

Investigation From Front

statement during the Oct. 5 Lancaster City Council meeting, Gaffney said the internal investigation into the Aug. 28 incident at Ronald Maples' Colony Road home has been completed and the three officers involved have been notified of its outcome.

The mayor did not disclose the investigation's findings or what action, if any, has been recommended or taken against the officers, saying additional procedural steps remain.

"The internal investigation concerning the incident at Mr. Maple's residence has been completed, and the city has also received legal guidance regarding this matter," Gaffney said. "The three officers involved in the incident have been informed of the outcome of this investigation."

Gaffney said the city would not discuss specific evidence or allegations while the remaining process is underway.

"Our responsibility is to protect the rights of our employees while also protecting the interests of our citizens we serve," he said.

The three officers were placed on administrative suspension after the Aug. 28 encounter with Maples. A police citation previously provided to the Central Record identified Lt. Steve Taylor, Officer Noah Allen and Officer Austin Pingleton as the officers who went to Maples' residence during a dispute involving neighboring property.

Police and Maples' family have offered sharply conflicting accounts of what happened.

According to the citation, officers went to Maples' home

after speaking with a neighbor who accused Maples of trespassing, making threats and attempting to establish what police described as a false property line. Police alleged that while officers were speaking with Maples at his doorway, Maples pushed a door that struck Taylor and later punched the lieutenant as Taylor attempted to detain him.

The citation said officers took Maples to the ground and handcuffed him after he continued resisting. Police said EMS was called after officers noticed injuries to his face and arms and that first aid was provided before he was transported to a hospital.

Maples' family and attorney have disputed that account.

His grandson previously told the Central Record that Maples was holding the handle of the screen door when officers pulled it open, causing Maples to be pulled toward an officer. The family denied that Maples intentionally struck Taylor with the door or punched him.

The family said Maples suffered four broken vertebrae, a fractured jaw, significant injuries to his left hand and extensive bruising. Attorney Ephraim Helton has publicly challenged the officers' version of the encounter and questioned whether the force used against Maples was justified.

Completion of the city's internal investigation does not mean those remaining administrative questions have been resolved.

Councilwoman Michelle Ballew pressed city officials Monday for a clearer timeline, referring to the matter as the incident involving the 84-year-old man and asking how long the remaining process could

take.

City Attorney Jonathan Baker said withholding further public comment was his recommendation because additional procedures, including possible hearings, could occur.

Gaffney said he expects the process to reach an outcome during October.

"Within the month of October, there will be an outcome," Gaffney said.

The mayor coupled the investigation update with what he described as a change in the structure and direction of the Lancaster Police Department.

Effective immediately, Gaffney said, the city's budgeted patrol division will be reduced from nine officer positions to six. He projected the reduction will lower general fund personnel expenditures by approximately \$215,000 during the next calendar year.

Gaffney presented the move not simply as a cost-cutting measure but as part of an effort to change the relationship between Lancaster police and the community.

"This is about more than reducing expenses," Gaffney said. "This is about changing the way we approach policing in the city of Lancaster."

The mayor acknowledged that recent events have damaged public confidence in the department.

"I believe trust between the police department and the community it serves is essential," he said. "Recent events have damaged some of that trust. We cannot simply ask the community to trust us again. We have to earn it."

Gaffney said he wants officers to be more visible in neighborhoods and to interact with residents while working with

businesses, schools and community organizations.

"Our goal is a police department that our residents know, respect, and trust," he said.

Gaffney also announced plans for a substantial reorganization of city offices.

With City Council support and the necessary ordinance changes, the mayor said he intends to relocate Lancaster City Hall to the current police headquarters on Richmond Street and rename the facility the Lancaster Municipal Center.

The proposed municipal center would bring the Lancaster Police Department, Lancaster Utilities, Lancaster Parks and Recreation, the city clerk's office and mayor's office into one facility.

Gaffney said consolidating those services would improve efficiency and make city government more accessible.

Councilman Marshall Norton voiced support for the concept, saying he believed combining the offices was a good move.

