

**KENTON COUNTY FISCAL COURT**  
**Historic Kenton County Courthouse**  
**5272 Madison Pike**  
**Independence, KY 41051**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 10, 2023**

**5:30 P.M.**

**Call to Order**

Judge/Executive Kris Knochelmann called to order the January 10, 2023, meeting of the Kenton County Fiscal Court. Commissioner Beth Sewell 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/Deputy Judge  
Scott Gunning, Assistant County Administrator  
Kurt Greivenkamp, Assistant County Treasurer  
Sue Kaiser, Fiscal Court Clerk

**Approval of Minutes**

**A. Approval of the Minutes from the meeting of December 13, 2022.**

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.

**Citizens Address**

Tyson Hermes at the last meeting he noticed that there were two first readings for new taxes. One was the room tax.

Judge Knochelmann stated that this is not a new tax.

Mr. Hermes stated that it sounded like it was a new tax on short term rentals. Then there was another one that was discussed about a new tax on LYFT and Uber drivers, and the term that was used was to "level the playing field". His ask this evening would be that the Commissioners don't vote in favor of any new taxes.

Mayor Fette stated that at the last meeting, the payroll tax rate increase and the cap increase was discussed. She thinks that Mr. Hermes asked what the dollar amount that is believed to be generated from this tax, and there was a true estimated dollar amount given. They had talked about it being equalization, yet it truly wasn't. She wondered if they had additional conversations about what is believed that the increase in the revenues will play out to be. There was more research that needed to be done, and now that it is a done deal have they been able to quantify what it is going to increase the revenue by?

Judge Knochelmann answered that there are ranges, and he has said that they have gotten estimates that are all over the place. They won't really know anything there until they get through a full year of this. He expects that probably this time next year they will have real numbers, but

the estimates they have for additional revenue purely based on estimates will be from a couple million dollars to in excess of eight to nine million dollars. They will be happy to share all of that quarterly.

Mayor Fette stated that if they are going to wait for up to year, they are not going to be able to get this information until around March of 2024. So, if they are planning to do some type of property tax rate decrease time is of the essence.

Commissioner Draud stated that he believes the max is somewhere around nine or ten million dollars, but this can't be guaranteed.

Judge Knochelmann stated that the commitment that he has made is that they would continue to reduce the property tax rate. He thinks that any change on the payroll side probably takes a year and half to get data. The property tax rate will be set before there is a year of data on the payroll tax. They will adjust property this year, and look at other data from the payroll side of it early next year.

Mayor Fette asked Commissioner Draud if he is saying it is no more than ten million, where are they getting that dollar amount from?

Commissioner Draud answered that this number is what has been discussed. He is not sure how accurate that number will really be, as he doesn't know what the impact will be from reducing the property tax.

Mayor Fette asked if they are anticipating that it will be close to an equalization, where the property tax will be reduced in order to level out what the payroll tax is being increased by?

Commissioner Nienaber stated that the reality is that they have no idea, because there is no exact science to payroll tax. Everyone who pays payroll tax is on an honor system with the way our system works right now. So, it is very difficult for the cities if a company is in their town or not. For the most part, it is a self reporting tax. So, just like they don't know who is working in their town or city, the County has no scope of what vendors are working in Kenton County. There are a lot of companies that are stagnant or domiciled within Kenton County or the cities, and that is the low hanging fruit that is easy to see. The real ambiguity comes in companies like realtors, contractors and other companies who basically report when they are in a specific town. He has a payroll company where his guys can just hit their phone when they go from one city to another. Very few payroll companies have that technology. The other variable is that businesses are in and out of town and layoffs, and they did their best to say that they know there are shortfalls in their taxes and expenditures. The Jail and Police Department and everything have been needing extraordinarily more, and it is harder to find people. Therefore, compensations have been increasing significantly over the last five years. The Fiscal Court is by no means just looking to raise revenue for no reason. The County, just like the cities, has things to pay for and we can't catch up with the gap that is being created without increasing the cap. The idea is maybe ten million dollars in revenue, but if he was asked right now if he knew that ten million was coming in that he would commit to reducing property taxes by ten million he would say no. He doesn't know what is going to happen to property values, so it is impossible to give an assessment right now. The commitment that they have from him is that they are looking to stabilize revenue for the County so that that the swings in the cost in providing services won't be a burden to the rooftops of Kenton County. Dilute it among the greater population of people, and quit hitting the rooftops. The reality is that they have to meet potential and real deficits, and it is impossible to predict the relationship between property tax and payroll tax on January 10<sup>th</sup> of the year.

