

KENTON COUNTY FISCAL COURT
Kenton County Government Center
1840 Simon Kenton Way
Covington, KY 41011
Kenton Chambers - Second Floor

Meeting Minutes
February 24 , 2026
5:30 P.M.

Call to Order

Judge Knochelmann called to order the February 24, 2026, meeting of the Kenton County Fiscal Court. Commissioner Draud 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
Sue Kaiser, Fiscal Court Clerk
Kurt Greivenkamp, Treasurer

Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of the Minutes from the meeting of February 10 , 2026.

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

Gary Meyer stated that about a month ago he saw an article in the paper talking about people arguing about the relationship with Kenton County Jail and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. There's a lot of people like him who tend to just stay silent about things, so he wanted to bring another opinion or another point of view around that. He is glad that the county is maintaining a relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and he encourages them to keep that going forward. He would have a concern if there wasn't an agreement. It would be very easy for a warehouse to get rented, and people be in non-optimal conditions. He knows the jailer here, and he has a great facility. He encourages the Court to continue to maintain that relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement so that we can do what's best for people that are being detained and the community at large.

Greta Etenbaas stated that she is a Fort Wright constituent, and she actually has concerns about the 287G agreements that we have across the state. She is hoping that we don't expand those, and we don't continue to pursue those types of agreements. There are 16,523 people with no criminal record housed and detained as of October of 2025. In 2025, over 170 U.S. citizens were

detained for at least one day by immigration without access to family or to an attorney. Our laws are not always just, and we've got history that supports that. We've seen slavery, not in our lifetimes, but we've seen the remnants of that with an inability for people to marry across race up through the 1960s.

We've seen the remnants of eugenics through the 1980s. The law is not always on our side.

Immigration law hasn't been truly overhauled since 1986. The remnants of what we're seeing, it's not our fault, it's not your fault, it's not any of our fault, but what we're seeing now is a lack of an ability for people to enter the country legally. Asylum is being revoked. We don't have an opportunity for people to come to the States lawfully, and we are lucky enough to have been born here, so we have the privilege. What she is asking is not for broad, sweeping gestures and not asking for statements. She is asking for quiet and thoughtful solutions. She is asking for us to still continue to act lawfully and make sure that where a crime has been committed, that's rectified and that's remedied. For the civil cases that we're talking about, for those 16,523 at one time detained, she is asking that we not contribute to that. She is asking that we act with kindness, compassion, and in the best interest of our neighbors and our communities, knowing that whether someone is here lawfully or unlawfully, the likelihood is that they're contributing financially, they're our friends, they're our neighbors, and she is asking that we act with conscience.

Muhammad Ahmed stated that he wasn't in Independence two weeks ago for the last Fiscal Court meeting, but he saw some people weren't very happy with demands of local residents who are calling for an end to the 287G agreement. He actually wants to look at some of those quoted comments. He believes one gentleman said that we are, quote, knowingly tugging at your heartstrings, giving you half-baked stories by leaving out important details, and that we, quote, simply live on social media. Never mind that millions of Americans didn't watch a mother get shot in the face multiple times, being called an effing B by her killer, nor subsequently watch a VA nurse who served this country get shot over and over by multiple agents. He went on to add, quote, sob stories aside, they, being us, are a vocal minority that does not speak for most of the community. Then another gentleman simply said that he wants law enforcement to, quote, follow the Constitution and the law, and that, quote, normal law-abiding citizens are tired of this. Okay, so to that, what he says is that we, the people of actual consciousness, are tired of this really, in his opinion, mediocre and simplistic way of viewing this issue that's devoid of any complexity and nuance worth discussing. He thinks that this kind of simplistic framing separates modern-day America from economic decay and despair, along with a dying American empire that we are funding that fuels this despair, such as the billions we give to genocidal Israel, along with the cultural displacement and political powerlessness that results from these factors. Now, anyone who wants to take that aforementioned view of those gentlemen can run with it, and deny the reality he just posed, if you so choose, but you can say whatever you want over and over and assume your own self-evident truths are valid, but that doesn't actually make them true. So, opposing this isn't some fringe vocal minority. He thinks what's actually fringe is just going along with this as a law-abiding citizen without questioning how effective is this, why is it effective, who benefits, and does it fight the problems in America that he mentioned? Not to be a broken record, but we can achieve stability, unity, and civic trust through common-sense reforms that don't resort to militarization. The English immigrant and founding father Thomas Paine said in exact words that the cause of America is in great measure the cause of all mankind. If you take that at face value and believe in a better America like he does, let's combine our empathy with our cognitive abilities to create wise-minded solutions instead of relying on reductive, crude, and dehumanizing narratives.