The mayor also disclosed another potential change involving Lancaster's participation in a law-enforcement task-force agreement. Gaffney said that following discussions among council members, he recommended they consider using their authority to eliminate the city's current federal task-force agreement involving DDS (Disability Determination Services) and CDI (Cooperative Disability Investigations).

The city's police department has faced mounting scrutiny since the Maples encounter.

When Gaffney initially announced the administrative suspensions, he said the seriousness of the allegations required an investigation under state law and departmental policies.

also serving as Lancaster police chief. Gaffney said the state paid for one of the positions and that Hughes performed most of the additional work outside his regular hours.

The council discussions provided no independently verified payroll accounting establishing the precise amount of task-force compensation paid to Hughes, the periods covered or the contractual terms governing those payments. Receiving compensation connected with two responsibilities does not by itself establish wrongdoing or an improper payment.

The task-force controversy has unfolded while Lancaster is also dealing with a transition in police leadership. Hughes was

Two of the officers identified in the Aug. 28 citation have also previously been named in unrelated civil litigation.

Taylor is a defendant, along with the City of Lancaster, in a lawsuit filed in May by Joshua B. Reidenbough arising from a 2025 arrest at a Mercer County marina. Reidenbough alleges Taylor unlawfully arrested him outside Lancaster's jurisdiction and used excessive force before criminal charges against Reidenbough ultimately ended in a jury acquittal. Those allegations remain claims in pending civil litigation and have not been established as fact.

Pingleton was previously named in a federal civil-rights lawsuit involving allegations of excessive force while he worked at the Madison County Detention Center. The claims against Pingleton and two other deputy jailers were dismissed because the court determined they were filed outside the applicable statute of limitations. The court did not adjudicate the underlying excessive-force allegations on their merits.

Neither lawsuit establishes what occurred at Maples' home on Aug. 28 or whether any Lancaster officer acted improperly during that encounter.

Another officer, not involved in the Maples incident, was also arrested for assault after a domestic dispute and another officer, also not involved in the Maples incident, was removed from his position as a school resource officer following a dispute with the administrators at Garrard Middle School.

Prior to the Maples incident, Police Chief Ryan Hughes was also placed on administrative leave after being arrested on DUI charges in Pulaski County.

Monday's announcement

marks a significant turning point in the city's response to the recent issues and particularly in regards to the Maples incident. However, even though the internal investigation that prompted the officers' suspensions is now complete, city officials made clear that the investigation's findings and any consequences stemming from them will remain undisclosed until the remaining personnel procedures have run their course.

Councilman Brandon McGlone thanked Interim Chief Rick Shearer for his work conducting the internal investigation.

Gaffney joined in that praise, saying Shearer had been placed in a difficult position.

"He was put in a very hard spot, and I think he's done a tremendous job with the hand he's been dealt," Gaffney said.

The mayor characterized the patrol reduction, task-force withdrawal and proposed consolidation of city offices as parts of a broader effort to reshape city government following months of controversy.

"I recognize that these are significant changes and they will not happen overnight," Gaffney said. "But leadership sometimes requires making difficult decisions and changing the way things have always been done."

He said the city's decisions must ultimately be measured by whether they serve Lancaster residents and said restoring confidence in the police department will require more than assurances from city officials.

"Rebuilding trust takes time, and it takes actions, not simply words," Gaffney said. "That work begins now."

Task Force From Front

by Police Chief Ryan Hughes in connection with task-force work.

At that September meeting, former mayor Don Rinthen presented records he said he had obtained through open-records requests and questioned whether the council's authorization concerning an MOU also authorized the later MOA. Gaffney maintained that the council had authorized him to sign any and all documents pertaining to the task force.

City Attorney Jonathan Baker previously described the agreement involving the Commonwealth of Kentucky as the mechanism allowing Lancaster to submit invoices and receive reimbursement funded by the federal government.

The task force had previously been described as a Cooperative Disability Investigations, or CDI, task force involving officers and an intelligence analyst, with expenses expected to be reimbursed through federal funding.

Monday's discussion shifted the council from debating the history and operation of the arrangement to determining how and when Lancaster would leave it.