Commissioner Draud stated that the intention was to raise more money, because the Treasurer has projected that in four or five years from now we will be in the red. It isn't a neutral revenue issue, we expect to raise more money.

Mayor Fette stated that she appreciates him saying that, because she doesn't think it was very clear at the last meeting. She said that it was referred to as revenue equalization.

Judge Knochelmann stated that he appreciates the questions. He thinks that she has gotten pretty much detail for what she asked about. The point of equalization, what that answer was, equalization balanced on property to payroll. Equalization in terms of where the money is coming from, because we are so heavy towards property. We cut our property tax last year, which they plan to continue to do and will have the revenue necessary. This is really a tax modernization program.

## **General Business**

### **A. Presentation on the Licking River study by Copperhead Consulting.**

Marty Marchaterre from Copperhead Environmental Consulting stated that this is regarding a feasibility study on the Licking River Bluewater Trail. It is about 122 miles that are being reviewed. It is from Stoner Creek near Paris, and travels up through the South Fork of the Licking River to the Licking River and ends up in Campbell and Kenton County. The Bluewater Trail and the streams nearby are hidden treasures in Kentucky. They are looking at the potential for outdoor recreation. People spend 7.7 billion dollars as visitors to Kentucky on tourism, and generated over \$800 million in taxes in 2021. These numbers are down due to COVID from the year before. Over 82,000 jobs across the state are related to tourism. In this 122 miles, it is very scenic with old bourbon distillery locations, historic battlefields, parks and greenways. This is a potential for economic development. There are a lot of natural resources along the way, there are 50 fresh water mussels. The Licking River is probably one of the best rivers in the state. There is a lot of wildlife.

Mr. Marchaterre then stated that there are cemeteries, battlefield sites and low head dams along this trail. When they were looking at things, they were trying to figure out different ways to see what was along the rivers. They canoed and kayaked the 120 miles, and they got to see and talk to people along the way. There were a lot of people out fishing and picnicking, and it is really pretty active. Each County has a difference in what they do or like, so counties can team up together to do projects or keep them county specific. This is a way to promote the area, and get people to visit. They are finding that the Bluewater Trails are very popular in Kentucky and the nearby states. The water quality is generally pretty good, and they encourage promoting the area.

Mr. Marchaterre then stated that they put together a plan that will be finalized in a couple of weeks. It will outline how this area can be used, and he will get this to the Fiscal Court when it is completed. They are trying to promote better access with boat ramps, parking and signage. They want to educate people about the area, and educate people how to use the area safely.

Judge Knochelmann stated that this study was completed through a State grant. This will be a great draw for tourism. This study is an inventory for the community that will help them decide what to do next.

Mr. Marchaterre stated that outdoor recreation is a future area of growth for the state.

Commissioner Draud asked if this is a statewide project?

Mr. Marchaterre answered that they did this project from Paris to here.

Commissioner Draud asked where the funding is going to come from?

Mr. Marchaterre answered that it was funded from the Department of Tourism. They have a second grant for some further efforts that may be given.