Randy Evans stated that he was going to speak about something else tonight, but he decided to change that. Now, in this country, things have been going on with immigration and supposedly people like Minnesota are peacefully demonstrating. People come to this country and they want to use what we have, how our government is founded, our republic, not our democracy, and they want to use it against us. Now, if we were in another country and we did the things those people did, we would be beaten and maybe killed. People come to this country and they want to use our laws and our customs and all that stuff against us. They want Islam over here. They want it to be

an Islamic state. They want Sharia law where women will be half a man. We should stand up against that whenever anybody tries to impose it, because if you don't, this country's going to be in trouble. It won't exist anymore.

Michael Staverman stated that he wanted to thank the Fiscal Court once again for having him and hearing his address, as well as listening to all the concerned citizens that have arrived here today. Two weeks ago, we visited the Kenton County Detention Center with Jailer Fields. He was very gracious. He brought us in, and had an extended dialogue with us. Some of our concerns were alleviated somewhat, but others were confirmed. As of February 5th, the Kenton County Detention Center that we're all holding in such high esteem was 49 individuals above capacity. At the time of our visiting, about a week later, it was still above capacity. He expects it still is above capacity right now. Jailer Fields indicated that overcrowding would be a concern headed into the warmer months, as the local population would increase, along with local crime, as it always does in the spring and summer. According to the UN, overcrowding in prisons and detention centers reduces access to food, health care, and rehabilitative services, turning prisons into dangerous environments, not only for those housed there, but also those who work there. Reduction in services would affect both Federal ICE detainees, immigration and nonimmigration, as well as local prisoners who would see their access to needed resources reduced. Jailer Fields assured us he would seek to reduce ICE detainee levels in the coming months to maintain acceptable standards of care for all of those in the Kenton County Detention Center. He asked the Fiscal Court to do the job of oversight to ensure that conditions within the Kenton County Detention Center are maintained within acceptable standards, and overcrowding does not get worse as he expects it will in the coming months

General Business

A. Request approval of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement for the Building Marfofma Corp.

County Administrator Joe Shriver stated that this project is in Elsmere by Fleury Michon, a multinational agri-food company that, among other things, provides meals for airlines worldwide. They are going to do a \$37 million acquisition and improvement, as well as equipping for manufacturing facilities in Covington. It is expected to create up to 98 new full-time positions and approximately 78 of those will be subject to Kentucky individual income tax. Covington has presented this to us to give half a reduction for 10 years.

Judge Knochelmann stated that it's basically the higher-end meals that you see in planes up front there. That's what they're going to be making here in Kenton County. It is going into the old White Castle production building.

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. Request approval of the Kenton County Detention Center 's Policy Manual.

There were no questions.

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.

C. Request approval of pay applications #25 and #26 to Dugan and Meyers for the Kenton County Government Center Parking Garage.

County Administrator Joe Shriver stated that the pay applications have been approved, and are deemed appropriate.

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.

D. Claims Lists dated February 24, 2026.

There were no questions on the Claims List.

Resolutions

A. Resolution No. 26-01D

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

Treasurer Kurt Greivenkamp stated that the budget adjustments are for the following: \$600 at the detention center for fuel at the fleet pumps, and \$10,000 for emergency management in the hazardous materials response. That's a pass-through that once we get the money from the responsible party, we'll then disperse the money to the responding agencies

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 930.6

An Ordinance amending the official zoning ordinance of Unincorporated Kenton County revising text related to qualified manufactured homes to comply with 2025 Kentucky House Bill 160.

