

BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

12 January 2026

Chair Commissioner Evan Baddour opened the meeting by noting the agenda order had been rearranged and the Courthouse Bond Resolution (handout provided) would be addressed first.

Motion made by Commissioner James Lathrop, seconded by Commissioner Matt Rubelsky to approve the resolution and forward to the full commission. The Chair gave a recap of the resolution by saying the bond would be for \$8.5M for a period of a 15-year payment plan. The debt service fund would be used to make the payments and the architecture service, which is in addition to the \$8.5M, could use the hotel/motel tax revenue as source of funds. Commissioner Matthew Hopkins expressed his concerns with a 15-year bond vs a 20-year bond noting that using the bond would limit the county's resources if unplanned costs, e.g., disasters occurred and limiting any future bonds if using all available credit limits. He further noted that with the age of the courthouse contingency funds would also probably be required. Commissioner Lathrop noted that with a 20-year bond there would be a higher interest, and with either a 15 or 20 year bond there could be an earlier payoff. County Executive (CE) Graham Stowe commented that the proposed resolution was the outcome of previous decisions. Commissioner Terry Jones moved to approve structure repair only noting that if the county went with a 15-year bond there would be no funding left for unplanned needs. With the CE reminding that the recent \$500K grant is for structure, Commissioner Terry Jones amended his motion to stop after the grant work completed. No second was provided with Commissioner Jones saying he would also bring before the full commission. Commissioner Jones asked if by receiving a \$500M grant, would that not reduce the \$8.5M need with Commissioner Matthew Hopkins saying not sure based on future needs that the \$8.5M would be enough. The CE said the grant would offset some of the need for contingency funding, rather than reducing the total of \$8.5M. Commissioner Tracy Wilburn asked for clarification on the \$500K grant, with the CE noting he could not move forward on the grant for structure

effort until after specific approvals on structural/egress and noted there is a 30% county match required. Commissioner Terry Jones said for \$200K then from county funds plus the grant, we could get all our structural needs done.

Commissioner Rickie Carpenter expressed his concern that the county can't even pay bills now so why should we borrow. The Chair noted how the county considers recurring costs vs non-recurring costs (e.g., capital projects) separately.

Commissioner Roger Reedy said when the county finishes the ~~TACN~~STACN payments, we should have approximately \$1M available and on a 20-year bond the payment would be \$625K to service the debt each year. He also said with a 20-year bond, you could borrow \$5M more giving you a cushion and not having to raise taxes to cover the debt. Commissioner Matthew Hopkins asked the Financial Manager (FM) Beth Moore-Sumners for "correct numbers" with her saying the TACNS should be \$1M, but she too expressed her concerns. She said looking at the whole budget the county continues to dip into the fund balance and even with the latest tax increase, with decreasing fees such as from court cases, with equipment needs such as for the highway, and not knowing what direction is coming from the commission, that cannot be a good financial strategy for the county. Commissioner Caleb Savage also added that with a 15-or-20-year bond some of the equipment will fail before paying off that bond, will need to be replaced and will need additional funding. He said you can't make decisions on what we do now – you have to think about the long term. Member of the public Ms. Leah Bailey asked about a \$13M cost (an amount originally discussed at the beginning of restoring the courthouse) with the Chair saying we are not doing all effort identified in the original design. Ms. Bailey asked about security needs with the Chair saying hopefully those can be addressed individually. Ms. Bailey said she had requested Maury County information to see what firms they had used, and she recommended to this committee that a Community Advisory Board be added so that the community could have some input, perhaps with experts in the community such as construction, lawyers, but who could not do any of the actual work. That Board could then work along with this committee. Commissioner Erin Curry said this project started with concerns about fire suppression, now there are cracks in the basement, noting the historical presence of the courthouse, and the

cost to build a new one (approximately \$40M), decisions that have been considered but not decided upon such as a justice center. She reminded all that this is a functioning building with ongoing government activities and they can't stop because we have recurring expenses; that we couldn't replace if burned down; and we have already spent a lot of funds to get to this point. The Chair noted recently due to no heat in the courthouse that the courtroom had to move to Lawrence County resulting in some no-shows due to lack of knowledge of unexpected required move. Commissioner Curry said we have been talking about this since 2019, and on a new ambulance location even longer. We need to take action. The Financial Manager said fiscally we are not where we need to be, and as a private citizen the courthouse needs to be restored and that the raised taxes are not enough to make that happen. The Chair noted that the wheel tax resolution would be discussed later. School Board Chair Knox Vanderpool discussed various interest rates on a 15-year bond and a 20-year bond and said if you don't go forward, there is no solution. Commissioner Shelly Goolsby moved that the motion be amended to a 20-year bond. Lack of second and motion died. She spoke to the commission being more reactive than proactive, responding to individual needs, finding funds for those, but when getting down to the bigger project we walk away and nothing gets done. The school, she said, had a plan and moved forward. It's time we do something and not kick the can down the road. She said she likes 20 but would settle for the 15-year bond. A motion by Commissioner Matthew Hopkins, seconded by the chair, was made to call for the vote on the original motion and cease further discussion. That motion was approved 5 – 2 with Commissioner David Adams and Commissioner Terry Jones voting no. Vote on the original motion to approve the resolution and send to the full commission was approved 4-3 with Commissioners Matthew Hopkins, Terry Jones, and David Adams noting no.