John Stanton stated that about four or five years ago the Weeb Companies built most of downtown Lexington announced that they were going to build a distillery in Paris. Jacob Spears was from Paris, and is thought to be the creator of bourbon. What caught the attention of the

people in Frankfort was that Jacob Spears shipped his bourbon to New Orleans up the Licking River. We were allocated a sum of money to explore the idea of a Jacob Spears Bourbon Trail from Paris. The Weeb Companies were going to build a distillery on an abandoned golf course in Paris, but the neighbors were not very fond of that. We got the allocation from the state to pursue three areas which included the outdoor tourism piece, some Jacob Spears history research in partnership with NKU and then put a marketing game plan together for all five counties. The neighbors of the golf course in Paris put a pool of money together, and have fought the zone change for almost three years. It is currently in the Court of Appeals, and in talking to the attorneys, they think it is going to be at least another year or two before the litigation resolves itself. They will be coming back to the Fiscal Court to talk about pivoting and using the remainder of the allocation from the State for something else. We want to move forward, and the Licking River is a substantially greater asset than we considered beforehand. The environmental and outdoor tourism in that corridor are substantial in the long run, so we want to go ahead and finish up the study. He wants to give Marty credit, as this was a study that covered five counties and a number of cities. It was launched right before the onset of COVID. He has not worked with anyone over the last few years that has persevered through more public meetings. There will be recommendations made to the Fiscal Court for the Licking River Corridor.

#### **B. Presentation by Rick Wurth for the Children's Home of Northern Kentucky.**

Rick Wurth, the CEO of the Children's Home of Northern Kentucky stated that he is coming before the Fiscal Court with an appeal to help expand mental health services for the general population. There is a long history in Kenton County, and they have served the County for 140 years. People think they are still serving the County in the same way as they did in the 1800s. Back then, Kenton County needed them to be an orphanage and they did it for 100 years. In the 1980's they switched gears and started taking care of kids in the State's custody because of abuse or neglect, and they are still doing that work today. Something dramatically shifted in 2014, and the Commonwealth of Kentucky realized that it had a huge shortage of healthcare providers to provide addiction treatment services, mental health services and behavioral health services. They extended the opportunity to the Children's Home of NKY (CHNK) to get new state licenses that were especially created so that they could serve the general public. They have embraced this wholeheartedly, and made the changes. They feel that they have left some of the community behind, as they are hearing from School Districts that parents are upset that their kids are getting referred to CHNK for a mental health care assessment because the parents are afraid that the CHNK is in the business of removing kids from families. That is simply not true, and they have some work to do on educating the general public about what their new mission is in Kenton County.

Mr. Wurth then stated that he is grateful for the time Judge Knochelmann has spent on both of their residential campuses. They started taking a serious look in November of 2021, as they knew they weren't keeping pace with the demand for the mental health services being requested of them. The School Districts are their number one referral customers. There is a history of undiagnosed mental health folks that need services but aren't getting them. The jails are filled with people that have a substance use issue or mental health issue, but it is not just the jails. Our schools are having effects as well. The School Districts in Kentucky are funded by how many students show up on any given day. When children are dealing with a mental health issue, addiction issue or their parents are dealing with an issue, attendance plummets and school funding plummets. The numbers are skyrocketing in terms of a 20% increase in severe anxiety and depression, 56% of young adults reported anxiety or depression in the past 18 months, 130,000 Kentucky youth under 17 reported wrestling with anxiety and depression and among 40,000 Kentuckians aged 12-17 recently received a diagnosis of depression. It is hard to get services, especially in the more rural areas of the Commonwealth. Almost every major medical association in the country has declared a State of Emergency. So 3.2 million people in Kentucky in a community that is underserved with mental health professionals. This is 70% of the Commonwealth. Since 2014 there has been a 434% increase in the number of clients and family members they are serving. They can't keep up with the demand. The Covington Schools have asked them to dedicate eight of their full time clinicians to their school district. He only has 140 employees, and 40 of them are clinicians.

Mr. Wurth then stated that they brought together elected officials in November of 2021, and stated that they needed to have an expansion program. They want to figure out how to grow their existing treatment lines (they are the only ones in town that can provide residential psychiatric care). They have a campus for boys at the main campus, and a campus for girls at the Burlington campus. They need to build their technology and telehealth services. Community education and awareness is also a big part of their expansion project. They have to educate the public that if their child is brought in for an assessment, it does not mean that there are plans to get the child removed from the family. There has been an 81% increase in services since 2015, and 54% of the children on the outpatient waiting list are from Kenton County. There is a waiting list of 65 children, and 35 of them have a Kenton County address. The demand is more than they can handle.

