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needs. Following discussion, the proposed regulations were deferred. Members also reviewed regulations affecting state licensing boards and the Kentucky Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Government Contract Review: Members reviewed funding requests and contracts from Kentucky agencies and organizations. Testimony was presented on contracts supporting juvenile treatment courts, health care consulting services, and expanded funding for psychiatric facilities across the Commonwealth. During the discussion, members examined contract cost increases, the availability of federal funding, and the need for significant funding requests to ensure taxpayer dollars are used effectively and responsibly.

Information Technology Oversight: Members of the Information Technology Oversight Committee received updates on the future of the KentuckyWired network, the Kentucky Communications Network Authority's ongoing procurement efforts, and broadband expansion initiatives across the Commonwealth. Discussion focused on KentuckyWired governance and funding, the state's strategy for expanding high-speed internet access, opportunities and challenges associated with federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding, and perspectives from technology leaders and internet service providers on meeting

Kentucky's growing connectivity needs. **Tobacco Settlement Agreement Fund Oversight:** Lawmakers received reports from the Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy on projects recently considered for funding by the Agricultural Development Board, including investments supporting Kentucky agriculture, local infrastructure, value-added production, and other initiatives intended to strengthen rural communities.

Legislative Oversight and Investigations: Members examined several issues impacting Kentucky taxpayers, state property management, and veterans. Agenda items include a review of the state's ability to monitor unused and underutilized state-owned properties and the Finance Cabinet's response to prior committee findings; organ donor designation processes on Kentucky driver's licenses; and a historical review of a problem-plagued HVAC replacement project at the Radcliff Veterans Center.

Next week's agenda includes committee meetings on subjects like health services, veterans, economic development, and issues facing Kentucky's children. These meetings will be televised live on the YouTube channel.

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line in Frankfort at 1 (270) 372-7181. You can also contact me via email at shawn.mcpherson@kylegislature.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature's website at legislature.ky.gov.

Knowing Stroke Signs Can Save Lives

EXPERTS SAY DURING AMERICAN STROKE MONTH

Staff Report

The American Stroke Association is encouraging people to learn the warning signs of stroke and act quickly during American Stroke Month in May.

Health experts say rapid treatment is critical because nearly 2 million brain cells die every minute a stroke goes untreated. In rural communities, where emergency response times can sometimes be longer, recognizing symptoms early can make a major difference in recovery and survival.

According to the association, stroke is the fourth-leading cause of death in the United States and a leading cause of long-term disability. About 800,000 Americans experience a stroke each year.

The organization is promoting the acronym "B.E. F.A.S.T." to help people recognize stroke warning signs:

- Balance Loss — sudden trouble walking or dizziness
- Eye Changes — sudden vision loss or trouble seeing
- Face Drooping — one side of the face droops or feels numb
- Arm Weakness — one arm feels weak or drifts downward
- Speech Difficulty — slurred speech or trouble speaking
- Time to Call 911 — seek emergency help immediately

Officials stressed that even if symptoms go away, calling 911 right away can help begin

STROKE
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the plan, and identify projects that already had been addressed. Suggestions could also be given.

"We have worked over the years with a local steering committee in Allen County and Scottsville that covers many different topics centered around quality of life initiatives," explained BRADD Executive Director Eric Sexton. "There's 11 categories that we access and help our communities create goals and objectives. Every five years we are required by the federal government to do a big update to our plans."

This year is such a year. A local steering committee was formed earlier this year to work on reviewing and updating the overall strategic plan. As part of the process, last week's first public

hearing allowed community members the opportunity to look at what's been accomplished locally since 2021 and offer input as to next steps.

"So we are doing two public meetings during this planning cycle in each of our counties," Sexton added. "That way we can meet people where they are and we are seeking their input. We ask, 'what do you want your future to look like in Allen County and Scottsville and how can we (BRADD) support that?' We are not the problem solver but we are an assistant to our communities."

Not only does the process lay the groundwork from which to build, but it puts in place information needed if a community asks BRADD to help secure a grant to meet a need.

