

UNION COUNTY FISCAL COURT MEETING  
January 25, 2022

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

The meeting opened 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 a regular meeting with Judge Executive Adam O’Nan presiding. The Union County Fiscal Court met in the upstairs Courtroom. Magistrates present were Wyatt, Floyd, Ricketts, Byrnes and Clements.

Union County Water District Board member, Andrew Arnold, along with Morganfield Mayor, Randy Greenwell and a couple of other City of Morganfield employees came before the Court to ask for their assistance to make some much needed improvements to our county water system that the EPA and the Division of Water are requiring them to make for better water quality. Andrew said that they started out having to meet TTA requirements, but they were not in compliance. No one in the state was in compliance. Four years ago, in stage one, they partnered up with the City of Morganfield and put in an injection system which brought them up to compliance but did not remedy all the problems. Now, in stage two, they are having to meet HAA requirements, which is very expensive and has many regulations that are very difficult to meet without a Ferric Chloride System. In September of 2020, Webster County implemented the Ferric Chloride System. In August, before the system was put in, Webster County tested and their HAA’s were at .087 and you’re allowed a .06. Their TTHM’s were .113 and you’re allowed a .08. In September, after they put the system in, they ran the test again and their HAA’s went from a .087 down to a .081 and their TTHM’s went from a .113 down to a .0829, bringing them into compliance. The County Water District and the City of Morganfield had Roaring River Consultants out of Tennessee run a test for them in August, 2021 and their results were cut in half, with their HAA’s going from a .084 to a .04 and their TTHM’s from a .081 to a .068. He stated that it is going to be expensive with the parts costing around \$73,000. After having an Engineering Firm come in and assess the project, they were told that they would have to have a structure to house the injection system in, which is an added expense, along with consultant fees on top of that for a year of training. Judge O’Nan said that this is a very important project, that it would benefit the entire county and we would be able to use Coal Severance Funds for this. Shawn Martin, Manager of the City of Morganfield’s Water Department, gave a ballpark figure of needing \$125,000 to \$135,000 from the county to help with the funding. Magistrate Clements made a motion to approve the county committing \$125,000 of Coal Severance funds to assist in the funding of this project, seconded by Magistrate Wyatt, motion carried.

Jailer, Jason Newton presented his 2021 Jail report to the Court. He stated that during the calendar year, from 1/1/21 to 12/31/21 there were 825 new arrest transports, 299 court transports,

290 court documents served, totaling 62,749 miles, with the State reimbursement for mileage totaling \$9,143. The 2021-2022 Fiscal year status report showed that there were 456 new arrest transports, 189 court transports, 122 court documents served totaling 31,690 miles, with the State reimbursement for mileage totaling \$4,459.78.

From a graph that he had drawn up you could see a drastic increase from 2020 to 2021 in the number of county inmates that were housed. Jason explained that the decrease in the number of county inmates housed in 2020 was due to the pandemic, causing the Supreme Court of Kentucky to issue a general order to the courts, stating that if a non-violent offender was arrested, the courts were to turn them loose. Numbers started increasing in May, 2021, topping out at 60 in November.

His average daily county inmate population by year shows those numbers as:

- In 2018-30.25
- In 2019-29.42
- In 2020-25.58
- In 2021-42.67

The 2021-2022 Fiscal year number to date was 51.

He also listed arrests by agency by year;

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
UCSO	312	265	236	424
M'FIELD PD	160	187	122	88
STURGIS PD	10	17	7	146
U'TOWN PD	8	18	14	0
KSP	59	82	52	122
OTHER	36	33	23	45
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>825</b>

Increase/decrease by percentage from 2019:

- UCSO: +60%
- M'FIELD PD: -53%
- STURGIS PD: +759%
- KSP: +49%
- OTHER: +36%

**Total percentage of increase from arrests from 2019: +37%**

Jailer Newton noted that the increase in the number of arrests made in the county doesn't necessarily mean that crime has gone up, but because some departments are now fully staffed, such as Sturgis and the Sheriff's Department, they are able to be more pro-active. With this being no slight whatsoever, Judge O'Nan said that it is important to note that we no longer have KSP

coverage on 24hrs. due to their department being short staffed and our Sheriff's Department has picked up that slack. Jailer Newton pointed out that because the City of Uniontown no longer has an active police department, the Sheriff's Department is now covering for them, as well.