Mr. Wurth then stated that if they used national statistics in terms of the number of percentage of children that are going to need mental health services and applied that filter to Kenton County the estimated number would be around 1,756 Kenton County students that have experienced one major depressive episode in 2022. The estimated number of Kenton County students that have experience at least one major depressive episode that do not receive service in 2022 is over 1,000. They need to make sure they can take more referrals in telehealth and on the two residential campuses, and they are going to grow their facilities and technologies. When he first brought the Judge into this in 2021, they talked about a \$4.5 million project to help immediately get started. The Judge asked him to go out and leverage the private community, and as of tonight the CHNK has raised over \$3 million. If the rest of the cities and counties that they have targeted come through, they will have more than the \$4.5 million. They have had good luck too. The City of Covington has invested \$500,000, the City of Union has invested \$100,000, the City of Elsmere has invested \$100,000, and the City of Independence invested \$150,000. He is not the kind of guy that sees government as the answer to every one of the problems, and they leverage the private sector. He is asking the Kenton County Fiscal Court to invest \$500,000 to this project. They don't want to go to Frankfort without having the support of all of the local counties. Kenton County is the number one user of their services. This \$4.5 million is not the answer to all of their problems. It is the answer to the immediate crisis. The next goal is to go to Frankfort and ask for \$38 million. They are one of the few organizations in the State that hasn't gotten line item funding from the General Assembly. There is ample evidence of other Children's Homes around the state getting \$3-5 million, even though Boone, Kenton and Campbell have led the state in terms of opioid overdoses and deaths. They are hosting elected officials with Representative Kim Moser to help take this to the state level. He appreciates the Fiscal Court's time.

Judge Knochelmann thanked Mr. Wurth for the work he and his team are doing with this project. He stated that the Fiscal Court will talk about next steps.

### **C. Claims Lists dated December 28, 2022, and January 6, 2022.**

There were no questions on the Claims List.

## **Resolutions**

### **A. Resolution No. 23-01A**

#### **A Resolution for the Kenton County Fiscal Court concerning Fiscal Year Budget Adjustments.**

Assistant Treasurer Kurt Greivenkamp stated that the budget adjustments are for the following: \$39,000 to cover the cost of the in car camera systems for the Kenton County Police Department and \$20,000 to cover overtime for Animal Services through the fiscal year (from wages to overtime line).

Judge Knochelmann stated that the cameras being replaced are over 12 years old.

Commissioner Draud asked what the \$20,000 for?

Mr. Greivenkamp answered that it is for Animal Shelter overtime.

Assistant County Administrator Scott Gunning stated that this is due to the Animal Shelter having a lot of vacancies in the last several months, and they have to fill those roles.

Judge Knochelmann stated that he doesn't expect that they will have to see this again, especially after this next budget round.

County Administrator Joe Shriver stated that this will cover wages through this fiscal year. 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.

**B. Resolution No. 23-02**

**A Resolution Authorizing An Application To The United States Department Of Transportation (USDOT) For Matching Federal RAISE Grant Funds For The Widening And Realignment Of KY 536 From Calvary Drive To KY 17.**

Nick Hendrix stated that the County has applied on behalf of the Transportation Cabinet in years past for this grant. We weren't successful during the last cycle for that section on KY536 from Williams Woods to KY17, so this is kind of a rinse and repeat application. They had a very good debrief with the Transportation Cabinet and USDOT, and they were encouraging us to submit another application.

Commissioner Sewell stated that it took two tries before didn't it?

Mr. Hendrix answered that it actually took three tries for the section that is currently under construction.

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.

**Ordinances**

**A. Ordinance No. 226.09 - Second Reading**

**An Ordinance of the County of Kenton, Kentucky amending Ordinance 225.77 relating to the transient room tax to include all accommodations contained in House Bill 8 of the 2022 regular legislative session and repealing inconsistent ordinances.**

Commissioner Draud asked if this is the one that all three counties approve for the tourism group?

Judge Knochelmann answered that yes it is.

