

# Harlan council hears flood damage update

BY JOE ASHER

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The Harlan City Council met recently for the regular meeting for April, hearing updates on various issues including a washed-out sewer line caused by flooding in February and the status of multiple downtown buildings.

Harlan City Mayor Joe Meadors called the meeting to order and brought the panel up to speed on multiple matters within the city.

"About 2 weeks after that heavy rain event we had in February, we discovered that at Rosspoint, high water had washed out our sewer line," Meadors said. "The flow of the water just completely ripped it out and we had to have that fixed."

Meadors told the council the city has applied for funds to cover the expense.

"We've applied and we've been given preliminary approval that it will be reimbursed by FEMA," Meadors said. "Of course, we had to pay for it up front to get it fixed, we couldn't wait. Tim Akins with Akins contracting out of Corbin brought his boring machine here and they bored underneath the river and underneath the road and everything was fixed."

Meadors advised the council the repair left the sewer line in better condition than before the incident. He also provided some information on an ongoing sewer repair project.

"The replacement of the main pump line from Huff edition to the old sewer plant in Baxter is about 95 percent complete," Meadors said. "The only thing holding it up is there's just a little bit of dressing to do with the earth work and he's got to do some paving when the black top plant on Sukey

Ridge opens up."

Meadors said the project should be completed approximately 6 weeks before the originally expected June completion date.

Meadors then brought up a property on Main Street on which the city has taken legal action to have repaired.

"You did see his (City Attorney Scott Lisenbee) email to me concerning the property on Main Street," Meadors said. "We went to court to force them to clean it up, and of course their response to that was they didn't have the money to fix it."

According to Meadors, the city then began a court action.

"We even went so far as the court appointed three commissioners to appraise the property," Meadors said. "All they've done so far is clean up the canopy, and it looked pretty problematic when they tore it off,

but at least it's down to the metal. They've got an architect working on putting a new roof on. That's all we ever wanted was for it to be fixed, be presentable, and maybe get some more tenants in there and maybe help our downtown area...at least we're moving in the right direction."

Meadors also mentioned the former J.J. Newberry's location in downtown Harlan.

"We've got somebody interested in that," Meadors said. "We don't have a dog in that fight legally, because we don't own the property...but there is somebody that has expressed interest, we'll see how that develops."

Meadors additionally provided an update on the former Belk's location in downtown Harlan.

"I think they're just waiting on some more grant money to finish up their fire suppression system," Meadors said.



City of Harlan Mayor Joe Meadors talks to the council during the Harlan City Council's recent meeting. (Photo by Joe Asher)

## Ball releases audit of Harlan County Sheriff's tax settlement

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

State Auditor Allison Ball released the audit of the sheriff's settlement - 2023 taxes for Harlan County Sheriff Chris Brewer. State law requires the auditor to annually audit the accounts of each county sheriff. In compliance with this law, the auditor issues two sheriff's reports each year: one reporting on the audit of the sheriff's tax account, and the other reporting on the audit of the fee account used to operate the office.

Auditing standards require the auditor's letter to communicate whether the sheriff's settlement presents fairly the taxes charged, credited, and paid in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The sheriff's settlement is prepared on the regulatory basis, which is described in the auditor's opinion letter. Regulatory basis reporting for the sheriff's settlement is an acceptable report-

ing methodology, and this reporting methodology is followed for all 120 sheriff settlements in Kentucky.

The sheriff's financial statement fairly presents the taxes charged, credited, and paid for the period September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2024 in conformity with the regulatory basis of accounting.

The auditor noted no instances of noncompliance. The auditor also noted no matters involving internal control over financial reporting and its operation that were considered material weaknesses.

The sheriff's responsibilities include collecting property taxes, providing law enforcement, and performing services for the county fiscal court and courts of justice. The sheriff's office is funded through statutory commissions and fees collected in conjunction with these duties.

The audit report can be found on the auditor's website.

## Obituaries

Obituaries are placed online at HarlanEnterprise.net on a timely basis, as they are received. Review current listings, archives or place an obituary at HarlanEnterprise.net/category/obituaries

Deadline for print publication:

Wednesday publication deadlines Tuesday, 10 am EST

### DEATH NOTICES

Barry Lynn Carmical, 75, of Coldiron, died April 14, 2025.

Amy Epperson Sanders, 51, of Loyall, died April 14, 2025.

Juanita Jeanette Simpson Harber, 89, of Rose Hill, Va., formerly of Wallins, died April 14, 2025.

Hazel Howard, 83, of Pathfork, died April 15, 2025.

Arthur Brock, 67, of Putney, died April 17, 2025.

Rodney Sellers, 76, of Harlan, died April 17, 2025.

Maymie Helen Vaughn, 72, of Evarts, died April 20, 2025.

## FEMA extends individual assistance deadline for homeowners and renters

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

Kentucky homeowners and renters who suffered uninsured or underinsured damage to their property from the February Severe Storms, Flooding and Straight-line winds now have a few weeks left to apply for federal disaster assistance. FEMA has extended the application deadline to Monday, May 25, 2025.

FEMA assistance for individuals affected by the severe weather can cover rental assistance, temporary housing, home repairs, personal property losses and other disaster-related needs not covered by insurance. FEMA grants do not have to be repaid. FEMA assistance is nontaxable and will not affect eligibility for Social Security, Medicaid or other federal benefits.

Survivors are encouraged to file insurance claims for damage to their homes, personal property and vehicles be-

fore they apply for FEMA assistance. FEMA Individual Assistance cannot duplicate insurance benefits or other sources of assistance.

To apply with FEMA:

■ Go online at DisasterAssistance.gov (fastest option);

■ Use the FEMA App (available at the Apple App Store or Google Play);

■ Call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. If you use a relay service, such as Video Relay Service (VRS), captioned telephone, or other service, give FEMA your number for that service.

■ Visit a Disaster Recovery Center. For locations: DRCLocator.

Disaster Recovery Centers are physically accessible to people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. They are equipped with assistive technology and other resources to help ensure all applicants can access resources.

### Salute To Your SPECIAL GRADUATE!

**Parents, grandparents, friends, take advantage of this opportunity to recognize that special graduate.**

Harlan Enterprise will publish photos of your favorite seniors in the 2024 edition of the annual graduation section (3X5 Ad) for only \$25

**Deadline: Friday, May 16, 2025**

All you need to do is email your pictures and information to: **lisa.black@middlesboronews.com** Or mail pic and information to **PO Box 2658 Middlesboro, KY 40965** or stop by the Middlesboro News office at **516 N. 15th St. Middlesboro, KY 40965**

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# Harlan Enterprise

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