

City increases contract with Strand

BY AARON SNYDER
THE DAILY INDEPENDENT

ASHLAND Ashland’s city commission approved a \$1.3 million increase in compensation for engineering services associated with the mandated wastewater treatment plant project.

The commission amended the agreement with Strand Associates from the original contract of nearly \$4 million to “not to exceed \$5,340,000.”

The agreement allows for the addition of post-final design field services — including the provision of record drawings, final completion letter, warranty activities and a completion date of Dec. 31, 2030.

In late July, after Ashland heard bids from five contractors on the project, Strand Associates advocated for Judy Construction. Judy proposed the lowest bid (\$99.7 million).

Other notable items from Tuesday’s 5 p.m. meeting:

- Commissioner Marty Gute led the charge in recognizing Ashland’s 10U Little League softball state championship. Coached by Brad Gillum, Ashland’s 10U All-Stars beat North Laurel, 11-8, in a winner-take-all game at Russell-Flatwoods to collect the state title.
- Mayor Chuck Charles proclaimed July 10, 2025, as “Ashland 10U All-Star Softball Day.”

The roster is as follows: Emma Cannoy (1), Lydia Brammer (2), Sadie Cannoy (6), Adalynn Melkert (7), Lilyana Pick (10), Khloe Freeman (11), Daine Jones-Keith (12), Patton Gillum (14), Blythe Dixon (21), Scarlett Kersey (22) and Brynn Surgalski (23).

Adam Cannoy and Shawn Brammer assisted Gillum.

- Ashland firefighters Tyler Cantrell and Jake Hale earned promotions to Engineer. Both Cantrell and Hale began their AFD careers on Dec. 30, 2013. Five other firefighters were honored for their first year of service during a badge presentation and pinning ceremony Tuesday.
- The commission approved to adopt standard operating procedures for the Ashland Fire Department. The purpose was to establish uniformity across the department, to maintain consistent quality of work and to reduce issues that impact productivity or result in failure to meet applicable standards. The ratification of the union contract and policy changes prompted the adoption.
- Commissioners voted to file a funding application for the Ashland water loss remediation project. If granted, it would bring in \$2 million to fund capital projects for reduction in water loss.

Commissioner DJ Rymer asked Michelle Veach, the city’s finance director, if Ashland has a good

chance at receiving the funds.

“I think we have a very competitive chance,” Veach said. “My understanding is they can be used for multiple reasons, including line replacement, replacement of meters that are close to 15 years old. This is one of the options that the water loss committee has obtained to help with our water loss.”

Veach said the program is statewide, so it’s competitive, but FIVCO is assisting in the process.

- The commission tabled two ordinances pertaining to the city’s 2021 Community Development Block Grant annual action plan amendment to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for approval and implementation.
- In old business, the commission approved upon second reading additional costs attached to the Winchester Avenue streetscape project. One item included \$304,525 in additional funds. For that, the city was awarded \$30,000 in 100% reimbursable federal funds and \$219,620 in 80% reimbursable federal funds. The city’s local match is 20% of \$274,525 which equals \$54,905. The second item included \$274,614 in extra funds. The federal match is \$219,692 and the city’s match is 20%, totaling \$54,922.80.

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Ky. community colleges working to meet students’ ‘severe’ need for mental health support

BY SARAH LADD
KENTUCKY LANTERN

About two-thirds of Kentucky community college students surveyed last year say they have experienced depression or anxiety while 1 in 5 reported engaging in “self-injurious behavior.”

In response, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System is launching a Mental Health Strategy for its roughly 100,000 students.

KCTCS President Ryan Quarles told the Lantern that since taking on his role in 2023, he’s sought to prioritize mental health.

“We know that half of all community college students across the country struggle with

mental health issues, and the report that we see here clearly shows that Kentucky is higher than national averages,” he said. “So, we still have to learn from other states, but the need is very severe right now.”

The largest provider of postsecondary education in the state, KCTCS will educate employees and students about mental health, create a centralized document full of mental health resources for the whole system, develop a peer wellness program in which students can volunteer as mental health ambassadors for those around them, provide staff with trainings on how to spot depression and anxiety in their students and more.

This comes in re-

sponse to a 2024 Healthy Minds Study that showed that in the KCTCS system, 68% of surveyed students had depression and 66% had anxiety. That survey also showed 13% of students who took the survey were at risk of an eating disorder and 20% had already engaged in “self-injurious behavior.”

“We know that our students are facing (a) heightened degree of mental health issues that, probably, previous generations have not faced or is undiagnosed,” Quarles said.

Stressors facing students are numerous, he said: financial and housing concerns, food insecurity, upheaval following back-to-back floods in Eastern Kentucky,

decimation by tornadoes in West and Western Kentucky and more.

Mental health challenges already existed prior to the global pandemic that hit Kentucky in 2020, but “COVID peeled the onion peel off to show how big of an issue this is,” Quarles said.

In 2022 the World Health Organization pointed to “unprecedented stress” during COVID-induced isolation as a key stressor driving worsening mental health. Children who switched to remote schooling also missed social milestones during that time.

KCTCS plans to apply for grant funding to support the mental health efforts, but for now it comes out of the general budget. It’s too soon to say if the system will ask the General Assembly for project-specific funding in 2026, Quarles said.