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

**B. Ordinance No. 226.10 - Second Reading**

**An Ordinance of the Kenton County Fiscal Court, County of Kenton, Kentucky, amending Ordinance 225.01, levying a license fee on the rental of motor vehicles and the disbursement of such license fees collected to the Tri-County Economic Development Corporation**

Judge Knochelmann stated that this is referring to Uber and LYFT, in addition to the rental car fees that have already been charged for many decades.

Commissioner Sewell asked if they have any idea what the increase will be from that monetarily.

Christine Russell answered that they have no way of knowing what the activity is of Uber and LYFT, as they have no requirement to report back to anyone locally.

Judge Knochelmann stated that it would just be an estimation, and 90% of those dollars come from Boone County to fund Tri-Ed and benefit Kenton County. This then expands that to LYFT, and now even LYFT drivers would have to have a license. Uber and LYFT do not pay a direct fee on anything they do in Kenton County today at all. He thinks that this will be a transition effective after this work tonight. Then the data will be tracked. It charges a fee of 3%, as it does on rental cars wherever they start.

Ms. Russell stated that it is the source of pickup not drop off.

Commissioner Draud asked if all of the revenue collected goes to Tri-Ed?

Ms. Russell answered that yes it does. It comes through the County, just like the rental car fees do now.

Commissioner Sewell asked if we are one of the few states in the region that have not done this?

Ms. Russell answered that she knows Ohio does, but she is not sure about Indiana.

Commissioner Nienaber stated that since the start of Uber and LYFT, he assumes there has been a reduction in rental cars so the revenue for Tri-Ed has gone down.

Ms. Russell answered that yes that has happened, and it is hard to track less rentals versus COVID, as both have hit. They have just now recovered to pre-COVID numbers for revenue.

Judge Knochelmann stated that as the perceived reduction of rental cars happens, this is an area to shift to. This is legislation that allows for it to be shifted to Uber and LYFT. They are transportation service network companies. It levels the field.

Ms. Russell stated that at the time the original motor vehicle license fee was put into place people weren't carrying cell phones, so it is catching up with technology.

Commissioner Nienaber asked if taxi services are included in this as well?

Ms. Russell stated that it doesn't include tax services or any type of public transportation. It would be ride sharing services and car sharing services

Commissioner Nienaber asked why taxis are charged?

Judge Knochelmann answered that he doesn't know why.

Commissioner Nienaber stated that his concern is that businesses are easy to identify, Uber drivers are not. He wants to know mechanically how this works? Do the companies Uber and LYFT get occupational licenses on behalf of the driver?

Ms. Russell answered that this would be at the corporate level. This would be a tax that the rider would pay. It is not out of the driver's salary, it would be for the passenger.

Commissioner Nienaber asked if Uber and LYFT are required to get an occupational license?

Judge Knochelmann stated that they should have one.

Commissioner Nienaber stated that he doesn't think Uber drivers are getting rich, he thinks they are filling gaps but Uber is making money. If Uber is collecting on behalf of the driver, and then subcontracting the driver they should have an occupational license. The bigger fish to fry is

corporate, because that opens up net profits and gross receipts to the cities they are functioning in.

Judge Knochelmann stated that there have already been fees charged to rental cars, Uber and LYFT when they are right on site at CVG. Uber and LYFT would change the fee on their system, and it will be easy. They should have an occupational license. Almost all of Tri-Ed's funding comes through this mechanism, and we expect a large majority of the funding will be generated through the airport.

Commissioner Nienaber stated that he is opposed to this Ordinance. Nothing against Tri-Ed, but he would really like to take a look at the Uber and LYFT situation from a perspective of businesses operating within our community.

Commissioner Sewell stated that back to the previous Ordinance, it is easier to track Airbnb and everything that already has an occupational license because they aren't moving through jurisdictions.

Commissioner Nienaber stated that Airbnb, Uber and all of that is pretty ambiguous. The cost is all passed on to the customer. He really just wants to take a deeper look into that industry in general.

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Draud. Judge Executive Knochelmann called for a roll call vote with the results being Commissioner Draud, yes, Commissioner Sewell, yes, Commissioner Nienaber, no, and Judge Knochelmann, yes. The motion passed with a vote of 3-1.

