

**KENTON COUNTY FISCAL COURT**  
**Kenton Chambers**  
**1840 Simon Kenton Way**  
**Covington**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**August 17, 2021**

**5:30 P.M.**

**Call to Order**

Judge/Executive Knochelmann called to order the August 17, 2021, meeting of the Kenton County Fiscal Court. Judge/Executive Knochelmann led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Judge/Executive, Kris Knochelmann  
Commissioner Beth Sewell, District 1  
Commissioner Jon Draud, District 2  
Commissioner Joe Nienaber, District 3  
County Attorney Stacy Tapke

Staff: Joe Shriver, County Administrator  
Scott Gunning, Assistant County Administrator  
Roy Cox, County Treasurer  
Sue Kaiser, Fiscal Court Clerk

**Approval of Minutes**

**A. Approval of the Minutes from the meeting of March 23, 2021.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**Citizens Address**

No citizens came before the Fiscal Court.

**General Business**

**A. Update on the NKY Office of Drug Control Policy by Amanda Peters.**

Amanda Peters, the Director of the NKY Office of Drug Control Policy stated that they do have a comprehensive regional plan, where they are addressing overdoses and the full continuum of care that people need that are struggling with addiction or substance use disorder. They have are working on prevention, number of residents that die from overdose, infectious disease, expanding treatment, creating support services for those that struggle with substance use disorders. They are also pulling in mental health as well. The Office of Drug Control Policy is here to assist with policy initiatives to coordinate the regional plan. They pool together hundreds of non-profits, all of the stakeholders, the detention centers, hospital systems, SUN Behavior Health, sober living and everyone that is needed along the continuum of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and re-entry into recovery. They have a data dashboard and they run the

Addiction Helpline. She reviewed all of the statistics from their website. Northern Kentucky leads the state in this effort, and Kentucky does lead the nation.

Commissioner Nienaber stated that when he is looking at charts, and there is a decrease of overdoses from December thru February. He wondered why those months were lower than the average?

Ms. Peters answer that it usually has to do with supply. When people were buckled down more in COVID, the opioids and fentanyl wasn't coming through so people didn't have access to it. There was an increase in meth, or a decrease in using substances at all. When they are seeing some of the bigger spikes, it has to do partly with the stimulus money. It could be a trigger for some people. Mental Health America has been working with people to use this money in a productive way.

Commissioner Draud asked if the 100 open beds are a result of Transitions.

Ms. Peters answered that yes, most of the beds are because of Transitions. SUN Behavioral Health has added some detox services, so that has helped. They also have an increase of some parenting and pregnant beds at Transitions. They have gotten another grant for Hope House.

Commissioner Draud asked if they are still in single rooms at Transitions?

Ms. Peters answered that she believes they are still single rooms. They have extended their intake on Saturdays as well.

Commissioner Sewell thanked Ms. Peters, as her numbers can be encouraging. It is good to hear that we are taking preventative actions. It is nice to have touch points with businesses, and she noticed we are hiring a QRT officer for our Police Department. She also feels like the mental health component is important as well. She then asked if there is a spiritual component to this? She has worked with a lot of different entities that are looking at the holistic approach, and she knows that there are different components that can help those that fall through the cracks.

Ms. Peters answered that is really part of the continuum of care, and there is a place called Life Recovery Center. This has been around for about four to five years. They have started their ministry called Life Recovery Center Church. They are in a capital campaign right now to get a new building, because they have outgrown their space again. There are three recovery community centers in the area. There is The Pier in Newport, Life Learning Center in Covington and the Life Recovery Center Church.

Commissioner Sewell stated that she is sure there are people who are out there lost, and some churches don't have all the knowledge and data.

Ms. Peters stated that there will be a community brochure coming out soon to show all the services available to the community.

**B. Presentation of Achievement Awards to Rick Buster, Shaun Lauderman and Todd Redman for their winning design in the Build a Better Mousetrap Competition.**

Nick Hendrix stated that on Dr. Draud's recommendation, we are honoring the three gentleman that won the Build a Better Mousetrap competition that was sponsored by the University of Kentucky. It was a statewide competition, and it was submitted nationally too. This is more than a single recognition of a single project. This is a recognition of what this group does every day for the County. The project was designed to help clean up the parks and parking lots with more efficiency.

Assistant County Administrator Scott Gunning stated that this all goes back to Pioneer Park, and how it floods all the time. We have been trying to find a way for years to clean the tennis courts, walking paths and parking lots out. Shaun, Rick and Todd came together to build a machine that cleans up very efficiently. He congratulated all of them on their accomplishment.

**C. Claims List dated August 14, 2021.**

There were no questions on the Claims List.

