

What to know as the World Cup prepares to kick off

BY DAVID BRANDT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

After years of preparation, a supersized World Cup has

finally arrived. This year's tournament — which is hosted by the U.S., Canada and Mexico — was expanded to 48 teams that will play in 16 stadiums in a record

104 matches over the 39-day tournament. Mexico gets the World Cup started Thursday and will be a heavy favorite when it hosts South Africa in Mexico City.

The second game of the day will be between South Korea and the Czech Republic in Guadalajara, Mexico. All four teams are part of Group A. Canada and the United States

will host their first games Friday. The Canadians will play Bosnia-Herzegovina in Toronto while the Americans

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SQUAD

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anything.”

Tyler Adams, the captain in 2022 and the team's top defensive midfielder, sees the goal as to go as far as any team has before.

“It's just been a while, I feel like, since we've knocked off a big boy,” he said. “I think we need to try and find that in our character and I think that we will.”

U.S. HAS WON ONLY ONE WORLD CUP KNOCKOUT GAME

Dreams and reality have collided for the U.S. in the World Cup. The Americans are 1-7 in World Cup knockout games, their only win over regional rival Mexico in 2002 before a quarterfinal loss to Germany.

Since then, they lost in the round of 16 in 2010, 2014 and 2022, failed to advance from the group stage in 2006 and didn't even qualify for 2018.

Despite the lack of pedigree, Pochettino told players in March they can win the title.

“Why not us? Why not us? Why not us?” he said. “We need to really believe that we can be there. We need to dream.”

ONLY A HANDFUL OF PLAYERS ON TOP EUROPEAN CLUBS

Pulisic in 2021 became the first American to play in and win a European Champions League final, helping Chelsea to the title. He is one of six American World Cup-bound players on clubs ranked among the top 40 by UEFA coefficient, spending the past three seasons with No. 30 AC Milan.

That list includes midfielder Malik Tillman (No. 9 Bayer Leverkusen), midfielder Weston McKennie (No. 25 Juventus), defender Sergiño Dest and forward Ricardo Pepi (No. 26 PSV Eindhoven) and defender Alex Freeman (No. 39 Villarreal).

DECLINE OF AMERICAN GOALKEEPERS

Goalkeeper, once an American strength with Kasey Keller, Brad Friedel and Tim Howard all starting for English teams, is now a weakness. This will mark the first time a Major League Soccer goalkeeper appears for the U.S. at a World Cup.

“Goalkeeping is definitely a concern,” said former

American midfielder Stu Holden, now a Fox commentator. “We haven't had a standout goalkeeper now for a number of years, but yet you have an opportunity to change the perception of who you are by one tournament.”

Matt Freese, the likely starter, made his international debut last June and has just 15 appearances. “Not really, not really


listening to anyone outside of the guys with me and the coaching staff,” he said.

HOME FIELD CROWD ADVANTAGE FOR A CHANGE

The U.S. team often plays home games in front of crowds with a majority cheering on the opponent, which happened during games against Colombia,

Guatemala, Mexico, Morocco, South Korea and Turkey.

“Americans are some type of fans that show out and show up for the big things even if they don't love soccer,” McKennie said. “Any big event, we know how to put on a show and we know to show up, so I think it's a huge advantage.”



LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

The second reading and adoption of the Hopkins County proposed budget ordinance for fiscal year 2026-2027 is scheduled to be held at Hopkins County Government Center on Tuesday, June 30 at 10 a.m.

BUDGET SUMMARY

AN ORDINANCE Relating to the Annual Budget and Appropriations.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE FISCAL COURT OF HOPKINS COUNTY, KENTUCKY:

WHEREAS, the proposed budget was tentatively approved by the Fiscal Court on the 19th day of May, 2026, and approved as to form and classification by the State/Local Finance Officer on the 27th day of May, 2026:


SECTION ONE. The following budget is adopted for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 and the amounts stated below are appropriated for the purposes indicated.