**C. Ordinance No. 930.5 - First Reading  
An Ordinance amending Article VII and Article X of the Official Zoning Ordinance of Unincorporated Kenton County relating to agricultural tourism definitions and regulations within the A-1 and A-2 agricultural zones.**

Judge Knochelmann stated that this is the first reading for a text amendment. This is a good project, and really appreciates Kathy Donahoue's efforts with the community on this. He does support this.

Commissioner Sewell thanked Kathy Donahoue and Stacy Tapke for a lot of hard work on this issue.

**Consent Agenda**

- A. Exhibit No. 23-01  
Request approval of the bonds for various Elected Officials.**
- B. Exhibit No. 23-02  
Request approval to purchase a Caterpillar 299D3 C3H3 Track Loader for the Kenton County Public Works Department.**
- C. Exhibit No. 23-03  
Request approval to renew the Memorandum of Agreement between the Boone County Fiscal Court, the Campbell County Fiscal Court, the Kenton County Fiscal Court and the Northern Kentucky Area Development District for the Northern Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy.**
- D. Exhibit No. 23-04  
Request approval to purchase a 2023 Chevrolet Silverado 3500HD for the Kenton County Fleet Department.**
- E. Exhibit No. 23-05**



Request approval of a change order for CT Consultants for the KY 17 Park and Ride acquisition process for KYTC.

- F. **Exhibit No. 23-06**  
Request approval of the Cincinnati Bell Services Addendum #00026546 to Services Agreement #02290659 for the Kenton County Technology Services Department.
- G. **Exhibit No. 23-07**  
Request approval of the revision to the IPS proposal for CCTV & IP Cameras at the Kenton County Emergency Communications Center.
- H. **Exhibit No. 23-08**  
Request approval to award the replacement boiler bid to Peck Hannaford and Briggs Service Corporation for the Kenton County Detention Center.
- I. **Exhibit No. 23-09**  
Request approval to award the in-vehicle camera system bid to Axon Enterprise, Inc., for the Kenton County Police Department.
- J. **Exhibit No. 23-10**  
Request approval of the IPS Contract for the camera system at the Independence Courthouse for the Kenton County Technology Services Department.
- K. **Exhibit No. 23-11**  
Request approval to submit the grant application to the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund for the construction of a Farmers Market structure at the Historic Kenton County Courthouse.

All items on the Consent Agenda were voted on together.

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

#### **Executive Orders**

- A. **Executive Order 22-170**  
An Executive Order relating to the Level One Snow Emergency issued on December 22, 2022.

No action needed.

- B. **Executive Order 22-171**  
An Executive Order relating to the Level Two Snow Emergency issued on December 23, 2022.

No action needed.

- C. **Executive Order 22-172**  
An Executive Order rescinding the Level 2 Snow Emergency issued on December 23, 2022.

No action needed.

- D. **Executive Order 22-173**  
An Executive Order rescinding the Level 1 Snow Emergency issued on December 22, 2022.

No action needed.

- E. Executive Order 23-01**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the Homeland Security and Emergency Operations Plan and support plans.**

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

- F. Executive Order 23-02**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of various employees for the Homeland Security/Emergency Management 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.

- G. Executive Order 23-03**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Sue Kaiser as the Fiscal Court Clerk for the Kenton County Administration Department.**

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

- H. Executive Order 23-04**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the reappointment of individuals as Department Heads and to various official positions within Kenton County government;**

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.

- I. Executive Order 23-05**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment and resignation of Nick Hendrix as the County Engineer/Director of Public Works for the Kenton County Public Works 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.

- J. Executive Order 23-06**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Lesley Hinman to the Kenton County Cooperative Extension District Board.**

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 23-07**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Cheyenne Hert as a Part Time Veterinary Assistant for the Kenton County Animal Services Department.**

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

- L. Executive Order 23-08**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Eunyi Kirst as a Canine Behavior Coordinator for the Kenton County Animal Services 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 23-09**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the resignation of Ryan Daff as an Animal Control Officer for the Kenton County Animal Services 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 23-10**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Michael Stork as the Interim County Engineer/Director of Public Works for the Kenton County Public Works Department.**

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

- O. Executive Order 23-11**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the appointment of Michelle Foster as the Interim Technology Services Director for the Kenton County Technology Services 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.