Andy Videkovich from PDS stated that this was a house bill that was passed at the last legislative session which basically mandated that no local jurisdiction could discriminate against a qualified manufactured home or treat that any differently than any other single-family home. Now, to be clear, we're talking about qualified manufactured homes, and that means a very specific type of home. It's not a mobile home. It's not a manufactured home that typically comes to mind when you hear manufactured home. These homes are just assembled off-site in a factory somewhere, and then they're brought out and put together on the site. In practice, they look no different than any other type of single-family home. They still need to meet all the building codes and all the health and safety requirements of any other single-family home. So, because this affected all of the jurisdictions in Kenton County, the Planning Commission authorized this text amendment so we didn't have to go through this 20 different times with 20 different jurisdictions.

Commissioner Nienaber asked if that kind of construction is becoming more common locally, or is this driven by the statewide KRS?

Mr. Videkovich answered that it is driven by the statewide KRS. When he actually asked how many requests we get per year, just for the jurisdictions we serve, it was like 10 countywide. So, not too much. We could certainly start seeing more, but it's definitely not a majority of our workload.

Consent Agenda

A. Exhibit 26-27

Request approval to surplus a Glock Model 17 for the Kenton County Sheriff's Department.

- B. Exhibit 26-28**
Request approval to surplus two (2) dump body plow trucks, V-Box salt spreader and a stainless steel flat bed for the Kenton County Public Works Department.
- C. Exhibit 26-29**
Request approval of the contract with Cincinnati Circus for the Kenton County Fiscal Court.
- D. Exhibit 26-30**
Request approval of Addendum One for the New Kenton County Park.
- E. Exhibit 26-31**
Request approval to purchase two (2) 2026 Chevrolet 3500HD Utility Body trucks from Bachman Chevrolet utilizing Kentucky MA 605 2600000599 as part of the fleet replacement program for the Kenton County Public Works Department.
- F. Exhibit 26-32**
Request approval of the renewal of the maintenance and service agreement with Stryker Corporation as the Sole Source for a Stryker Power-LOAD cot-fastening system and ambulance cost for the county 's spare ambulance.
- G. Exhibit 26-33**
Request approval to solicit proposals for Road Reconstruction in the Harvest Hill Subdivision for the Kenton County Public Works Department.
- H. Exhibit 26-34**
Request approval of the modified snow and ice agreement between KYTC and Kenton County.
- I. Exhibit 26-35**
Request approval of the modified maintenance agreement between KYTC and Kenton County.

All items on the Consent Agenda were voted on together.

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.

Executive Orders

- A. Executive Order 26-30**
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the re-appointment of Lee Crume and Karen Finan to the NKY Port Authority 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.

- B. Executive Order 26-31**
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court appointing Jessica Fette to the Emergency Communications Board.

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.

- C. Executive Order 26-32**
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the lateral hire of Jeremy Lynn from the Parks and Recreation Department to a Public Services Technician III 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.

- D. Executive Order 26-33**
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court accepting the resignation of Tracy Tattershall as an Animal Shelter Technician for the Kenton County Animal Services 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.

- E. Executive Order 26-34**
An Executive Order relating to the Fiscal Court approving the rehire of Lee Meeks as a Part-Time Seasonal Maintenance Laborer for the Kenton County Parks and Recreation 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.

Administrative Reporting

Emergency Communications

Ashley Hawks stated that over the last several months, she has been updating the court in regards to a project that has been ongoing with our training program. Last year, the Fiscal Court approved the hiring of a training consultant that would come in and revamp our training program. After nine long months, she is proud to report that that has been completed. They had the training consultant come in last week where we had a class in the training facilities down at the jail. All of our trainers were able to come together and have a unified train-the-trainer event. This consultant also went through and revamped all of our training curriculum and our training program in general. We recently just brought in two new hires on Monday of this week. We have another one coming in next week, so we'll be able to take three new hires and put them through this new revamped training program. Hopefully, in about six months, she will be able to report back how those changes and that investment that you have made are returning in our new employees.

