

Fiscal,

— Continued from Page One



Eugenia Ferguson, inset, reacted as County Judge-Executive Luke King presented the Kentucky Colonel certificate she has been awarded for her long service to the county and the important difference that has meant to the county’s finances.

Photo by Greg Wells

prerequisite that had not been completed before the current administration took office.

Emergency Management Director Greg Cary said the matter had been discussed previously. District 2 Magistrate Lane Cope noted that the demand involved one site and that additional repayments would follow. King agreed, but no total for any additional repayments was given.

The court approved paying the amount requested. This is part of the million-dollar-plus payback the magistrates opted for at a special called meeting, rather than having to make the repairs previously agreed to for disaster funds.

Despite that setback, King and Cary expressed optimism about work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Kentucky Emergency Management on the county’s more recent flood recovery. County employees and magistrates have been helping document road damage, and King said improved communication and timely responses would be essential to keeping projects moving.

Finance office transition approved

Eugenia Ferguson was recognized as a Kentucky Colonel for her decades of service to Cumberland County. Following a closed session for personnel discussion, King announced that she plans to retire effective Jan. 1.

She stressed that she began working there when she was three years old, eliciting laughter from the audience.

The court approved King’s recommendation to bring Isaac Allen on full time for training

beginning as early as Oct. 13, with an annual salary of \$30,000 during the training period. Allen is to become finance officer Jan. 1, with his salary increasing to \$40,000 upon completion of training.

At present, Allen, a Cumberland County native, is working with the Lake Cumberland Area Development District.

King emphasized the importance of preserving Ferguson’s work reviewing and repricing inmate medical bills. He said nearly \$71,000 in bills received during July and August had been reduced to less than \$16,000 through Ferguson’s process.

“That position will pay for itself multiple times over so long as we continue to get this right,” King said.

The approved recommendations also move part-time employee Emmalee Fulton for cross-training, with a \$2-per-hour increase effective Jan. 1 tied to additional duties. King said Evan Stotz would also be cross-training in the medical repricing work.

In a separate personnel action, the court authorized King to hire a part-time custodial employee at \$14 per hour for 20 hours or less per week following a resignation.

Food storage selected as grant priority

Magistrates voted to make expanded cold storage at the annex a priority for a potential Appalachian Regional Commission grant. The court agreed to provide a dollar-for-dollar match, if necessary, for a grant of up to \$50,000.

King proposed a large freezer, potentially one large enough to drive into, to support the county’s growing Retail

Rescue food program. The project would be pursued for next year and remains dependent on grant approval.

The county is collecting food through partnerships with three Dollar General stores and hopes to add a larger retail partner. King said eight refrigerators or freezers are already in use at the annex, with a local grocery providing temporary overflow storage when needed.

More capacity could allow the county to accept larger donations, including meat and other perishable foods.

King said Retail Rescue distributions are not income-based, unlike USDA commodity distributions, creating an opportunity to help more county residents with grocery costs.

Stotz reported that the program had not missed any pickups. King said maintaining that record is important to securing additional partners.

Building repairs and water projects discussed

The court approved using local contractors to repair flood damage at the annex after King reported that the county’s insurer would permit that approach.

Work at the Justice Center remains delayed while officials await action through the Administrative Office of the Courts on an inspection of drains beneath the building. King said identifying drainage problems is necessary to prevent future flooding from damaging replacement flooring.

Officials are also seeking approval for contractors to work beyond regular daytime hours and on holidays. King said an earlier

estimate of completing repairs by the end of December had assumed work would begin in August, but major reconstruction had not started.

Water District Manager Michael Ballard reported progress on several projects, including a planned upgrade from a one-inch to a three-inch waterline along Rich Williams Road to address pressure problems. He said that project would not require a new loan.

Ballard said most remaining waterline installation in the Marrowbone area could be finished within about two weeks, although creek bores were progressing more slowly because of hard rock.

A new pump station on South Ky. 61 is expected to arrive around late December. Ballard said the district hopes to have the foundation and connecting infrastructure ready before delivery.

The station is intended to improve supply reliability in an area now dependent on water purchased from Albany. Ballard said the roughly \$1 million project is financed at 1% interest over 20 years, with its cost already accounted for in the district’s previous rate increase.

Ordinance changes, vehicle purchase approved

The court gave final approval to amendments to the county’s

alcoholic beverage control ordinance.

King said the changes eliminate future carry-over of unused license-fee credits and address a gap in how regulatory fees apply to sales. The ordinance also corrects an inconsistency in its wording to reflect the 5% regulatory fee the county has been using.

King said the carry-over change would apply at the end of the current year, without changing current-year operations.

Magistrates also approved purchasing a replacement vehicle for ABC Officer Junior Smith using ABC funds, contingent on confirming that the proposed dealer qualifies for purchasing without a separate bid process. Otherwise, King said the purchase would be bid.

The vehicle’s price was not stated in the meeting discussion.

Road needs and other business

Road Supervisor Ricky Melton identified a replacement dump truck as his department’s most pressing equipment need during a discussion of aging trucks and mowing tractors.

