

Court convened for a Special Called Meeting at the Courthouse, Henderson, KY, on Monday May 1, 2023 at 2:00 p.m., County Judge/Executive Brad Schneider presiding.

Call To Order

County Judge/Executive Brad Schneider called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Magistrate Berry	Present
Magistrate Starks	Present
Magistrate Tompkins	Present
Magistrate Puttman	Present
Magistrate Southard	Present

2023/2024 Budget Presentation – Judge Schneider

Judge Schneider presented a draft budget to the court. He explained to the new magistrates how the county uses zero based budgeting. The overall increase to this draft budget is about 3.8% from this year. Because of the rising costs and an increase of large claims this year, health insurance will have to be raised. He would like to go through this budget draft line by line and have the department heads give their input.

County Attorney Steve Gold explained his budget will decrease a bit this year but will still include raises for his employees. There will also be some reductions in income this year.

County Clerk Renesa Abner’s budget reflects about a 5% increase. Overall her salaries went down because of a couple long time employees have retired. She has increased her election supplies but the election officers pay will decrease because fewer are needed.

Judge Schneider said the largest expense for the Sheriff’s budget are the employees’ salaries. It appears there is a large increase in salaries in next year’s budget, but the salaries for this year were exceeding the budget. Sheriff Chip Stauffer pointed out that the salaries for next year will include flow-through for 2 new School Resource Officers. He has programed a 3.1% salary increase for his employees for next year. With the courts decreasing the use of video court sessions and increasing full in person sessions, there may be a need to increase the number of Court Security Officers next year.

Coroner Bruce Farmer’s budget will decrease by \$200. He would like to ask for a cost of living raise for this year for himself and the magistrates. Magistrate Berry said that he felt they had received a raise last year and could not justify receiving another one to the public right now. The question came up on whether a partial cost of living index raise could be given. (CPI increase is 6% but a 3% raise is given) There are certain guidelines elected officials need to abide by. Treasurer Rider will check with the Department for Local Government for guidance. The magistrates all agreed they were content with their salaries but would consider a COLA for the Coroner if it is possible.

Judge Schneider continued on the general fund budget. He plans on giving his staff a \$2000 annual increase in pay next year. Small increases to line items were made to accommodate price increases. Planning Commission’s budget represents about a 5% increase over last year. Other entries under the general fund budget were reviewed. Sheriff Stauffer said he needs to make a correction on his training incentive line item. It should be \$2494 instead of ad \$4372

Nick Stallings from the Road Department reported on the Recycling, Parks & Road departments. He is planning to give raises to his employees. One of the biggest challenges will be the asphalt prices. Currently the asphalt price is running about \$135 per ton compared to last year when it was \$78 per ton. He is going to try to load up on salt before the end of this fiscal year and not have anything in his budget for next year. He has purchased several large pieces of equipment this year and has cut his budget in this category next year. Judge Schneider said that we may possibly get some coal severance money which we could put into asphalt. It may not be next year.

Jailer Bruce Todd and Lori Quarles presented the jail’s budget. He is planning to raise salaries for next year including the starting pay in order to become more competitive. They are waiting for some numbers from the state and are using some projections right now.

Discussion switched to revenues. The main pillars we get money from are property taxes, occupational taxes and insurance premium taxes. The Judge has changed these numbers slightly for next year. Sheriff Stauffer added that for some reason the unmined coal tax has not been billed by Frankfort for 2 years now. These bills will be going out in June hopefully. Since interest rates have risen this will also be additional revenue for next year. Revenue should increase by \$500K next year.

The LGEA appropriations were the final section to be addressed. Judge Schneider said the fiscal court will plan to purchase the CAD system update and in return the city will remove the landfill fees until it is paid back. Canoe Creek dropped because it will be an off year for work to be done. As far as the nonprofit funding, he has left the agencies funded the same as last year for now. There have been 4 new requests from agencies that have not requested funds before. Magistrate Puttman suggested that next year a committee be formed to vet these agencies and have the committee make the decisions on funding. This will be looked into further for next year. Judge Schneider suggested that the organizations be funded the same as this year and the 4 new organizations each be given \$5,000. Judge also asked about funding the Salvation Army. Butch Puttman who is the Board Chair for the Salvation Army said that he would rather the Salvation Army come to court and ask for money this year and then next year have them submit a written request. The Judge pointed out a couple of the funding requests. The County Fairboard in the past has been funded \$1,000. This year they are asking for an increase. This is because in the past the Fairboard had been receiving money directly from some of the rentals instead of the money going through the Parks Department. It was agreed to fund the Fairboard at \$2500 for this year. The Judge explained we have a \$50K capital campaign pledge to the Boys & Girls Club. He would like to pay the remaining \$30K out of this fiscal year and then it would not have to be funded next year.

The jail is still waiting on several numbers but everyone agreed the budget looked good. Once those numbers are received, the final budget can be tweaked to be presented to the court for 1st reading. Magistrate Southard mentioned he would like to look into a possible cap on the insurance premium tax. Some discussion ensued and this will be a subject to look at. Magistrate Puttman brought up the concern of the rise in the health insurance costs and the increase to the employees. More discussion ensued on this topic.

There being no further business to come before the court, Magistrate Puttman made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Magistrate Berry.

Brad Schneider
County Judge Executive

ATTEST:

Kurt Wiesen
Fiscal Court Clerk