

# OBITUARIES & NEWS

## OBITUARY

### Mountjoy Joseph "Monty Joe" Lovell

Edgewood

Mountjoy Joseph "Monty Joe" Lovell, 79, the husband of Belinda Elaine Van Winkle Lovell, passed away on July 30, 2025. He was born on November 15th, 1945 in Danville, Kentucky to Joseph Calvin and Dorothy Wilmot Mountjoy Lovell, both of whom preceded him in passing. He was also preceded in death by his father-in-law, Earl George Van Winkle, and brother-in-law, David Van Winkle.

Monty Joe was a retired secondary school educator, coach and administrator with the Richmond City Schools (1968-84) and Grant County Schools (1986-2004).

Monty Joe also served the communities in which he lived. He was a dedicated member of the Richmond Jaycees and was selected as Richmond Jaycee of the Year in 1971. He served as the President for the EKU Alumni Association in the 1980s. In addition to his coaching career, he started a work vocational program at Madison (ICVE) in 1972 and placed several Madison High students in jobs during their junior and senior years at Madison. He was also elected Richmond City Commissioner in 1977 and served six years in that capacity.

Monty Joe was a lifetime and active member of the First United Methodist Church in



Richmond and since 1986, the Williamstown First United Methodist Church. He sang in the Williamstown First United Methodist Choir and served as the church board chairman for 23 years.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Belinda Elaine Van Winkle Lovell; his son Joseph Shawn Lovell (Jamie), his daughter Dawn Leigh Lovell Cochran (Cecil); three grandchildren, Cameron Lovell (Clint), Kennedy Lewis and Savannah Lewis (Spencer), Caitlynn Cochran ; a great granddaughter, Monty Jane; and three siblings, Susan Lovell Brigati (Eddie), Dorothy Ann Lovell, and John Lovell (Donna); Mother-in-Law, Helen Van Winkle and Sister in Law, Marlene Van Winkle Jones; foster brothers Wyatt and Bryan Miller; as well as numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

The pallbearers will be Donnie Ballard, Hubert Broaddus, Ray Desloover, David Gay, Jim Lacey, Velmer Miller, Tod Williams.

Visitation will be Friday August 8, 2025 from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Stanley Funeral Homes - Williamstown. Funeral services will be Saturday August 9th at 11:00 a.m. at Stanley Funeral Homes.

#### MADISON NANTZ STAFF WRITER

What began as an effort to formally charge London Mayor Randall Weddle with misconduct devolved into a heated and inconclusive City Council meeting — with the legality of the vote and whether the resolution will move forward remaining unclear.

The resolution, presented during the council's Monday meeting, alleged multiple violations by Weddle. The discussed resolution proposed holding a public hearing on August 20 to consider removing the mayor from office for misconduct and willful neglect.

Council Member Anthony Ortega moved to amend the regular meeting's agenda to include the proposal, which was read aloud by Acting City Clerk Ashley Taylor.

The charges against Weddle include the following allegations:

- Hired and paid individuals for city positions not formally established or approved by the City Council, violating KRS 83A.0703
- Removed and appointed members of the London Housing Authority in violation of KRS 80.090 and KRS 80.030
- Directed Housing Authority staff to ignore laws and regulations, misused police resources and made inappropriate remarks during city business
- Created a personal police protection detail using city resources
- Falsely asserted city jurisdiction over FEMA contractors working outside city limits
- Failed to meet city residency requirements
- Used a personal media outlet, Laurel County News+, to target a city employee
- Refused to hold regular council meetings without the consent of a majority of council members
- Altered and rejected city contracts without notifying the legislative body
- Improperly released a

## London City Council attempts to bring charges against mayor



Photo by Madison Nantz

**Mayor Randall Weddle** questioned why the council failed to open an investigation prior to the charges.

recorded call between a crime victim and a city police officer.

Council Member Stacy Bengé moved to table the resolution, but it failed to receive a second. Council Member Kelly Greene then moved to vote, seconded by Justin Young. The motion passed with all voting in favor except Bengé.