Budget Amendments for County General

Fund 101 Bissell Pet Foundation Grant – Shelter. Motion to approve the grant was made by Commissioner Matt Rubelsky, seconded by Commissioner

Shelly Goolsby. Director of the Shelter Ms. Jaclyn Payne discussed inviting Ms. Cathy Bissell of the foundation to see Giles County's shelter and its disrepair and the resulting grant. Commissioner Terry Jones discussed a local company Butcher Drafting company providing the drawings for the shelter with the CE saying go by and thank them. Commissioner Joyce Woodard noted a correction on the completion date showing August 2025 and noting should be changed to 2026. Roll call voting showed 6 in favor and with Commissioner David Adams voting no the motion was approved 6 – 1. A motion by Commissioner Terry Jones, seconded by Commissioner Matthew Hopkins to approve a second amendment for shelter needs of \$10K was approved unanimously. Commissioner Gayle Jones asked where the location of the shelter would be with the Chair saying "behind Lewters on co-owned property with Pulaski".

Courthouse Repairs Project – OHM for \$596K from hotel/motel reserve. The CE said there are two parts to the OHM contract with this amendment on the construction leading up to a bid for construction, a professional service contract with 10% of the \$8.5M = \$596K. Member of the public Ms. Catherine Bailey mentioned the possibility of change orders with the Chair agreeing that would be a possibility. Motion to approve by Commissioner James Lathrop, seconded by Commissioner Matthew Hopkins and was approved 6 – 1 with Commissioner Terry Jones voting no.

Vogue Tower rental for emergency comms –Discussions with Motorola showed new tower cost would be prohibitive and rental would be \$1200 monthly. The rental agreement would be multi-year and no funding would be spent until equipment is actually hung on the tower. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Matthew Hopkins, seconded by Commissioner James Lathrop and was approved unanimously. The CE noted that PES has run the electricity required free of charge. Commissioner Hopkins commented that there is a 1% increase each year.

School Amendments – Discussed in previous meeting same day. Motion by Commissioner Shelly Goolsby, seconded by Commissioner Matthew Hopkins, to approve was made and was approved unanimously.

Budget Amendment on the County's General Fund –Shelter Donations, Opioid, Burials. The FM discussed the amendments noting the burials are for the indigent only and are according to the CE outsourced to Steve Pierce to prevent any fraudulent approach. Commissioner Roger Reedy asked if cremation is used with the FM saying yes. After asking the public if any comment, and there being none a roll call vote showed 6 – 1 with Commissioner Terry Jones voting no (reflecting in the minutes a no vote by Commissioner Jones due to the OHM included in the amendments).

Mid-year review of Budget Concerns –Handout provided reflecting data as of 31 December 2025 on County Buildings, Jail Operations, Ambulance Services (cut \$238,544 from Overtime), Autopsies, Revenue Considerations, Capital Projects, County Financial Overview and Highway Department. FM Beth Moore-Sumners discussed each item noting of all, there were three she had the most concerns, i.e., the ambulance services, capital projects, and the county buildings. Road Superintendent Gene Barnickle mentioned the raise in prices on rock going up significantly, with Commissioner Reedy asking about renting a portable crusher for the Ag Park "rock". Superintendent Barnickle said that rock, as well as some rock used from Wayne County, could only be used for scrap rock since oil wouldn't bind with it due to much dirt/mud being in it. Sheriff Purvis also mentioned the additional cost of medical costs due to several serious inmate hospitalizations. Due to the heat situation or lack of, he had to move approximately 30 inmates to another county where someone there did purposeful water damage (county did not charge Giles County for the cost of damage). Commissioner Terry Jones asked Willow Chavez (still doing some PT work at Emergency Management) if they had started looking at diesel engines, but the truck being used by EMA is no longer being produced and the ones available are bigger and the current bays may not be long enough to fit the newer available trucks. Commissioner Terry Jones in noting the jail and road discussions and potential future needs said to consider when voting on the bond issue.