Police Department

Chief Jones stated that they recently turned over 86 firearms to the Kentucky State Police. He thanked Detective that-thank you, Detective Scheiding for doing all this work. These weapons were either used in the commission of or somehow involved in criminal activity. These weapons will be sold by the state, and the proceeds will be used to purchase protective body armor for our officers and officers across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Also, they are very excited about the recent graduation of recruit Nick Geraci from our state's basic training academy, and we're happy to welcome him to our team. Nick will be in field training for the next few months with a training officer before beginning solo patrol. Lastly, he traveled to Frankfort to stand in support of House Bill 299, which is an act related to making improvised machine guns illegal under Kentucky law. Currently they're illegal under federal law, but there are instances that we come in contact with Glock switches or devices or improvised machine guns where the Federal government will not

adopt the case. In this instance, it gives our prosecutors and our officers an ability to take those very dangerous weapons off the street and keep our communities safer.

Detention Center

Jailer Fields stated that he wanted to talk a little bit about home incarceration. This past week, Kurt Greivenkamp and Drew Harris were on standby. We had our Kenton County Community Corrections Board meeting which governs our home incarceration program. We did that so that we could approve the grant application for this next year. There were some numbers that we went over that were pretty enlightening. In the first quarter of this year, which is June through September, diverted costs are just averaging \$40. This is what the state says, \$40.11 a day is what it costs to house somebody. He thinks that's a little low, and he thinks at the legislature this year they're asking for \$63. If we're using their \$40.11 per day, the first quarter we diverted \$157,151 in days and that diverted 3,918 days from being in our jail. That's in one quarter. The second quarter we even did more. We diverted 4,492 days and saved \$180,000 on that side of it. He shared these numbers with Joe Shriver, and he brought up a very good point. It doesn't have anything to do with external medical. So as you all know, a couple meetings ago the court increased our budget by another \$250,000 for external medical expenses. So far, at the end of January, we've spent \$333,000 and a little change on external medical costs. There's really no way of knowing how much we're diverting, but if we took that number and we averaged it by the number of inmates that we have, it came up with \$595 for each inmate of what we were spending for that during that period of time. If in fact that would hold true, and he is not saying that it does, using this as just a guesstimate, which Mr. Shriver has asked him to do. He thinks that we have probably diverted somewhere around \$126,000 in medical costs if we look at it that way. There's no way to know if that's true because we don't know the seriousness of the illnesses that maybe those people in home incarceration do have. So far in that time period, we've had 16 cancer patients that have been physically in the jail that accounted for about 22% of that cost. We had two people on dialysis during the seven months. We've had 38 people go to ortho kind of things. We've had 26 OB patients, and we've had five childbirths. Those were the big-ticket items that are outside of our facility that we end up paying, and that's what that \$334,000 has paid for so far. We're lucky because there is a state law that says that we have to have Medicaid rates. So every bill that we get from these medical providers is sent to be repriced, and we get that, and that's a big deal for us to have. We want to make sure that the legislature never changes that, because it's a great savings to us to do that. He wants the Court to know how much he thinks that home incarceration really is helping us. We have now started inside looking at these people that we know have serious medical problems, and are trying to work with the prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the judges to maybe move them on that program because if they get moved on that program, they can have health insurance that pays for their medical needs, and it wouldn't be the Kenton County taxpayers' problem at that point in time.

Commissioner Draud asked if the people on home incarceration have their own insurance?

Jailer Fields answered that they may, or they can get on Medicaid or Medicare. Medicaid gets suspended once they become an inmate in a facility. So, even if they were on Medicaid prior to an arrest, once they come in our facility, the state suspends their Medicaid, and then they become our issue for medical.

Commissioner Draud asked if this happens with home incarceration too?

Jailer Fields answered that no it doesn't. Home incarceration is the exact opposite. They can stay on Medicaid, Medicare or their health insurance. They don't become a responsibility of the locals.

Commissioner Sewell asked if she heard him say that we bill at Medicaid rates?

Jailer Fields answered that every bill that we get from an outside provider was sent for repricing, and it is repriced at Medicare rates, but we are still going to have to pay that bill. Medicaid rates do not cover the real cost, but we're just getting reduced in cost by that number.

Commissioner Nienaber stated that if it's \$40.11 a day, that's \$14.640 a year. In Kentucky, the poverty level is considered \$15.650, and he would argue that for that \$14.650 you're living a lot better than a lot of people who are outside on the poverty level. He isn't advocating for it, but he just finds it really interesting that those are the numbers.