(01) General Fund		
General Government	\$9,010,467	
Protection to Persons and Property	719,252	
General Health and Sanitation	900	
Social Services	0	
Recreation and Culture	0	
Debt Service	200	
Capital Projects	100	
Administration	0	
General Services	3,106,755	
Contingent Appropriations	7,247,290	
Fringe Benefits	2,938,840	
Other Government Agencies	1,000	
Total	23,024,804	
(02) Road Fund		
Transportation Facilities and Services	0	
Roads	\$5,381,705	
Other Transportation Facilities and Services	0	
Debt Service	200	
Capital Projects	2,400,000	
Administration	0	
Contingent Appropriations	200,000	
Fringe Benefits	1,071,012	
Total	\$9,052,917	
(03) Jail Fund		
Protection to Persons and Property	\$5,502,960	
Social Services	0	
Debt Service	200	
Capital Projects	0	
General Services	3,035	
Contingent Appropriations	200,000	
Fringe Benefits	1,992,715	
Total	\$7,698,910	
(04) L.G.E.A. Fund		
General Government	\$2,645,100	
Protection to Persons and Property	500,000	
General Health and Sanitation	5,876,359	
Social Services	206,000	
Recreation and Culture	471,400	
Transportation Facilities and Services	0	
Roads	0	
Debt Service (limited to applicable categories)	0	
Capital Projects (limited to applicable categories)	1,668,421	
Contingent Appropriations	800,000	
Fringe Benefits	522,948	
Other Government Agencies	110,000	
Total	\$12,800,228	
(05) Other Funds:		
Economic Assistance Fund	\$1,300,000	
Local Government Economic Development Grant	\$100	
State Grant Fund	\$500,000	
Contingent Appropriations	\$6,126,235	
WK State Funding	\$8,890,190	
Clerk Record Storage	\$221,207	
Opioid Settlement Fund	\$714,717	


SECTION TWO. This Ordinance shall be published in The Messenger newspaper by title and summary within thirty (30) days following adoption.

SECTION THREE. This Ordinance becomes effective upon passage and publication.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
All interested persons and organizations in Hopkins County are hereby notified that a copy of the County's proposed budget in full is available for public inspection at the office of the County Judge/Executive during normal business hours.



LEGAL NOTICE



ALLISON BALL
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
Independent Auditor's Report

To the People of Kentucky
The Honorable Andy Beshear, Governor
Holly M. Johnson, Secretary
Finance and Administration Cabinet
The Honorable Jack Whitfield, Jr., Hopkins County Judge/Executive
Members of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statement

Opinions
We have audited the accompanying Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Changes in Fund Balances — Regulatory Basis of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court, for the year ended June 30, 2025, and the related notes to the financial statement, which collectively comprise the Hopkins County Fiscal Court's financial statement as listed in the table of contents.

Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting
In our opinion, the accompanying financial statement referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements, and changes in fund balances — regulatory basis of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court, for the year ended June 30, 2025, in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as described in Note 1.

Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles section of our report, the financial statements do not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of each fund of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court, for the year ended June 30, 2025, or the changes in financial position and cash flows thereof for the year then ended.

Basis for Opinions
We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS), the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the *Fiscal Court Audit Guide* issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
As described in Note 1 of the financial statement, the financial statement is prepared by the Hopkins County Fiscal Court on the basis of the accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Department for Local Government to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The effects on the financial statement of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statement
Hopkins County Fiscal Court's management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Department for Local Government to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws. This includes determining that the regulatory basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statement in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Hopkins County Fiscal Court's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statement.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards*, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statement.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Hopkins County Fiscal Court's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Other Matters
Supplementary Information
Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statement taken as a whole of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court. The Budgetary Comparison Schedules and the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards, as required by Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance) are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statement; however, they are required to be presented in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Department for Local Government to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws.

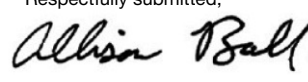
The accompanying Budgetary Comparison Schedules and Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards are the responsibility of management and were derived from and relate directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statement. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statement and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statement or to the financial statement itself, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the Budgetary Comparison Schedules and the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statement as a whole.