**Resolutions**

**A. Resolution No. 21-01M  
A Resolution for the Kenton County Fiscal Court concerning Fiscal Year Budget Adjustments.**

Treasurer Roy Cox stated that the budget adjustments are for the following: \$3,450 for work done on the crosswalk at 1840 Simon Kenton Way, \$5,000 for Technology Services to pay for a SANS unit and \$8,350 for unused sick pay for an individual retiring at Fleet.

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**Ordinances**

**A. Ordinance 950.90 - Second Reading  
An Ordinance amending an Interlocal Agreement between the Kenton County Fiscal Court and various Kenton County cities for the Kenton County Joint Code Enforcement Board.**

Commissioner Draud made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**B. Ordinance 225.99 - Second Reading  
An Ordinance of the Kenton County Fiscal Court relating to the levy and adoption of the 2021 tax rates of 15.4 cents per hundred dollars valuation on real property, 19.3 cents per hundred dollars valuation on personal property and 15.8 cents per hundred dollars valuation on motor vehicles to provide such revenue as has been budgeted and approved for expenditure in the current fiscal year.**

Treasurer Roy Cox stated that this tax rate is a reduction of 3.1%.

Commissioner Draud stated that there should be a press release about this reduction.

Commissioner Draud made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Executive Knochemann called for a roll call vote with the results being Commissioner Draud, yes, Commissioner Sewell, yes, Commissioner Nienaber, yes, and Judge Knochemann, yes. The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

**C. Ordinance 226.00 - First Reading  
An Ordinance of the Kenton County Fiscal Court relating to the levy and adoption of the 2021 annual improvement benefit assessment rate on the basis of the assessed values of benefitted properties within the former city of Latonia Lakes, Kentucky as specifically identified in Kenton County ordinances 620.9 & 620.10.**

Judge Knochelmann stated that this is the Latonia Lakes annual rate for roads work.

**D. Ordinance 971.17 - First Reading**  
**An Ordinance adopting an interlocal agreement between the Kenton County Fiscal Court and the City of Walton, Kentucky for the collection of a job assessment fee.**

County Administrator Joe Shriver stated that Walton doesn't have a payroll tax, therefore they asked the county to enter into an inter-local agreement with them.

Treasurer Roy Cox stated that this is a fee that we collect, and will keep our percent like the occupational license.

Commissioner Draud asked if Walton has a TIF District?

Judge Knochelmann answered that yes they do.

**E. Ordinance 226.01 - First Reading**  
**An Ordinance (226.01) of the Kenton County Fiscal Court relating to the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget and amendment thereof.**

Treasurer Roy Cox stated that this budget amendment is for when we receive funds that we are going to spend that weren't in the budget.

**Consent Agenda**

- A. Exhibit No. 21-104**  
**Request approval of a supplemental agreement between the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and the Kenton County Fiscal Court for the Bromley Crescent Springs Rd. Multi-Use Path.**
- B. Exhibit No. 21-105**  
**Request approval to amend the maintenance agreement with Tyler Technologies for the DSS Performance Dashboard Replacement for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**
- C. Exhibit No. 21-106**  
**Request approval to ratify the Estoppel Certificate and Agreement for the River Haus Project.**
- D. Exhibit No. 21-107**  
**Request approval to surplus various items for the Kenton County Sheriff's Department.**
- E. Exhibit No. 21-108**  
**Request approval to go out to bid to remodel the fifth floor of the Kenton County Justice Center.**

Commissioner Draud asked with is going on with Bromley/Crescent Springs Rd.?

Nick Hendrix answered that this formalizes the change in finances. This puts the money in the right buckets.

Commissioner Draud asked when the project will be finished?

Mr. Hendrix answered that it will be finished in October of 2022.

All items on the Consent Agenda were voted on together.

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

### **Executive Orders**

**A. Executive Order 21-95**

**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the re-appointment of Fritz Kuhlmann, Wayne Hartke and Edwin Faulkner to the Linden Grove Cemetery Board.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**B. Executive Order 21-96**

**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the re-appointment of Maureen Hebert to the Library Board of Trustees.**

Commissioner Draud made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**C. Executive Order 21-97**

**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Iliana Rosales-Figueroa to the Library Board of Trustees.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**D. Executive Order 21-98**

**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Connie Jones- Baynum to the NKADD Council on Aging.**

Commissioner Draud made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**E. Executive Order 21-99**

**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the training and out of classification rate for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Draud. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**F. Executive Order 21-100**

**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the reorganization of the Kenton County Police Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Draud. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**G. Executive Order 21-101**