- P. Executive Order 23-12**  
**An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the step increase of Tiffany Fields from a Dispatcher I, G5-1 to a Dispatcher I, G5-2 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.

## **Administrative Reporting**

### **External Affairs**

John Stanton stated that the General Assembly is in short session, and we are fortunate to have a great group of people down there. They have completed four days out of their 30 assigned, and we will continue to work with them as we go forward on different issues. He did have a great meeting this morning with Gina Douthat, the leader of TANK. He doesn't think that our regional organizations have ever worked together more than they are right now. There are some phenomenal leaders in Sharmili Reddy, Gina and Tara Noem, and when they work together it generates a lot more work. Also, the workforce study that is going on is in progress, and they have selected a vendor. There will be a lot of meetings regarding this in January and February, and the hope is to come back at the end of the first quarter with some plans on how to reorganize the approach toward workforce in Northern Kentucky. Lastly, he mentioned that we are fortunate to have Chris McDaniel chairing the A and R Committee. The Bluegrass Institute holds him in high regard for how he protects the State's finances.

## **Technology Services**

Jessica Ramsey stated that this is her last report before going on maternity leave. She stated that one of the great things about working for Kenton County is the great culture among the fellow directors and employees. Her favorite thing about Nick Hendrix is not only his knowledgeable, but he has a fantastic attitude. He will be greatly missed. Also, there were a couple of items on the agenda for security cameras. They are working on improving security cameras at all the different sites, so they are on one integrated system. They just finished adding cameras to the Police and Dispatch building, and the change order was a negative one as the pricing came down. They are working on the cameras at Public Works, and the cameras will be put up at the Independence Courthouse. The next ones to go up will be at the Animal Shelter. Michelle Foster has been handling all of the security camera implementation, and she has done a fantastic job. She introduced Ms. Foster to the Fiscal Court as her interim director while she is on maternity leave.

Ms. Ramsey then spoke about the tax portal, or the Filing Wizard. The site is now live, and it will walk people through annual filings with checkboxes for forms and such. It is like a TurboTax for people doing their annual filings. It is currently live on the site right now, and they are accepting voucher payments for people's annual filings. By the end of this month, they will have added credit card payment functionalities. Some promotional material will be sent out about the Filing Wizard. There will be a lot more improvements with this project like payroll imports.

Judge Knochelmann stated that he was over at the Police annex project, and Michelle Foster was amazing.

## **Animal Services**

Kelsey Maccombs stated that they just seized nine horses in connection to a case they are pursuing on animal cruelty. The Animal Shelter does not have the space or capacity to be housing nine horses, and six of them have been signed over. It has been a challenge, but they have worked with many inner agencies such as the Sheriff's Office and the Police Department along with the County Attorney's Office. She hopes to have a great outcome.

Ms. Maccombs then stated that on January 29<sup>th</sup> they are starting their new operating hours on seven days a week. This will be a great change to be able to serve the public with more accessible hours. They just finished up the new roof on the shelter which is very nice. Looking at their 2022 numbers, locally and nationally, she has heard that the last three years are showing an increase in intake. Kenton County is not outside of that scope, as they have seen a 59% increase in intake. That means that the team is hustling at a greater rate. It is a testament that there can be increases, and we can still maintain the 94% live release rate.

## **Treasurer**

Assistant Treasurer Kurt Greivenkamp asked that the records reflect that the December 2022, Financial Reports have been submitted.

## **Public Works**

Nick Hendrix stated that he is happy to report that the County road network is safer and more resilient, and he is proud of that. The fleet countywide is more reliable and resilient. They have expanded recycling access and service for the residents. They have built an incredible team at Kenton County Public Works, and he is very proud of that. He is grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as the County Engineer/Director of Public Works, and he appreciates all of the Court's trust and friendship.