Homeland Security/Emergency Management

Steve Hensley stated that we are the County of affiliation for the Northern Kentucky Technical Rescue Team, and that team is made up of fire agencies and a few police agencies from Boone, Kenton and Campbell County. They do all the specialized rescues. We assisted them in putting together a grant with Kentucky Emergency Management, and we have received a \$28,000 award they plan to utilize to purchase some swift water rescue equipment. It's very frequently utilized, and so it'll be really nice to bring that into the equipment inventory. They appreciate Kurt Greivenkamp and Treasury's help on that. As we're talking about the Northern Kentucky Technical Rescue Team, we are also the County of affiliation with the Hazmat Materials Team. A lot of the members from the Hazmat Team are the same members that are on the Technical Rescue Team, and we're finding ourselves having quarterly meetings with these people. Oftentimes, we'll have a meeting in one week for the Hazmat Board, and a meeting the following week with the Technical Rescue Board, and it's the same people in the room. So in order to increase efficiency, we're looking at the possibility of merging those two teams. We've been working with Mr. Shriver and the surrounding counties to try to bring those two teams together. There will be more to follow on that. They have also been reviewing our Hazmat Materials Cost Recovery Ordinance that we utilize when we make responses like the one that we had to do the budget adjustment for here recently. Every few years, we have to look at that because, obviously, cost increase, payroll increases and we want to make sure that the monies we're recovering are actually making the response agencies whole for their personnel and their equipment that they're responding with. That will be coming before the Court probably in the next few months for approval once we get the input of some of the agencies that will be involved in that. Our last hazmat materials bill has been paid, and he is happy to report that without the assistance of Drew Harris this would not have been possible. Drew usually has to send a friendly letter from the County Attorney's office, and generally we get immediate results.

County Administrator 's Report

Joe Shriver stated that Director Hawks pointed out that despite the appointments to the dispatch board, we still have a vacancy that was created by one Scott Hardcorn. Since the Drug Strike Force re-employed Mr. Hardcorn, subject to the County Attorney's review, he would ask this court to re-appoint him back to the Dispatch Board to serve under his own unexpired term.

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.

Mr. Shriver then stated that this is Drew Harris' last meeting. He has done a great job.

County Attorney 's Report

County Attorney Stacy Tapke stated that it is Drew Harris' last meeting with us. He is going to the private sector. So we will certainly miss him.

Commissioners ' Reports

Commissioner Beth Sewell

Commissioner Sewell had nothing to report.

Commissioner Jon Draud

Commissioner Draud stated that he doesn't know if the people out in the audience are as particular as he is, but he doesn't like running over these sewer lids. Some of the sewer lids are like potholes to him. He has been in touch with Bob Yeager and also Adam Chaney, who's the head of the Sanitation District. They have agreed to look into this problem and try to solve it. He asked Spencer Stork to look into the issue for him.

Commissioner Joe Nienaber

Commissioner Nienaber stated everyone that came to the meeting to speak tonight. Regardless of what side of what issue you're on, we're here to kind of have the open dialogue. Policy from this board is informed from one meeting to the next. It's formed over the term of the year, month, or months and years, and even a term. We've never shied away from tough issues. Everybody is welcome, and he appreciates everybody's concerns. He does think that we have the premier jail in State of Kentucky. He is always amazed at the resources that are afforded from the federal government, state government, or local government. He is impressed by how efficiently we're able to operate our jail and the quality of life that we provide for anybody no matter what your plot in life may be or what the resources anyone has. Regardless of who's in there, whether you're drug addicted or you're just in there for petty theft or something, everybody's treated the same and he thinks our jail does a pretty good job of that. He complimented the people that have made their statements, both pro and con, about ICE because actually there have been some pretty intelligent statements made on each side of the issue. He certainly agrees with your right to express your opinion, and he has been impressed with the points that everyone has made.

Judge/Executive Kris Knochelmann

Judge Knochelmann had nothing to report.

Executive Session

- A. Pursuant to KRS 61.810 (1) (C) pending litigation regarding Grand Lodge v. Kenton County, et al, as well as any proposed or pending litigation regarding the Kenton County Detention Center.**

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 Nienaber 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 Nienaber. Commissioner Sewell 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 February 24, 2026.



Sue J. Kaiser
Fiscal Court Clerk

DRAFT