Magistrate Clements asked if Newton had any comment on whether or not the inmates were going to be allowed to help out in the county like they use to with roadside trash pickup, mowing and various other jobs. Newton replied that he is very hesitant to go into depth about this because he knows it's a concern of the Court since there are so few inmates helping with trash pickup and with mowing season quickly approaching. He has talked to Webster County Jailer Sauls about inmates and they just don't have the inmates to give us. He said that one thing he is working on right now is a Community Service Program that he is going to start and administer here in Union County. Through this program, he will not be using inmates, but defendants of District Court, that instead of giving them jail time or fines, the Judge will give them community service hours which would allow them to be able to come out and do the jobs previously done by inmates. Depending on the success of the program, they may be able to not need the inmates any longer, only time will tell. He also noted that people who are serving community service hours are not held to the same standards or restrictions as inmates, making it easier on all involved.

Community Service used to be a big thing in the county but it got to where no one wanted to deal with the administrative side of things. Jailer Newton said that he would happily take care of that because he knows it would be helping the county out. Judge O'Nan said that Webster County is using a lot of inmates in Providence, Clay and all of their cities on a daily basis but after meeting with Judge Henry and the Jailer and reminding them how much money Union County is contributing for inmate housing, they assured him that once COVID slows down, we would receive more help. He said that this is not to take away from Jailer Newton's program, he thinks it's a wonderful idea and any way the County can be of help, or write letters of recommendation or whatever he needs from his office, he will find a long line of support.

Magistrate Clements then asked if any progress had been made on setting the Jailer's salary. Judge O'Nan said that as he stated two meetings ago, this will be done at the first meeting in February

The Judge then presented the Emergency Management Yearly Agreement for the Grant Portal. This is done every year. It's for 2021 EMA Program Funds in the amount of \$3million, reminding everyone that it does not mean that Union County will get \$3million but that we can vie for these \$3million grants. Magistrate Floyd made a motion approving for Judge O'Nan to be able to sign this agreement, seconded by Magistrate Byrnes, motion carried.

Judge O'Nan said that after the committee, made up of himself, Magistrate Ricketts, Magistrate Wyatt, Road Supervisor Tony Ratley and Lead Mechanic Jerry Dempsey held interviews, they recommend that the Court hire Dalton Rudder at \$15.50 per hour for the heavy equipment operator at the Road Department. Magistrate Ricketts made a motion to approve the

hiring of Dalton Rudder at \$15.50 per hour for the heavy equipment operator at the Road Department, seconded by Magistrate Byrnes, motion carried.

The same committee then recommended that the Court hire Justin Mosley at \$16 per hour for the mechanic position at the Road Department. Magistrate Wyatt made a motion to approve the hiring of Justin Mosley at \$16 per hour for the mechanic position at the Road Department, seconded by Magistrate Byrnes, motion carried.

The Judge then brought before the Court, Maintenance Supervisor "Coach," Ray Steward's recommendation to hire Mark Mills at \$15.50 per hour for the maintenance assistant position. Magistrate Floyd made a motion to hire Mark Mills at \$15.50 per hour for the maintenance assistant, seconded by Magistrate Ricketts. When asked if there were any questions, Magistrate Clements wanted to know if applications had been taken and was this position advertised for. Judge O'Nan replied that it had not. He said that because it was a specific job that was being filled, he let Coach make the recommendation. Magistrate Clements said that he has all the respect in the world for Coach and is not questioning his recommendation, but it has always been his policy that when a position needed to be filled, you advertised, took applications and interviewed for it, keeping it transparent and letting people know that the position is open if they want to apply. Judge O'Nan noted that only one of the applicants for the Road Department openings, learned about the job through the advertisement the others learned by word of mouth. All voted in favor except Magistrate Clements who voted no because of the process. Motion carried.

At the recommendation of Road Supervisor, Tony Ratley, Judge O'Nan asked the Court to raise Chase Hooper's salary to \$15.50 per hour. Chase was hired in as a general laborer and has worked his way up to an operator. He's the only one who operates the grater blade. Magistrate Ricketts made a motion to raise Chase Hooper's salary as an operator to \$15.50 per hour, seconded by Magistrate Byrnes, motion carried.

Claims are to be paid as presented.

Judge O'Nan said that Discretionary Funds for Ben Ladd Road in the amount of \$14,411 and \$11,760 were approved and we would be receiving the paper work shortly.

He was invited to the School Board Meeting and read a Proclamation declaring January as "School Board Month."