**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the reorganization of the Kenton County Public Works/Fleet Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**H. Executive Order 21-102  
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the resignation of Thomas Crabtree as a Seasonal Laborer for the Kenton County Parks Department.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Draud. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**I. Executive Order 21-103  
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the retirement of Karen Kuntz as the Secretary for the Kenton County Fleet Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Draud. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**J. Executive Order 21-104  
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the resignation of Patrick Taylor as a Police Officer for the Kenton County Police Department.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**K. Executive Order 21-105  
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Skiler Alexander as a Police Officer III for the Kenton County Police Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Draud. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**L. Executive Order 21-106  
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Darla Humphries as a Dispatcher 1, G5-1 for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**M. Executive Order 21-107 (Action Requested)  
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Zachary Lawson as a Dispatcher 1, G5-1 for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

**N. Executive Order 21-108  
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Ashley Hawks as the Director for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Draud. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

- O. Executive Order 21-109**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the retirement of Joseph Pflum as the Network Engineer for the Technology Services Department.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

- P. Executive Order 21-110**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the resignation of Maxwell Wahoff as a Seasonal Laborer for the Kenton County Parks Department.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

- Q. Executive Order 21-111**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the wage scale increase for Timothy Mains as a recruit for the Kenton County Police Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

- R. Executive Order 21-112**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the wage scale increase for Travis Bryson as a recruit for the Kenton County Police Department.**

Commissioner Draud made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

- S. Executive Order 21-113**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the step increases for various employees in the Kenton County Police Department and Public Works.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

- T. Executive Order 21-114**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court establishing the pay-rate for the Kenton County Coroner.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

### **Administrative Reporting**

### **Emergency Management**

Steve Hensley congratulated Ashley Hawks on her position as the Emergency Communications Director. He then spoke about some of the upcoming events. Tomorrow there is a scheduled exercise at the Family Reunification Center at the Lakeside Christian Church. That is the location they would use in the event that they would have to evacuate a school or another location. They try to do exercises frequently to stay prepared. Then, on the 19<sup>th</sup> there will be a Port of Cincinnati

Maritime security exercise. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, they have an exercise at the airport that will have responders from three states.

Mr. Hensley then stated that the COVID numbers are trending in a bad direction with the Delta Variant. Hospitalizations are up, and positivity is up to 12.4%. Intensive care patients and people on ventilators is up as well. A lot of that has to do with the fact that there are people not getting vaccinated. We have to continue to promote the vaccine. It is still available to everyone, except for children under 12.

Judge Knochelmann stated that back in the earlier part of COVID and throughout we were doing a couple day a week calls with the Health Department and the hospital. Those calls are starting back up on Friday. The numbers were down to maybe five to eight COVID beds at St. Elizabeth, and now we are back up to around 140. This is a faster trend than we had before.

Mr. Hensley stated that the people getting the sickest are the people that have not been vaccinated.

Commissioner Sewell stated that it would be good to see all the data sorted out.

Mr. Hensley stated that over 95% of the people that are getting the sickest are unvaccinated people.

Commissioner Draud asked how many people have actually died?

Mr. Hensley answered that he doesn't have those numbers at the moment. Based on what we know, the age group of 65 years and older have 84% vaccinated. The age 50-64 have 69% of people vaccinated, 40-49 have 56% vaccinated, 30-39 have 51% vaccinated and 18-29 have 40% vaccinated.

Commissioner Sewell stated that it is safe to say that those that are being hospitalized and getting the sickest are younger.

Commissioner Draud stated that he has seen a law firm advertising that people can get \$300,000 for anyone that died from COVID from the Federal Government. He asked if this is true?

Mr. Hensley answered that he knows there was a death benefit and a burial benefit, but he doesn't know about the \$300,000 benefit. We had 2,100-2,200 cases statewide, and about 187 of those were here in Northern Kentucky in a 24 hour period. The numbers are trending in a bad direction. The vaccines are available.

Commissioner Draud stated that he knows someone that was vaccinated that got COVID.

Mr. Hensley stated that you can get re-infected, but the benefit of getting the vaccine is that you don't get nearly as sick. There will also be booster shots that will be coming out, and they are recommending anyone that got two shot vaccine to get the booster.

Commissioner Draud stated that the legislature is having meetings on the mask issue.

Mr. Hensley stated that the best solution is to receive the vaccine. If someone is not going to do that, they should social distance and wear a mask. As for the school-age children, the best protection for them is a mask.

Commissioner Draud stated that there are some people who feel that the vaccine hasn't been out long enough, and are afraid of the side effects.



## **Police Department**

Assistant Chief Chris Haddle stated that the Police Department has re-opened their lateral hiring process. It is on social media with a link to learn about the agency. The lateral officer would need to have two years' experience, and this way they don't have to be sent for training this saves about a year on the process. The geography of the area is what they have to work on. Their department is two officers down now. They have two at training, and one starting in October. Also, he reminded everyone that tomorrow is the first day of school for Kenton County. He asked everyone to be very attentive in school zones and watch for school buses.