“I do think that our legislators are aware of the mental health issues of our students,” he said, “and I think it’s come to them both from their constituents ... but also higher ed in general is talking more about this, deservedly so, across the

UKKD Family Pharmacy to open 24/7 soon

STAFF REPORT

ASHLAND The UK King’s Daughters Family Pharmacy will begin 24/7 service for patients and the public Wednesday, Aug. 20, according to a UKKD news release.

The pharmacy’s location is “easily accessible to all parts” of the Ashland campus, including the main entrance and emergency department, according to the hospital’s statement. Visitors may enter the new main entrance to get to the pharmacy at 613 23rd Street, Suite 110.

A new pharmacy drive-thru in Lot E in Ashland will also open Aug. 20 with 24/7 service. Customers can access the drive-thru by entering the parking lot at 24th Street between Bath and Montgomery Avenues.

Prescription drop-offs and pick-ups can occur at all hours, but the family pharmacy’s retail space will be closed from 8 p.m. until 7 a.m. daily. During this time window, prescriptions and over-the-counter items can be picked up at the family pharmacy’s walk-up window or drive-thru.

According to the release, the Meds to Beds patient room free delivery times are the same: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday; and 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bean dinner set for Friday

FLATWOODS

The Flatwoods Lions Club will have a soup bean dinner from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday at the Flatwoods Senior Center.

Deliver is available starting at 3 p.m. Dinners are \$9 and include soup beans, cornbread, fried potatoes, sauerkraut and wieners, diced onions and choice of dessert, including sugar-free banana pudding; beverages will include canned Pepsi, Mountain Dew and Diet Pepsi, as well as bottled water. Extra sides are \$1 each.

A hot dog dinner will be available to children, including a hot dog, bag of chips, drink and dessert for \$6.

Cash or credit/debit cards will be accepted; an additional fee of 50 cents will be charged for using card payment.

Those unable to attend but wish to order, delivery is available by calling (606) 939-3251 before 3 p.m. the day of the event.

Church has back-to-school event

ASHLAND

Unity Baptist Church will have a giveaway of services from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the church at 2329 29th St.

Services will include vision/eyeglass clinic, haircuts (all ages), drive-thru car wash, food bank, toiletry bags, life coaching, health and wellness check, community services assistance and oil changes, which are limited. To register, text OIL to (606) 220-6027.

Phelps tour coming to Danville

DANVILLE

In support of his brand new recording, which releases Aug. 30, multi-Dove and Grammy Award-winning recording artist David Phelps will be featured at 7 p.m. Saturday at the Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, 339 W Lexington Ave.

The Speak of Love Tour stop will feature songs from Phelps’ “Speak of Love” recording.

For more information, visit davidphelps.com.

Staff reports

HOW TO REACH US

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<div><div><div>PUBLIC NOTICE</div><div>NOTICE OF INTENT TO DEMOLISH</div></div><div>The City of Ashland hereby advises, without further notice, that any person or entity claiming ownership of or holding interest or other encumbrances in the property at 924 Prospect Avenue, Ashland, KY 41101 is notified that the structures have been found unsafe and unfit for human habitation or use. Failure to repair, demolish, or obtain a restraining order within thirty (30) days of the publication of this notice will result in the City of Ashland razing and removing all structures. A lien for all associated notification, legal, and demolition expenses will be charged against the real estate. For inquiries, please contact Jacob Risner, Program and Grant Administrator, at (606) 268-0541, jrisner@ashlandky.gov, by mail at PO Box 1839, Ashland, KY 41105, or in person during regular business hours at 1700 Greenup Avenue, Room 208, Ashland, KY 41101. Published: August 14, 2025</div></div>	<div><div><div>PUBLIC NOTICE</div><div>DEMOLITION BID REQUEST</div></div><div>The City of Ashland is currently accepting written bids for the removal of all structures at 934 Prospect Avenue, Ashland, KY 41101. Specifications and requirements may be obtained by contacting Jacob Risner, Program and Grant Administrator, at (606) 268-0541, jrisner@ashlandky.gov, or in person during regular business hours at the Ashland City Building, 1700 Greenup Avenue, Room 208, Ashland, KY 41101. Sealed bids will be received until 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 28, 2025 in the City Clerk’s Office on the fourth floor of the Ashland City Building, 1700 Greenup Avenue, Room 403, Ashland, KY 41101. Bids will be opened and read publicly at 3:05 p.m. on Thursday, August 28, 2025 in the Commissioners’ Chambers on the third floor of the Ashland City Building, 1700 Greenup Avenue, Room 308, Ashland, KY 41101. Published: August 14, 2025</div></div>	<div><div><div>PUBLIC NOTICE</div><div>DEMOLITION BID REQUEST</div></div><div>The City of Ashland is currently accepting written bids for the removal of all structures at 924 Prospect Avenue, Ashland, KY 41101. Specifications and requirements may be obtained by contacting Jacob Risner, Program and Grant Administrator, at (606) 268-0541, jrisner@ashlandky.gov, or in person during regular business hours at the Ashland City Building, 1700 Greenup Avenue, Room 208, Ashland, KY 41101. Sealed bids will be received until 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 28, 2025 in the City Clerk’s Office on the fourth floor of the Ashland City Building, 1700 Greenup Avenue, Room 403, Ashland, KY 41101. Bids will be opened and read publicly at 3:05 p.m. on Thursday, August 28, 2025 in the Commissioners’ Chambers on the third floor of the Ashland City Building, 1700 Greenup Avenue, Room 308, Ashland, KY 41101. Published: August 14, 2025</div></div>
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