

UNION COUNTY FISCAL COURT

August 25, 2020

All supporting documents to these Minutes may be found in the office of the County Judge/Executive.

The meeting was called to order by Judge O’Nan at 9:00 a.m. with a Prayer by Bro. Jerry Manning and the Pledge to the American flag.

The Union County Fiscal Court met in regular session with Judge O’Nan presiding. The Union County Fiscal Court met in the Fiscal Courtroom but social distancing was practiced and the meeting was livestreamed on Facebook. Magistrates present were Wyatt, Floyd, Byrnes and Clements.

The minutes from the August 11, 2020 meeting were accepted as read.

Clay Wells, Property Valuation Administrator spoke before the Court regarding county tax growth. Clay noted that the County is set up on a quadrennial inspection plan, meaning that it is split up into 4 sections, with this year being Morganfield’s year. It has been a really good year for the County with residential assessments increased by \$9 million, farms by \$2.5 million, we had a fair amount of increase in commercial and oil & gas increased from \$10 to \$20 million. The biggest jump in the County was in tangible property, with an increase of \$35 million. Clay stated that the housing market is hot right now. It may have slowed down just a little, especially due to COVID, but the things that are selling are selling at really good prices. Overall, our equalized assessment increased by about \$67million putting the County at over a billion dollars. This is the first time in many years that the County has been over a billion-dollar assessment. This could increase some of the monies that comes the County’s way.

Judge O’Nan then advised the Court that we had received the 2020 Tax Rate information from the Department of Local Government. The compensating rate for 2020 is 10.00 cents per hundred, which will produce a revenue of \$951,739. In 2019 with the tax rate at 10.30, we had a revenue of \$912,800. If we take the 10.00 rate, we will have around a \$40,000 increase from last year. If we keep it the same, because of our assessed value going up, our revenue would be \$980,291, which is a \$70,000 increase. Before turning it over to the Court for a motion, Judge O’Nan stated that with the economy the way it is, he would lean toward the 10.00 tax rate. It would still give the County an increase and it allow us the flexibility, that if it need be in the future, we could try to recapture the 10.30 or whatever the rate is at that time, but that this is a decision that needs to be made by the Court collectively. Magistrate Clements expressed his concern with how much stress and how short of finances some people of the County were and that if he could ease that stress and financial worry, then that’s what he wanted to do. After all of the Magistrates expressed their concern for the residents as well, Magistrate Clements made a motion to accept the 10.00 cent per hundred tax rates for 2020, seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried.

Judge O’Nan also advised that we had received the 2021 Motor Vehicle & Watercraft Property Tax Rate Information. He recommended that we keep the rate the same as last year, at 11.30 cents per \$100. Magistrate Wyatt made a motion to set the 2021 Motor Vehicle &

Watercraft Property Tax Rate at 11.30 cents per \$100, seconded by Magistrate Clements, motion carried.

In other matters, the Judge asked the Court for their support for Kenergy with their intent to bring ultra, high-speed broadband internet to Union County. It will be a wired to the home internet process to all of Kenergy's customer in about 13 counties, which adds up to approximately 56,800 homes. What we've seen in Union County because of the school situation and people having to work from home because of the pandemic, we are definitely underserved in high speed internet services. They are participating in a reverse auction that would provide them with a large amount of money to get this project started. He noted that in the beginning this will be most helpful to Kenergy because we have a lot of KU customers. Once this works out for Kenergy customers, he feels that it will open us up statewide for co-ops to provide this service to all because regardless of where you are located, you are served by some form of electricity. This will be a long and tedious process but once it's up and going, Union County will be on a more level playing field. There are some requirements because of statute, that won't allow co-ops to have another business like this. Kenergy is asking for a waiver of that rule. Judge O'Nan drafted a letter to the Public Service Commission (PSC) that he would like the Court to adopt and accept and have all the Magistrates to sign to help them get this started. If that doesn't help, the Judge said that the Court is going to work on Legislation. Magistrate Byrnes made a motion to adopt and accept the letter to the PSC, seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried.

Judge O'Nan then presented the CARES Act Resolution that the Federal Government handed down to the State Government to be disbursed to its counties who are facing hardships due to COVID-19. Union County is seeking \$489,000. The Judge noted that there is broad use for this money, and because of this, there are several businesses in the County that were adversely affected by COVID, that were not eligible to receive any money, that he would like to help. He wants to set aside an amount, probably no more than \$5,000, for these businesses. An application process and a committee would be established to bring recommendations of which businesses to help before the Court. Magistrate Clements made a motion to accept the CARES Act Resolution as presented to the Court, seconded by Magistrate Wyatt, motion carried.

In other news the Judge stated that a Sheriff's vehicle was totaled around three or four weeks ago. The claim was turned into KACo who totaled the vehicle, giving us two options;

1. Keep the vehicle, get rid of it ourselves and receive approximately \$26,000
2. Let the vehicle go, let them get rid of it and receive approximately \$24,000

The Judge noted that the vehicle has brand new tires, the engine nor transmission were hurt and we could take the equipment off of that one and put it on another one. He asked the Court for their agreement on purchasing a 2020 Ram as a replacement vehicle. The previous purchase price of the truck has been around \$32,000, that's state contract price, and he would have the exact amount at our next meeting. Because we have lost one vehicle, the Sheriff's Department is running short, so we need to purchase one as soon as we possibly can. Magistrate Wyatt made a motion to approve the purchase of a new Sheriff's vehicle, seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried.

