans Service Director** Donnie Morris, **EMS Assistant Director** Kane Watkins, **Chamber of Commerce CEO/President** Ryan Egly, **County Maintenance Director** Mark Brewer, **Sheriff** John Myers, **Chief Deputy** George Barturen, Bethe Bolin, **Library Director** Marie Brennan, **EMA Director** Shelton Barnett, **Main Street Lawrenceburg Director** Michelle Gantz, **Main Street Lawrenceburg President** Jason Grayson, **Library Chairman** Lucas Hunt, Anthony Washburn, John Uzbasic, and other county residents.

Executive Morgan called the meeting to order.

Reconvened from the recessed Budget Committee meeting held on June 1, 2026.

ROLL CALL: *Chairman* David Morgan, *Vice-chair* Scott Franks, Barry Luffman, Phillip Heatherly, and Travis Cauwels.

**All the meeting documents, including the proposed FY 2026-2027 Budget, are available in the meeting folder.*

SURPLUS PROPERTY—SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT

- **Williams** discussed the Sheriff’s Department surplus property.

Approve the Sale of the Sheriff’s Department Surplus Property.

Motion: Heatherly. **Second:** Cauwels.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

FY 2025-2026 BUDGET AMENDMENTS

- **Williams** went through the Budget Amendments to be considered at the June 30, 2026 Special Session.

Approve the Budget Amendments to the General Fund to be Considered at the June 30, 2026 Special Session Meeting.

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

Approve the Budget Amendments to the Solid Waste Fund to be Considered at the June 30, 2026 Special Session Meeting.

Motion: Heatherly. **Second:** Cauwels.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

Approve the Budget Amendments to the Highway Fund to be Considered at the June 30, 2026 Special Session Meeting.

Motion: Cauwels. **Second:** Heatherly.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

Approve the Budget Amendments to the General Debt Service Fund to be Considered at the June 30, 2026 Special Session Meeting.

Motion: Heatherly. **Second:** Cauwels.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

- The committee briefly discussed repairs needed for the Solid Waste Transfer Station.

Approve the Budget Amendments to the General Capital Projects Fund to be Considered at the June 30, 2026 Special Session Meeting.

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

PROPERTY TAX REVENUE

- **Executive Morgan** explained that the State Certified Tax Rate is **\$1.4825**. He recommended reducing it another penny and adopting a **\$1.4725** tax rate instead.
- **Williams** added that all the numbers included in the proposed *FY 2026-2027 Budget* presented to the committee are based on the **\$1.4725** rate.

FY 2026-2027 BUDGET DISCUSSION

- **Williams** went through each request line by line in the General Fund.

MAINTENANCE

- **Executive Morgan** recommended increasing Maintenance Director Mark Brewer's salary. Citing that his responsibility goes well beyond maintenance and he has saved the county hundreds of thousands of dollars with the work he does.
- **Brewer** gave an overview of his budget. He specifically recommended promoting Bethe Bolin to Assistant Maintenance Director along with an increase in her salary. He also discussed several projects that the maintenance department needs to work on.
- **Bolin** briefly explained their need of a new service truck equipped with tools.
- **Williams** continued going line by line.
- **Executive Morgan** recommended increasing Director of Accounts & Budgets Brandi Williams' salary. Citing that she has more than proven her capabilities to manage the budget and she's getting paid less than the previous director.
- **Williams** continued going line by line.

SHERIFF

- **Sheriff Myers** discussed the equipment the Sheriff's Department will need in the future such as body armor.
- **Barturen** agreed with the Sheriff and added they are constantly looking for grant funding opportunities when available.
- **Sheriff Myers** added that body cameras will need to be purchased in the future as well.
- **Williams** continued going line by line.

EMA

- **Barnett** gave an overview of the EMA budget and needs.

The committee recessed at 6:15 p.m. and reconvened at 6:21 p.m.

EMS

- **Williams** continued going line by line.
- **Executive Morgan** recommended increasing the supervisor pay differential to \$2.00 per hour. He also recommended transitioning to a 24/72 shift schedule to improve competitiveness with surrounding counties, increase employee retention, and promote better mental health and work-life balance.

- Employees expressed a willingness to accept a reduction in pay to transition from a 24/48-hour shift to a 24/72-hour shift. The proposed pay scale results in an average pay decrease of 5%, though individual adjustments vary by position and job responsibilities.
- **Williams** continued going line by line.
- **Watkins** gave an overview of the EMS budget. He explained that, a little over three and a half years ago, EMS established three primary goals: increasing employee pay, adding a fifth ambulance, and transitioning to a 24/72-hour shift schedule. He stated that the first two goals have been accomplished and that transitioning to the 24/72-hour shift remains the department's final goal.
- **Commissioner Luffman** was positive with changing to a 24/72 shift after doing his own research on it.