He said that shortly after Court he will be leaving for Frankfort & Lexington to attend the Judge's Reception with Legislators this evening and tomorrow, he along with several coal judges have appointments with some of the Legislators in person at the Capitol as well. He also has a meeting with the Governor's Senior Advisor, Rocky Adkins asking for help with nursing shortages.

He stated that he heard something on the radio regarding the numbers on the Census and he wanted to remind everyone that all of the data is not in yet. He clarified that the County lost a

little under 1,000 people, and that the vast majority was because around 800 Job Corp students had to leave due to COVID.

Magistrate Wyatt asked if any new jobs were coming to the county. Judge O’Nan said that a manufacturing entity is purchasing the Nutrien building to refurbish large tires. At this time there will be no additional jobs but they are hoping to add up to 25 in the next five years.

He wanted to know if any progress had been made on getting internet service to the rural areas in the county. The Judge said that he received a letter from Jeff Hahn with Kenergy yesterday, stating that at this time it is at the PSE for the public hearing part. Some of the trouble is that we have bigger businesses like Comcast who have no intention of providing internet to rural Kentucky. Taking it in another direction, Judge O’nan said that from the Coal Severance money we receive every year, Legislators typically take a significant amount off the top to be used for Debt Service. In the Governors Budget for this year, Governor Beshear suggests that all Debt Service be paid out of the General Fund not the Coal Severance Fund. This means that we will receive around \$10million a year and because of this we can use the money to provide high speed, wired fiber internet to Union County. Judge O’Nan has talked to the ones who have done the projections and has the map showing what Union County would look like with this internet and he said it can be done in a year. That’s what he’s advocating for in his meetings tomorrow. He and Webster County Judge Executive, Steve Henry have had conversations and they’ve requested information on Hopkins, Webster and Union County so that they will have a united effort and can approach this issue at a different angle, when the time comes. He said that the best way to get people out of the urban flee and into Union County is to have high speed internet, not to mention how badly it’s needed with all the NTI being done due to COVID. Magistrate Clements asked what the price tag would be for getting this done to which the Judge responded, around \$9million. He said that the interesting thing about all of this is that we have probably the best at building fiber networks, maybe in the country and guarantees the best east of the Mississippi River with Ervin Cable and Gary Ervin has seen this happen enough times that once we get a start it will explode.

Magistrate Ricketts said that broadband in Union County is imperative and should be our top priority.

He said that progress is being made on Waller Omer Bridge.

Magistrate Floyd asked Melissa Coker to give an update on our new website. She said that over the last couple of months they have been working on website content, getting information to put on the website from every entity in Union County. The idea is to capture Union County’s quality of life in a web format. They successfully submitted this information in December and currently Granicus is transferring the content onto our website. The website is created but it’s out in cyberspace where no one can see it. It will be pulled out the second week of February for just us to be able to access. This is when the website committee and department heads will be trained

on how to get into the CSM to make changes and edit information. The Go Live date is still set for April 1<sup>st</sup> to launch the website.

Magistrate Floyd noted that it's time to start planning for the County's Spring Cleanup.

Magistrate Byrnes asked if there has been any talk about building a lodge at Moffit Lake. Judge O'Nan said that there hasn't been any talk about a lodge but there has been talk about adding more camping sites for campers and refurbishing the bath houses. County Engineer Sean Sheffer said that they are talking about building an outdoor pavilion that can be used for company picnics, family reunions and things of that nature. Magistrate Ricketts said they are also discussing developing a 5year plan for the development of Moffit Lake.

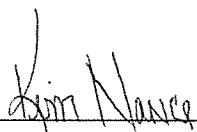
Magistrate Clements asked Sean if any progress had been made in regards to our border with Henderson County to which he replied that he is not getting any cooperation from them.


Morganfield Mayor Randy Greenwell asked if he could address the Court before it adjourned. He just wanted to thank them for agreeing to help with the funding for the upgrade to the County's water system. He said that the cooperation between the county and the city has always been fantastic. He then presented a Key to the City to Judge O'Nan on behalf of the Fiscal Court.

Magistrate Wyatt made a motion for the Court to go into Executive Session for Proposed Litigation per KRS 61.810(1)(c), seconded by Magistrate Floyd, motion carried.

Magistrate Floyd made a motion to go back into regular session, seconded by Magistrate Ricketts, motion carried.

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

  
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Fiscal Court Clerk  
Kim Nance

  
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Adam O'Nan  
County Judge/Executive