Judge O’Nan made the Court aware that the County Annex Building is having some roof issues. Around 8 months ago, the people, from Madisonville who engineered the Annex came and looked at the roof. It is a membrane roof, and they said that the useful life of this type of roof is 20 years and that is where we are now. The Judge recommended that the Court approve to set September 3rd, 9th and 16th as the dates to advertise this project and to open the bids on September 22nd. Sean Sheffer has bid specs drawn up to replace existing roof with another membrane roof, and they are ready for anyone that is interested is placing a bid. Magistrate Wyatt made a motion to accept the advertising bid dates and the opening bid date, seconded by Magistrate Clements, motion carried.

Judge O’Nan presented to the Court, for their approval, 5 MOA’s from House Bill #352. These MOA’s will provide reimbursement for county projects that have already been completed. Magistrate Clements made a motion to approve the MOA in the amount of \$45,547.00 for a new Sheriff’s vehicle, seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried. Magistrate Byrnes made a motion to approve the MOA in the amount of \$8,082.00 for a new mower at Moffit Lake, seconded by Magistrate Wyatt, motion carried. Magistrate Clements made a motion to approve the MOA in the amount of \$135,215.000 for a new ambulance, seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried. Magistrate Byrnes made a motion to approve the MOA in the amount of \$121,850.00 for 2 pre-built cabins at Moffit Lake, seconded by Magistrate Clements, motion carried. Magistrate Floyd made a motion to approve the MOA in the amount of \$41,894.00 for a new tractor at Moffit Lake, seconded by Magistrate Clements, motion carried.

As asked to do at the August 11th Court Meeting, Judge O’Nan received a quote from Jailer, Julie Brady at the Henderson County Detention Center on what it would cost us to house our inmates at their facility if our jail were to close. The cost would be \$50 per inmate per day, with us having to provide all healthcare insurance. Crittenden County’s rate was for \$32 per inmate per day and Webster’s was for \$30 per inmate per day. The Judge, County Attorney, Julie Wallace and Jailer, Shawn Elder have been working on an agreement with Webster County. They have been working with Webster County’s County Attorney, Clint Prow, their Jailer and Judge Executive, Steve Henry and they feel like they have the agreement where they want it. The Magistrates were given a copy of the agreement to look over and Judge O’Nan asked that the Court be ready to vote on the decision they make at our next Court Meeting, September 8th. He felt that that would give them plenty of time to go over the provided information to make the best decision possible. The Judge reiterated that although the inmates had already been moved to Webster County, that was done because of safety and health concerns due to the current sewer issue and that the County Jail is still open. Jailer Elder will come before the Court on September 8th as well, with different ideas on how the jail building can still be utilized.

All claims are to be paid.

Magistrate Clements made a motion to approve transfers, seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried.

Following the approval of claims and transfers, Judge O’Nan announced that he had met with the ambulance service in regards to Magistrate Wyatt’s concerns about the response time that the First Responders are having with the ambulance service since Deaconess took over July

1st. He has follow-up meetings scheduled with them. Deaconess told the Judge that they will have an offer for all of our ambulance and inventory fairly soon., which will be brought before the Court when it is received. He said that he felt that we are making progress with the ambulance crew and also stressed that our dispatch center is not the issue. He also stated that he had received word that the County has experienced it first COVID-19 related death, a gentleman from Sturgis. He was given this information from Union County Coroner, Stephen Shouse and he asked the County to Pray for the family. He stated that we have 5 new cases in the County today and the numbers are climbing. He encouraged everyone to be mindful that this virus is not behind us and that we are still working our way through it. He also commended the Union County Board of Education for working diligently on a plan to get our schools opened amidst this pandemic.

Magistrate Wyatt told the Court that he had been approached about a drainage issue on HWY. 1176 and a curve issue on HWY. 2091 and he stated that those issues are being work out. He also expressed his concern about the First Responders having a better way of being notified about possible COVID-19 cases when they are making their runs so that they can be better prepared. Judge O’Nan stated that Green River had assured him that this was being done but he would reach out to them again.

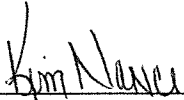
Melissa Coker gave a brief Census update stating that the National response rate is at 64.4%. Kentucky’s response rate is at 66.7%. Union County is sitting good at 67.6%, with Morganfield at 70%, Sturgis at 62.8%, Waverly at 72.6% and Uniontown at 53.3%. All of these have grown since the last time the rates were announced. Nationwide Census workers are out and about. They are also doing a Quality Survey, which is just to make sure your information is correct. Don’t be alarmed if you are visited again, because even if you have already completed the Census you may have been randomly selected to complete the Quality Survey as well. Once again, these workers are local and will have a form of identification. The Census has started their mobile assistance program, where Census workers will be available to help people with filling out their survey, in person at a specified location. COVID-19 guidelines will be followed, such as, social distancing and wearing a mask. Melissa is going to make some suggestions on where these locations are set up at, with Uniontown being first on her list. She reminded everyone of how important it is to fill the Census out because these numbers help with federal funding, economic development, healthcare and so many other things.

Magistrate Floyd expressed his Thanks to Mike and his crew at the Road Department for their work on completing a big project that has been in the process for months and for getting the roadside mowing done as fast as they are able to. He also reminded everyone about the Drive-thru St. Agnes Picnic on Saturday, September 12th. Rib sales will start at 9a.m. with the rest of the meat being sold at 11a.m.


Magistrate Byrnes just wanted to express his Thanks to Mike and all at the Road Department for the Great job they are doing.

Magistrate Clements wanted to express his Thanks to Governor Beshear and his administration for the CARES Act money our County is to receive.

With there being no further business to come before the Court, a motion to adjourn was made by Magistrate Wyatt, seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried.



Fiscal Court Clerk
Kim Nance



Adam O'Nan
County Judge/Executive