"When funding opportunities come around, whether its federal or state grant programs, it gives us the goals and objectives that we can put into grant applications," Sexton explained. "That helps the community. This aligns with BRADD's objective to make life better for the people in the region."

The public hearing last week and any future public hearings will help BRADD finish the new strategic plan—a plan that will be presented to both city and county officials later this year or early in 2027.

"We hope to bring all this in as we look into rewriting and updating this plan for the next five years," Sexton said. "We take this back internally and look at the comments and take everything

into consideration as we draft goals and objectives for the next cycle. This also helps not only Allen County but for the region. Most likely if Allen County has an issue, some other county may have the same issue. It helps identify regional trends."

While BRADD officials gather community information, work continues behind the scenes. Currently, BRADD employs four community development specialists who work directly with city and county governments to secure grants for projects much-needed.

These grant-writers seek out funding to help communities improve infrastructure, upgrade facilities, and improve quality of living for the citizens of the community.

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The meeting was well attended and after Judge-Executive Harper gave his remarks, a lot of questions were asked by those in attendance.

stated Walter Dobring who chaired the open meeting on Tuesday night. "With that, let's give Dennis Harper applause."

Given the national state of both major political parties, it should be noted that seeing Democrats in our community reaching out and giving the time to hear from Judge-Executive Harper concerning something that could potentially effect all of us was wonderful on their part.

"Before I get started, as far as I know, we have not been contacted by anybody about locating data centers in our county," said Harper. "This is a time to prepare for that and that is what we are doing in the fiscal court."

Harper went on to state that "We don't always agree politically. Some of us are Democrats, some of us are Republicans, some of us are Independents. In places like Allen County we understand something important—we are all neighbors first. We attend the same churches, the same schools, the same sporting events. We all shop at the same businesses and when hard times like storms, tragedies, illnesses, economic

struggles, political labels can make matters a whole lot worse. That is the strength of a small community. Good ideas don't belong to one political party and protecting the future of our community should never be partisan.

Whether we are talking about schools, roads, jobs, growth or major industrial development, we have a responsibility to work together, ask hard questions and make decisions that leave Allen County stronger for the next generation."

Judge Harper then went on to describe briefly what data centers are, what they do and why some desire them while others don't want them around. All the while he clarified that, currently, Allen County doesn't have the infrastructure and certainly not an electric grid big enough nor a water supply vast enough to house even a small to medium sized data center.

He insisted though that, in setting a two-year moratorium on big technology companies such as Google, Meta (owners of Facebook and Instagram), Apple or any other company at the forefront of web

services and Artificial Intelligence (AI) development, it will give the community, the fiscal court and other county leaders to hear from citizens and, if necessary, put in ordinances that will protect what we cherish most.

Judge Harper further elaborated, "There are quality of life concerns: Noise from cooling systems, generator testing, security lighting, heavy truck traffic, large industrial buildings changing rural landscapes, loss of farmland, pressure on infrastructure. For some people, these concerns may seem small. But for families living nearby, they are very real. Once farmland is converted or rural character changes, there is rarely a way to undo it. That is why these decisions deserve caution."

Along with not having the infrastructure in place to support even one small to mid-sized data center, Judge Harper admitted that, outside the city limits of Scottsville, there are no county-wide zoning ordinances. That singular point raised some of the biggest concerns from the crowd that was gathered.

One gentleman took that to mean that the

issue of data centers is just a "smoke screen" of sorts in order to get county-wide zoning put in place so that "the government can control what I want to do on my property."

Judge Harper though emphatically insisted that there will be several instances over the course of the next two years for citizens of Allen County to speak with their magistrates, attend zoning board meetings, do some research and make their views known to their county representatives.

When asked when all these meetings would be taking place, it was stated that all public meetings and hearings are announced in the local paper, The Citizen-Times and stated on the local radio station. It came out a short time later that only a relative few who were attending the meeting actually have a subscription or otherwise buy the paper.

Yet the bigger issue is without strong zoning ordinances in place, land becomes a commodity to be bought up and used for whatever purpose. Should that happen, citizens lose their say.

Just over the course of **DATA**
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