King said the county needs to plan for an equipment purchase in the next budget year, but cannot afford both a truck and a tractor. No purchase was approved.

Officials reported that mowing crews had completed a pass

through all four districts and were beginning another round. Melton said flood response had pulled workers away from mowing for about two months.

The court also held a first reading on a proposal to close roughly 255 feet of Albany Loop Road No. 1 in District 2. King said the proposal would be advertised before a second reading at a future meeting. No final closure was approved.

Magistrates approved a \$45,000 transfer from the general fund to the jail fund. King cited inmate medical expenses as a major reason for the additional funding.

The court also authorized King to proceed with a revised splash pad agreement with the City of Burkesville allowing a capped first-year contribution toward water costs. King said the city attorney was still preparing the agreement.

Animal Control Officer Danny Groce reported 32 dogs at the shelter and encouraged residents to consider adoption. King recognized Groce for being named the 2026 Animal Control Officer of the Year.

King also praised high school Civics Club members who spent three days of their high school fall break learning about county operations, touring facilities, participating in a mock debate and working through emergency-response simulations.

10/15/26

Super Crossword

BROTHERLY POSSESSIONS

ACROSS

- 1 Unsettles
- 9 Beginning of a process
- 16 Opposed to
- 20 Woman from Madrid's land, to Madrid natives
- 21 Relatives of grapefruits
- 22 Cut of beef
- 23 Start of riddle #1
- 25 Pea holders
- 26 Kyoto coin
- 27 Actress Longoria
- 28 Astern
- 29 Diameter halves
- 30 Middle of riddle #1
- 37 Star of "10"
- 40 Foe of Spinks
- 41 Most polar
- 42 End of riddle #1
- 48 Second-rate
- 49 Suffix with glob or duct
- 50 Spicy
- 51 V-shaped cut
- 55 Hand-talking syst.
- 56 90 degrees from norte
- 58 Intend to do
- 61 Great sorrow
- 62 "That's it!"

DOWN

- 65 Answer to riddle #1
- 69 Humility
- 72 Mensa stats
- 73 Performs in front of
- 74 Start of riddle #2
- 79 Casino stake
- 80 Flaky dessert
- 81 Unit of a sentence
- 82 Tell — story (try to evoke sympathy)
- 84 Undergrad degs.
- 87 Drinking aid
- 90 Part of ENT
- 91 Actress Ortiz
- 92 Actor Skeet or drummer Lars
- 95 Middle of riddle #2
- 100 Warship fleet
- 103 "I'll take that as —"
- 104 Civil War general
- 105 End of riddle #2
- 111 Kicked in seed money
- 112 Bottom line
- 113 Chum
- 114 Crunches work them
- 117 Injure badly

ACROSS

- 118 Answer to riddle #2
- 125 Hotel chain
- 126 Greek
- 127 Ate lunch or dinner
- 128 Former rival of Nintendo
- 129 Tranquil and carefree
- 130 "Yes, it's true, alas"

DOWN

- 1 Course for U.S. immigrants
- 16 "Scarface" star
- 17 Strip of pasta
- 18 Neatens up
- 19 Refuse to yield
- 24 Pappy
- 29 Puerto —
- 30 Te — (giggles)
- 31 Municipal laws: Abbr.
- 32 Yeshiva teacher
- 33 Scarce
- 34 Styled after
- 35 Victory
- 36 Fruit drink brand
- 37 — Raton
- 38 Avian hooters
- 39 Genetic structure with "rungs" of base pairs
- 43 Novel writer, e.g.: Abbr.
- 44 Pooch pest
- 45 Gabfest
- 46 Charged atoms
- 47 Sink as low as
- 52 Drill attachments with spiraling grooves

ACROSS

- 53 Paint layer
- 54 Sub in a deli
- 57 Reaping tools
- 58 Arouse
- 59 Misplaced
- 60 Pittsburgh Steelers' org.
- 63 Whack down
- 64 Burning residue
- 66 Waterways, to Mexicans
- 67 "— Four" (Beatles)
- 68 Dark deli bread
- 69 Atlas features
- 70 Handling the matter
- 71 Strike gently
- 75 Part of UAE
- 76 Uncovered
- 77 Sharp pain
- 78 Morales in movies
- 83 Horn for taps
- 85 Nagging pain
- 86 "— Out of My League"
- 88 The universe of universities
- 89 Walked through water
- 91 After a while
- 93 Distance unit in astron.
- 94 Optimistic
- 96 Road gunk

DOWN

- 97 On the — (escaping)
- 98 Yoko of art
- 99 Roast that may include chopped cashews or almonds
- 100 Los —, New Mexico
- 101 Title anew
- 102 Beating at chess
- 106 When many a driver stops
- 107 Touchy —
- 108 To any extent
- 109 Jungle beast
- 110 Sister of Malia Obama
- 114 On a mattress, say
- 115 Squeezing snakes
- 116 WWII battle site in Normandy
- 118 X, to Greeks
- 119 — Aviv
- 120 Kin of mono-
- 121 — room (Ping-Pong place)
- 122 Prez #32
- 123 Car club initis.
- 124 Stat involving wt. and ht.

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