Other Information
Management is responsible for the other information included in this report. The other information is comprised of the schedule of capital assets but does not include the financial statement and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinions on the financial statement do not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statement, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the financial statement, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards
In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated March 23, 2026, on our consideration of the Hopkins County Fiscal Court's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the Hopkins County Fiscal Court's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Based on the results of our audit, we present the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs included herein, which discusses the following report findings:
2025-001 The Hopkins County Jail Commissary Report Was Materially Misstated
2025-002 The Hopkins County Fiscal Court's Schedule of Expenditures Of Federal Awards Was Misstated
2025-003 Occupational And Net Profit Tax Receipts Were Not Processed Nor Deposited Timely


Respectfully submitted,



Allison Ball
Auditor of Public Accounts
Frankfort, Ky

March 23, 2026

State law requires the Auditor of Public Accounts to annually audit fiscal courts, county clerks, and sheriffs; and print the results in a newspaper having general circulation in the county. The complete audit and any other audit of state agencies, fiscal courts, county clerks, sheriffs, and property valuation administrators may be viewed in the reports section of the Auditor of Public Accounts' website at auditor.ky.gov or upon request by calling 1-800-247-9126.



LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MINE


Pursuant To Application Number 854-0234, Renewal #5 (1) In accordance with KRS 350.055, notice is hereby given that Webster County Coal, LLC, 1146 Monarch Street, Suite 350, has applied for renewal of a permit for a surface coal mining and reclamation operation affecting 41.34 acres located 1.5 miles north of Nebo in Hopkins County.

(2) The proposed operation is approximately 0.1 miles south from KY Route 502's junction with Old Morganfield Road and located 0.3 miles north of Pond Creek.

(3) The proposed operation is located on the Nebo & Slaughters U.S.G.S. 7-1/2 minute quadrangle maps. Patricia Taylor, Goose Pond, LLC, Mark and Jamie Yates, Rodger Hayes, Anne Parish, Justin Crowe, and Webster County Coal, LLC.

(4) The application has been filed for public inspection at the Division of Mine Reclamation and Enforcement, Madisonville Regional Office, 625 Hospital Drive, Madisonville, KY 42431. Written comments, objections or requests for a permit conference must be filed with the Director, Division of Mine Permits, 300 Sower Blvd., Frankfort, KY 40601.

This is the final advertisement of the application. All comments, objections or requests for a permit conference must be received within thirty (30) days of this date.



LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
HOPKINS CIRCUIT COURT
MADISONVILLE,
KENTUCKY 42431
CIVIL ACTION NO.
26-CI-00111

ESTATE OF BILLY JOE WATSON
c/o DEBORAH HAYES,
Administratrix With Will Annexed,
DEBORAH HAYES, a single person,
SANDRA KAYE WATSON, a single person,
and
MARGARETTE YVONNE BUXTON and her husband,
MARK BUXTON
PLAINTIFFS

vs. **NOTICE OF SALE IN EQUITY**

BOBBY JOE WATSON and his wife, SHIRLEY WATSON and DONALD CHARLES WATSON, a single person DEFENDANTS

By virtue of Judgment and Order of Sale of the Hopkins Circuit Court the undersigned will, on **Monday, June 15, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.** on the steps of the Hopkins County Judicial Center, 120 East Center Street, Madisonville, Kentucky, proceed to expose to PUBLIC SALE, the real estate located at **505 Alan Drive, Madisonville, PVA Parcel No. M-11-10-34B**, Hopkins County, Kentucky. See **Deed Book 445, page 83**, Hopkins County Court Clerk's Office, for the legal description of said property.

Terms: The real estate shall be sold for cash or on credit of thirty (30) days. If on credit, the purchaser must pay a down payment of 10% of the purchase price at the time of the sale and post bond with approved surety for the balance of the purchase price, bearing interest at the rate specified in the judgment from the date of said bond, with a lien reserved upon said property until payment is made in full. The buyer shall be responsible for the current year's property taxes.

Al Miller
Special Master
Commissioner
Hopkins Circuit Court