LIBRARY

- **Brennan** gave an overview of the library budget. She also gave an update on the hold up with the adjacent property the commission approved for purchase.
- **Hunt** explained that the state classifies libraries based on the population they serve and that the library will soon be designated as a Level 5 library, which serves populations of 50,000 or more. He reported that library visitation has increased by 22% and the library generates an estimated annual return on investment (ROI) of \$2.5 million.
- **Hunt** recommended modest salary increases for both the Library Director and Assistant Director. He noted that the Director, Marie, has assumed additional responsibilities by networking and representing the library within the community, while the Assistant Director oversees the library's day-to-day operations.
- **Williams** continued going line by line.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Executive Morgan** recommended separating Economic Development and Tourism from the Charitable Contributions committee.
- **Egly** provided an overview of the Joint Economic and Community Development Board (JECDB), explaining its role and how it operates. He explained that the JECDB contracts with the Chamber of Commerce to provide economic development services on the county's behalf. He noted that the funding request was identical to last year's request and explained that the requested funds would be appropriated to the JECDB, which would then distribute them to the Chamber. He stated that this arrangement

provides an additional layer of accountability, as the Chamber is governed by a volunteer board of directors, while the JECDB includes representation from county and municipal governments. The mayors of Lawrenceburg, Ethridge, Loretto, and St. Joseph, along with the County Executive, serve as ex officio members, in addition to other business leaders from the community. He further noted that the JECDB is also subject to an annual audit as required by state law, adding another layer of financial accountability.

- **Egly** also provided an overview of the Industrial Development Board (IDB), explaining that it primarily facilitates industrial development through financing and property-related activities, while the JECDB focuses on economic development initiatives such as business recruitment and site development. He noted that the IDB is currently working to become more active, as it presently meets only on an as-needed basis, while the JECDB is required by the state to meet quarterly to remain in compliance.

MAIN STREET LAWRENCEBURG

- **Executive Morgan** explained that Main Street has been a great asset to the county as well. The downtown vacancy rate was 55% in December 2022 and now it's less than 1%.
- **Gantz** provided an overview of Main Street Lawrenceburg and its operations. She reported an estimated return on investment (ROI) of \$550,000 over the past two years and noted that downtown foot traffic has increased by 25%. She also reviewed grant activities and explained the Color Run events. Gantz emphasized that Main Street Lawrenceburg supports all downtown businesses, regardless of whether they financially contribute to the organization.
- **Commissioner Luffman** discussed alternative uses for tourism funds, suggesting they could be used to help fund a new courthouse elevator and the installation of ADA-compliant automatic door closures. He also expressed concerns regarding the county's future growth.
- The committee continued to deliberate over the use of the hotel/motel tax.

Approve Funding \$428,680 to the Joint Economic Community Development Board (JECDB) from the Industrial Development (58120) Budget Line.

Motion: Franks. **Second:** Cauwels.

Vote: Franks—**Yes**. Cauwels—**Yes**. Heatherly—**Yes**. Luffman—**No**.

Motion passed 3/1.

VETERANS SERVICE

- **Morris** gave an overview of the Veterans Service budget.
- The committee revisited and discussed the property tax rate.
- **Commissioner Franks** suggested sticking with the states recommended rate.
- The committee continued to deliberate over the certified tax rate.
- **Williams** recommended to go back to the capital projects page and see what the committee would like to add into the budget so she can prepare budget numbers for the next meeting.

CAPITAL PROJECT — ADD INTO BUDGET

51800

- Mark Brewer \$10,000 raise (\$90,000 annual salary) — *Add.*
- Bethe Bolin \$12,000 raise (\$52,000 annual salary) — *Add.*
- Morgue — *Add.*
- EMS Station — *Add.*
- Air Conditioning — *Leave out.*
- Elevator Controls — *Leave out.*
- Door Openers — *Add.*
- New Service Truck — *Leave out.*

ACCOUNTS & BUDGETS: Fund 52100

- Budget Director raise (\$90,000 annual salary) — *Add.*
- 4 Workstations — *Add.*

CIRCUIT COURT CLERK: Fund 53100

- Rolling Shelf System — *Leave out.*
- Computer Replacement — *Add.*

CLERK & MASTER: Fund 53400

- 4 new printers and scanners — *Add.*

SHERIFF: Fund 54110

- 7 New Patrol Cars with Equipment — *Add.*

CIVIL DEFENSE: Fund 54410

- Mobile Radios at reduced rate. — *Add.*
- Drones at Reduced Rate. — *Add.*
- Chairs EOC — *Leave out.*
- Tornado Shelters, reduce request to \$50,000 — *Add.*
- Communications Tower — *Leave out.*

CORONER: Fund 54610

- Furniture — *Add.*

AMBULANCE SERVICES: Fund 55130

- 24/72 — *Add.*
- Radios — *Add.*

LIBRARY: Fund 56500

- Director and Assistant Raises — *Add.*
- Furniture — *Leave out.*
- Space Audit — *Leave out.*
- Surveyor/Architect Expansion — *Leave out.*

- **Commissioner Franks** requested increasing Sandcastle Library back to their original \$5,000 request, which they have received the last several years.

Increase Castle Library Funding from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

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

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

VETERANS SERVICE: Fund 58300

- Employee — *Leave out.*
Potentially use WIOA grant funds to provide service.
- Computer — *Add.*

Recess and Reconvene after the June 30th Special Session Commission Meeting.

Motion: Cauwels. **Second:** Luffman.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 4/0.

Minutes Submitted By: *Christian Tyree*