Commissioner Draud stated that in his opinion, Nick has been one of the more outstanding professionals that he has ever worked with. He appreciates that he always responded to some of

the silly things that he asked no matter how minor. It is an outstanding culture among the employees, and he gives leadership credit for that. There has never been a culture like this around any organization that he has been a part of in his life. He thanked Nick for all the hard work he did for the County, and wished him a bright future.

Judge Knochelmann stated that eight or nine years ago when he was looking around the community to fill Nick's position he was sent to us. He has done amazing work, and the team has been built to be strong. He has challenged the Department Heads, and come up with some great procedures and helped his team. Every department looks at the leadership of Nick. The building project was unprecedented, and Nick saved the County a lot of money on this project. He is a great guy, great dad and a great husband. He is all about other people and his family.

### **County Attorney 's Report**

County Attorney Stacy Tapke stated that Nick will be missed. She then stated that back in 2017 the Court authorized the lawsuit against the opioid manufacturers. That legislation was passed the year before last, and it splits 50/50 with all the funds that come in. The \$478 came in with the first wave, and some of that money has hit the County already. The Attorney General just announced that Kentucky is entering into an agreement with TEVA for \$114 million, which would be \$57 million to the local governments. This will be divided up in the same manner. According to a press release, it will be the middle of 2023 when the money may be seen. In addition, there is another \$53 million with Walmart, which would be \$26.5 million for the local governments. There are some other litigations out there with others, so there may be more funds.

Commissioner Draud asked what local governments is this going to?

Ms. Tapke answered that it will go to all the counties and the cities. If a city is not getting more than \$30,000 over that whole time period, their money roles up to the County.

Judge Knochelmann stated that the first round of dollars will be spread out over many years, and the NKYODCP is drawing up a plan for the money. There will be a regional effort to utilize these dollars. We have more to gain by doing this regionally to make big impacts. The idea is to try to get people into treatment before they end up in jail.

Ms. Tapke stated that there may be a desire to pay faster, so there may be more money up front.

### **Commissioners ' Reports**

#### **Commissioner Jon Draud**

Commissioner Draud asked what the schedule is for the altafiber project?

County Administrator Joe Shriver answered that August of 2023 is the completion date.

Commissioner Draud then asked what the status is of the New County Park?

Assistant County Administrator Scott Gunning answered that the final report is being completed. There was a comment section on the website, and he passed it along to the Judge and Mr. Shriver. Once they get the report back, it will be shared with the Court.

Commissioner Draud asked if there is any plan to solicit private investments for the park?

Mr. Gunning answered that part of that report is going to provide grant funding opportunities.

#### **Commissioner Beth Sewell**

Commissioner Sewell stated that on behalf of Kathy Donahoue and Southern Kenton County, thank you to Nick Hendrix for the countless hours that he spent in meetings and helping in that area. All of it mattered. She hopes her son turns out like him. He will be missed.

### **Commissioner Joe Nienaber**

Commissioner Nienaber stated that sometimes his tone is not appropriate, and he apologizes. He is looking for a larger level funding mechanism for the County that will essentially relieve the property owners of Kenton County. He fully intends to have some kind of offset down the road.

Commissioner Nienaber then stated that he can't say anything that everyone hasn't already said about Nick. He served on the building committee with him, and when he would get fired up Nick would pull him aside and remind him that he was forgetting to mad about this.... He kept him on point. He is so thankful for Nick. He has saved the County a lot of money being creative, and has been incredibly helpful.

### **Judge/Executive Kris Knochelmann**

Judge Knochelmann asked for approval of a proposal from Elevar for renovations to the Clerk's office to give a specific and private place for people to sign in when getting their registrations done for their cars. The cost would be around \$5,800. This approval would also include a budget adjustment for \$8,000 to cover any costs.

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.

### **Executive Session**

#### **A. Discussion pursuant to KRS 61.810 Subsection C for the purpose of discussing pending litigation.**

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

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

### **Adjournment**

Having completed all business before the Court, Commissioner Draud offered a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge/Executive Kris 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 January 10, 2023.



Sue J. Kaiser/Fiscal Court Clerk