## **Emergency Communications**

Ashley Hawks stated that she attended a meeting this month with all of the directors of Northern Kentucky, as well as several of their fire department members. They discussed inner operability, and the ability they have in communicating with one another. They have come a long way since 9/11, where everything was kept separate. There were no similar computer, radio or phone systems. There is a lot more that can be done in Northern Kentucky, and they are taking the first steps to do that. Additionally, they have a meeting next month with everyone in the Tri-State.

## **Detention Center**

Jailer Marc Fields stated that back in May they had their annual state inspection. They were inspected on 211 different areas, and they had no deficiencies. They are good to go for another year. They have an occupancy certificate. They have put together a population team that reviews the statistics weekly. One example of what they have done is that since January 1 until today, they have gotten out of their jail to treatment centers 384 people, transferred 281 to other county facilities. The population this morning was 651. They are working diligently to keep their population under control. There has been a lot of assistance from the courts, Rob Sanders office and the Judges. All the other programs that have come about are helping. There are about 320 people of the 651 that have possession of drug charges. There are 58 people that have trafficking charges, so needless to say we can see the burden that drugs are putting on the corrections system. The only number that they can really do a lot about are the felony parole violations. Since COVID, the state is not accepting people.

Jailer Fields then stated that they have some of their workers back out helping Public Works and Fleet. They are going to attempt to expand that program. They have gone through two rounds of vaccinations, and have vaccinated 286 inmates. Those are the only ones that are being considered to be sent out to work. Over the weekend, they were able to send clean-up workers to couple of different festivals. On Friday when they had their staff meeting, there were six active cases, and today there are 12 cases. They are trying their best to isolate and quarantine those individuals that are active, but it is difficult in that facility.

## **Treasury**

Treasurer Roy Cox asked that the records reflect that the July, 2021, Financial Reports have been submitted.

## **County Attorney 's Report**

County Attorney Stacy Tapke stated that there is a real problem with administrative release, and then they pick up charges before they even show up for their first court date. There is a problem with pre-trial services and the funding there and staff shortage. More funding towards those type of services is needed, because there is a back-up in the jail. Everyone is trying to think creatively of ways to try to fix the problem. There has been a study conducted, and there is hope that there

is legislation where they are going to try to focus on pre-trial access to treatment. This may roll out soon, and she will pass it along.

Ms. Tapke then stated that she emailed everyone that the court won't be seeing the special districts coming before the court the way they have in the past. Last year, the General Assembly adopted the statute that went into effect this year. There are some options if an entity is establishing a new rate or increasing the fee above the compensating rate they will have to come before the Fiscal Court.

### **Commissioners ' Reports**

#### **Commissioner Jon Draud**

Commissioner Draud asked about broadband, and how he saw that the State has money allocated, and the Federal Government may have money. He asked which money we would try to get first?

Judge Knochelmann answered that waiting for money is not going to slow up the implementation of the broadband project. Nothing will preclude us thought to trying to get other dollars.

Commissioner Draud stated that he is not in favor of waiting.

County Administrator Joe Shrive stated that Cincinnati Bell has a couple of programs that can help with the affordability.

#### **Commissioner Beth Sewell**

Commissioner Sewell stated that the South Kenton Citizens Group put together a survey for bus routes, and Nick Hendrix and Judge Knochelmann found solutions for almost 80% of the problems listed. She thanked all that were involved in taking care of all of this. Also, the Police Department will be working with the group on a safety video. She thanked the staff for all of their hard work.

#### **Commissioner Joe Nienaber**

Commissioner Nienaber stated that as a member of the Dispatch Board, Ashley Hawks has their support 100% as the new Director. Also, on Thursday there is a PDS Board meeting regarding their tax rate. There will be a significant reduction in the tax rate. This group has worked well together, and accomplished a lot. He thanked the whole group at PDS for the great work.

Commissioner Draud stated that there should be a press release about taxes being lowered.

#### **Judge/Executive 's Report**

Judge Knochelmann stated that yesterday was the brick breaking for the 303 Court St. property. It was a great relief to see this project begin.

#### **Adjournment**

Having completed all business before the Court, Commissioner Draud offered a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochelmann requested a voice vote whereupon all members present voted in the affirmative with a 4-0 vote.

Text for all proposed and recently passed ordinances may be acquired by accessing the Fiscal Court web page at <http://www.kentoncounty.org> or by contacting the administrative offices at 859.392.1400.

### CLERK CERTIFICATION

I, Sue J. Kaiser, having been appointed to the office of Fiscal Court Clerk, do hereby certify that this is a true and accurate record of the actions taken by the Kenton County Fiscal Court at the meeting of August 17, 2021.



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Sue J. Kaiser  
Fiscal Court Clerk

DRAFT