



# Middlesboro News

## Council approves budget, keeps same property tax rates

BY JAY COMPTON  
jay.compton@middlesboronews.com

The Middlesboro City Council approved the first reading of the budget ordinance for fiscal year running from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 during Tuesday's regular meeting. They also approved the ad valorem tax levies, keeping the rates the same at 23.20 cents per \$100 of assessed value on per-

sonal property and 6.90 cents per \$100 of assessed value on real property.

The city's budget projects \$18,494,000 in total revenue and \$18,158,750 in total expenditures during the upcoming fiscal year. It includes \$1,038,000 for administrative expenses, \$2,342,000 for the Police Department, \$2,128,500 for the Fire Department, \$2,064,000 for Ambulance Service, \$3,011,500 for the Sewer

Department, \$798,000 for the Street Department, \$573,000 for Parks & Recreation, \$185,500 for the Pool, \$532,000 for the ABC Fund and \$945,000 for the Sanitation Fund and another \$3,950,750 for general items.

Included in the budget is the annual 1-percent raise for all city employees which takes effect each November.

Council members Brad Cawood and Bill Smith were not

present at Tuesday's meeting. The budget's first reading and both property tax levy ordinances were approved unanimously.

The real property tax ordinance also includes a 0.025% bank franchise and local deposit tax. There is a 2% discount for tax bills paid in full by November. There is a 5% penalty on taxes not paid before January and a 21% penalty on taxes not paid before February.

During his report Police Chief

Petie Gilbert shared that new MPD officer TJ Patterson has successfully completed his field training and is now working a night rotation. Jacob Quillen is two months from being certified as a K-9 handler.

Gilbert told the council his department was currently short on police officers and in the process of trying to get more.

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The group of sponsors and supporters gathered at Tuesday's Levitt AMP artist reveal luncheon raise their glasses to toast the lineup of artists who will be performing during this year's Middlesboro Music Series. (Photo by Jay Compton)

## Lineup revealed for 2025 Levitt AMP Middlesboro Music Series

BY JAY COMPTON  
jay.compton@middlesboronews.com

The lineup for the 2025 Levitt AMP Middlesboro Music Series was revealed on Tuesday during a special luncheon at the Levitt AMP Park.

Downtown Middlesboro's free concert series will run each Thursday starting at 6:30 p.m. from July 24 through September 25. This is the 10th year for the Middlesboro Music Series and the September 25 show will be the 100th concert in the series.

Tuesday's event was presented by Middlesboro Main Street, Bell County Tourism and the Levitt Foundation. It featured special music by Josi J

accompanied by Kaleff Brenson, Kevin Dickson and Mike Hamer, lunch provided by Cater It, and table snacks by Cambron Charcuterie.

Dana Greene served as the host for the event and shared the lineup of artists before leading everyone in a champagne toast.

"I know each year we say this may be the best line up ever and it could be hard to top, but this may just be the best lineup ever," he said. "Thanks to everyone. Enjoy year 10, shows 91 through 100 for the Levitt AMP Middlesboro Music Series."

Here's a look at this year's lineup of headliners and sponsors:

July 24 — Ghost Hounds —

stage sponsor: Shades and LMU, concert sponsor: Sleep Inn

July 31 — MT Jones — stage sponsor: Redmond Auto Group, concert sponsor: First State Bank and Middlesboro Coca-Cola

Aug. 7 — Ally Venable — stage sponsor: Ike's Pizza, concert sponsor: Green Construction, Commercial Bank

Aug. 14 — Pony Bradshaw — stage sponsor: Gizzy's and JammNation, concert sponsor: Mountain Tarp and Barton Family Dentistry

Aug. 21 — Jade Macrae — stage sponsor Turn Key Reality-Dawn Risner and Smithfield Foods, concert sponsor: Bluegrass Transit

See **LEVITT**, on 2

## MPD officer injured during pursuit, one in custody



A police pursuit in Middlesboro ended in a collision near the intersection of South 35th Street and Exeter Avenue on Wednesday afternoon. MPD Sgt. Jeremiah Johnson and the driver of the fleeing vehicle, Jason Bullins, were both transported to Middlesboro ARH for treatment of injuries. (KSP Photo)

### STAFF REPORT

At approximately 12:40 p.m. on June 18, 2025, the Kentucky State Police received a request for assistance from the Middlesboro Police Department regarding multiple individuals injured during a vehicle pursuit that ended in a collision.

The incident took place near South 35th Street and Exeter Avenue in Middlesboro.

According to a release from the KSP, Middlesboro officers were actively pursuing Jason Bullins, who had active parole and burglary warrants. Mr. Bullins fled from law enforcement after initial contact.

During the pursuit, a Middlesboro Police Sgt. Jeremiah Johnson and the operator of the fleeing vehicle (Mr. Bullins) were injured. Both were transported by ambulance to Middlesboro ARH for medical treatment.

The Kentucky State Police is leading the investigation into the collision, while the Middlesboro Police Department is handling the criminal investigation.

After being released from the hospital, Jason Bullins was lodged in the Bell County Detention Center charged with fleeing or evading police - 1st degree (motor vehicle), wanton endangerment - 1st degree, wanton endangerment - 1st degree (police officer), assault - 3rd degree (police officer), buying/possessing drug paraphernalia, possession of controlled substance - 1st offense (Methamphetamine). He was also served with burglary - 2nd degree and parole violation warrants.



Jason Bullins

## Jones appointed superintendent of Middlesboro Schools

**SPECIAL TO THE MIDDLESBORO NEWS**

The Middlesboro Board of Education is proud to announce the appointment of Mr. William "Bill" Jones as the new Superintendent of

Middlesboro Independent Schools, effective July 1, 2025.

Mr. Jones brings over 50 years of combined military and educational leadership experience to this role. He served with distinction in

the United States Army for 20 years, followed by more than three decades in public education, most recently as Principal of Middlesboro Middle School.

Mr. William "Bill" Jones brings a wealth of experience to his new role as Superintendent of Middlesboro Independent Schools, with over a decade of leadership as Principal of Middlesboro Middle School. Throughout his service in this role, he maintained a strong focus on academic excellence, school safety, and fostering meaningful relationships with staff, students, parents, and the community. He has supervised more than 100 teachers, staff, and coaches while overseeing all

academic and operational functions of the school. Mr. Jones was instrumental in integrating STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) into the curriculum, promoting innovative instruction across content areas. In addition to his role as principal, he served four years as District Athletic Director and was instrumental in starting the U. S. Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) at Middlesboro High School, where he oversaw extracurricular programming, technology operations, and budget management. Mr. Jones also contributed extensively to student

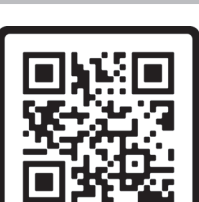
athletics, serving as head coach for track and field and cross country for six years each, and leading the boys' basketball program as head coach for five years after seven years as an assistant coach.

From 1973 to 1993, Mr. Jones served in the United States Army, ultimately attaining the rank of First Sergeant. He was a selectee for the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy. His distinguished military career included assignments as Drill Sergeant, Platoon Sergeant, First Sergeant at the National Training Center (NTC) and Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of G3 Tactical Operations at the Corps level. He managed

large-scale operations and logistics, supervised the health and welfare of over 1,000 soldiers and their families, and oversaw the maintenance of military housing and facilities. His final assignment was as Senior Military Instructor for the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at Carson-Newman University.

He also completed multiple overseas deployments, including a pivotal post with the U.S. Army Berlin Brigade in Germany. His military leadership and logistical experience continue to influence his strategic and disciplined approach to education.

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SCAN ME

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