However, the legality of the vote immediately came into question. Mayor Weddle argued that approval of the full council was required, not just a majority. City Council Attorney Conrad Cessna disagreed, stating that the higher threshold applied only at the hearing stage. City Attorney Larry Bryson maintained that a majority of the full was required to adopt the resolution.

As tensions escalated, TJ Roberts introduced himself as outside legal counsel retained by the council, but was met with loud boos from the crowd. The mayor, pointing out that no public motion had been made to hire Roberts, told him to sit down. Roberts obliged.

Mayor Weddle then accused the council of skipping due process.

"Let's get this on the record — every accusation that you guys have made, you have a due diligence, according to KRS, to start an investigation exploratory subcommittee. How come that has not been done on any of this?" he asked.

attorney for Mayor Weddle, then addressed the council, stating, "I think that Mr. Bryson's recommendation is very well advised. In order to ensure due process, and that the Kentucky Revised Statutes are in fact followed, in such an important situation as the removal and nullification of the vote of the people of London."

Weaver asked Iaccarino whether the resolution required six votes. Iaccarino deferred, replying, "My recommendation is to follow Mr. Bryson's recommendation."

Weaver then asked for the determination of the chair, Mayor Weddle, to which the mayor replied, "I think we're taking the recommendation of the city attorney."

Weaver moved to appeal the decision, which was seconded by Greene, but no vote or discussion followed.

Weddle would go on to adjourn the meeting himself, stating, "The chair has the ability to adjourn a meeting. We're getting nowhere. The chair is adjourning the meeting. The meeting is adjourned."

With that, the mayor and council members dispersed, and the status of the resolution remained unresolved.

The meeting was also marked by community members protesting for justice for Doug Harless — the victim of a December 2024 London Police officer-involved shooting. Protesters have made a point of convening outside the facility whenever the council meets.

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## How to keep Kentucky's 'purple' US House district red?

#### MCKENNA HORSLEY KENTUCKY LANTERN

FANCY FARM — With control of the U.S. House up for grabs next year, U.S. Rep. Andy Barr is urging Kentucky Republicans to put him at the top of the state ticket, saying it would help President Donald Trump's party keep the House seat Barr is vacating.

Not surprisingly one of his Republican rivals for the U.S. Senate disagrees. Daniel Cameron, a former Kentucky attorney general, says the best thing Barr could do to protect Trump and retain GOP control of the U.S. House of Representatives would be to run for reelection in the state's 6th Congressional District.

Republican Senate candidate Nate Morris' campaign declined to comment.

The three leading Republican candidates for Senate are competing for Trump's endorsement in a state the president swept in all three of his runs. With no presidential or governor's race in 2026, the campaigns to succeed retiring U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell will be Kentucky's premier political contest.

Speaking to reporters after the Fancy Farm Picnic in West Kentucky Saturday, Barr said he has "worked really, really hard to lock down" his Central Kentucky congressional district for Republicans. He called it the "one swing purple district in the state."

Home to Lexington and the University of Kentucky, the district has a history of alternating between political parties. Barr was elected to the U.S. House in 2012 when he defeated incumbent Democrat Ben Chandler who had held the seat since a special election in 2004. Before that the seat was held by Republican Ernie Fletcher who won the governor's race in 2003. Fletcher had succeeded Democrat and former Lexington Mayor Scotty Baesler who ran for U.S. Senate and lost to Republican Jim Bunning. The Republican-controlled legislature made the district more favorable to Republicans by removing Democratic-leaning Franklin County after the 2020 census.

Barr said that he has heard Trump "cares very deeply" about the congressional seat through conversations he's had with the White House, Republican U.S. House Speaker Mike

Johnson and Richard Hudson, the chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee. National news outlets have reported that the White House has concerns about retaining control of Barr's congressional seat as Democrats have an edge in registered voters in the district. Plus, the White House has tried to dissuade incumbent House Republicans in swing districts from seeking higher office.




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