Director of Economic Development Phil Reese provided information on the IDB A&D property which had been sold but not developed and was now proposed to be purchased from that buyer for the original selling price as defined in the original ~~sell~~sale. The 5.05 acres was sold for \$7500 an acre. In principle the buyer and now as the seller is in agreement with selling back to the county, and per Mr. Reese he is waiting on their signature. Upon that happening the city/county would need to provide those dollars back. Commissioner Terry Jones asked if the property would stay with the IDB for future sell with Mr. Reese saying yes, and he also said there would be no strings if “we” buy it back. The CE asked if the funds would be needed today with Mr. Reese saying the timing is not crucial. The Chair said if local government does not buy, they can then sell to anyone. The FM said she would do a budget amendment and put \$20K toward the purchase. A motion by the Chair, seconded by Commissioner Terry Jones, to take the \$20K from the fund balance with the contingency that the city also approving, with Mr. Reese saying that would not be a problem (motion approved). Mr. Reese noted that for the IDB to sell that property after buying it back, the asking price in today’s market would be \$200K for that property. Commissioner Terry Jones asked re the location with Mr. Reese saying on Tarpley Shop Rd in front of Murco Wall Products. Rickie Carpenter asked how much usable land does the county now have for sell with Mr. Reese discussing 3 lots, Lot 5 with 20 acres, past that lot the central 82/83 acre lot which would require some work to get ready (smaller could subdivide), South Industrial Park 120 acres. He mentioned a 25 acre site off Mine road, listed for \$725K but contingent on investment a company would be willing to do that could be negotiated. Roll call vote showed approval unanimously (Commissioner Erin Curry voting in James Lathrop’s temporary absence).

Water Alliance meetings –The Chair noted that \$500K had been identified as the cost to fund an overall county water study. While not in the water business, the county funding was recommended as 10% of the cost ~~and contingent on the private-the~~ utilities funding the balance. However, the utilities have not been consistent in their support. The Alliance was to have all parties in one room, and has been meeting quarterly to discuss a new water resource. State Representative Clay Doggett ~~has been helpful and~~ stated he would like to see the RFQ and there is

a chance he could help with the funding, per Chair of the Water Alliance Commissioner Erin Curry. Commissioner Terry Jones said you should know something fairly soon, given the next Alliance meeting would be March. A motion by the Chair, seconded by Commissioner David Adams to approve was made for the county to fund and including the Campbellsville Spring in the study. Commissioner Terry Jones suggested this be tabled for one more month to include the budget amendment. The Chair agreed to table the discussion for one month while encouraging state support. No vote taken.

Ambulance – The CE said ambulance remounts are currently \$180K each and this request has been vetted through the committee. Commissioner Matt Rubelsky asked why wasn't this in the budget with Commissioner Matthew Hopkins saying because we pulled it out in the budget process. Commissioner David Adams asked why not buy a smaller version with Willow Chavez said the smaller limits our maneuverability around the patient and there is not enough room for all equipment and access to that equipment. A motion by Commissioner Evan Baddour, seconded by Commissioner Matthew Hopkins, was made to allocate funds for one remount for \$180K from the fund balance. Ms. Chavez mentioned the original budget that had \$450K to \$650K removed. With the mileage on existing vehicles and the time to obtain a remount is approximately 8 – 14 months. Since this funding would come from the fund balance, the CE clarified the legislative earlier agreement to keep 45-50% of our annual budget in the fund balance and that as of October 38% is in the balance. Commissioner Terry Jones queried Ms. Chavez with a large equipment purchase previously, the EMA was queried about the shape of the remounts with the answer being they are in good shape. Ms. Chavez said we didn't need them at that time but since have replaced 5 – 6 engines within a year as well as having someone do preventive maintenance. Commissioner Matt Rubelsky discussed using the general fund for recurring costs such as the remount. Commissioner Matthew Hopkins said unless we are getting a wheel tax, or raising property tax again, there has to be more revenue coming in. Commissioner Matt Rubelsky said we didn't have a true balanced budget and we have to find a way to get additional revenue. Commissioner Gayle Jones clarified

the process in buying a remount and Commissioner Hopkins said it is too late for a wheel tax for this budget year, with the Chair commenting and applauding Commissioner Hopkins who recently had a town hall meeting speaking candidly about our budget shortfall. FM recommended all visit with department heads so as to be mindful of what it takes to operate the county. Public Member Eddie Jones asked what would the wheel tax revenue be allocated to with the Chair saying the description would be kept broad, and Mr. Jones asked how long it would be in effect with several saying forever. Member of the public MS. Bailey said she would like to have live streaming on the committee meetings.

Commissioner James Lathrop asked for a recap on the motion and Commissioner Caleb Savage called for the question. Vote on motion was called with Commissioner Matt Ruebelsky voting no on principle and Commissioner Terry Jones said he would vote here but may change vote in full commission.

Sheriff Purvis on New Business said please come to the Sheriff's office if you have concerns or more information. He said he is always available.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Matthew Hopkins, seconded by Commissioner Matt Rubelsky, and was approved unanimously.

ATTENDANCE: Members of the Committee – Chair Commissioner Evan Baddour, James Lathrop, Terry Jones, David Adams, Matthew Hopkins, Matt Rubelsky, Shelly Goolsby Other commissioners attending – David Wamble, Roger Reedy, Erin Curry, Rickie Carpenter, Annelle Guthrie, Gayle Jones, Carman Brown, Joyce Woodard, Tracy Wilburn, Judy Pruett, Caleb Savage Others in attendance Joseph Purvis, Sheriff, Road Superintendent Gene Barnickle, Josh Young – EMA Chief, Phil Reese – Economic Development Director, Knox Vanderpool – School Board Chair, and members of the public including