Gaffney emphasized that he could not independently eliminate the task force without the approval of the council.

"I can't eliminate the task force," Gaffney told Norton. "The recommendation would be that this council votes to move on from the task force."

After Norton moved to terminate the arrangement, Gaffney pointed to a provision requiring at least 30 days' notice. Rather than ending Lancaster's participation at the earliest possible date, however, the mayor recommended allowing additional time for the entities involved to make other arrangements.

Gaffney suggested the council could potentially extend Lancaster's involvement through the end of the year so those involved in the task force would have time to find another department, organiza-

tion or entity through which to continue their work.

"At the end of the day, it's this council's decision on what you all choose to do," Gaffney said, while explaining that the agreements contained a 30-day notification provision.

Councilwoman Michelle Ballew asked how the city could extend the notice period beyond 30 days and whether doing so would require a written amendment.

Gaffney said the provision established a minimum rather than a fixed termination period. The council, he said, could provide 45, 60 or 90 days' notice if it chose.

Baker agreed that the council could determine the timeframe. He said that based on whatever action council members approved, he would send letters to the state and local agencies with which the city was contracted notifying them of Lancaster's intent to withdraw and identifying the termination date.

Norton then proposed changing the timeframe to 45 days, saying 30 days was relatively short and additional time could help resolve issues arising from the transition.

Because Norton's original motion had already received a second, however, the council first had to dispose of that motion before considering a different termination date.

At Norton's request, the council conducted a roll-call vote on the initial 30-day proposal. Gaffney clarified before the vote that council members were not deciding at that point whether they ultimately wanted to leave the task force. Instead, they were deciding whether to terminate it using the 30-day timeframe or reject that proposal so another motion providing more time could be considered.

Norton ultimately voted against his own initial timeframe after saying he wanted to make a new motion with a later termination date. The 30-day proposal failed.

The discussion then turned to how much additional time should be provided.

Council members considered Dec. 15, a period of at least 60 days and the possibility of

continuing through Dec. 31. Gaffney said the city was dealing with two governmental entities and suggested allowing at least 60 days to give them a fair opportunity to make the necessary arrangements.

The council ultimately settled on Dec. 15.

Councilman Brandon McGlone seconded the motion establishing that date. After Gaffney asked whether there was any further discussion and none was offered, City Clerk Teresa Cheek conducted a roll-call vote.

The motion passed unanimously among the council members, establishing Dec. 15 as the date for ending Lancaster's participation in the agreement.

The decision represents a significant change from where the task-force issue stood a month earlier.

During the Sept. 8 meeting, council members repeatedly questioned whether they had been adequately informed about the agreements and staffing decisions associated with the program but stopped short of taking action to withdraw. Norton and Ballew noted at that meeting that the city had been told it could terminate its participation with 30 days' notice, and Gaffney confirmed the existence of that provision.

Monday's vote exercised that termination authority while providing substantially more than the minimum notice period.

Questions about the task force had intensified as the council examined both its administrative history and its effect on the Lancaster Police Department.

During the September discussion, Gaffney identified Jeremy Smith, Robbie Tudor, Hughes and former Police Chief Rodney Kidd as assigned to the task force, while noting Hughes' administrative-leave status. Ballew questioned whether council members had been adequately informed that officers were leaving regular police-department assignments for task-force work.

Hughes' compensation also became a point of controversy. Gaffney acknowledged in September that Hughes had received compensation connected with task-force work while

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LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

Due to a lien on the 2007 Jeep Wrangler, owned by Lorna Lyons, Highway Haulers, 264 Bryantsville Road, Lancaster, KY 40444, 859-265-1778 is seeking application for title of the 2007 Jeep Wrangler. Application to be filed on October 24, 2026.

**Owner: Lorna Lyons
2007 Jeep Wrangler
vin number:
1J4FA24167L178374**

Commonwealth of Kentucky, Garrard District Court - Probate No. 26-P-00108, Notice to Creditors In Re: Estate of Dewey Ralph Young, Deceased

Notice is hereby given that by order of the Garrard District Court, Lancaster, KY in probate number 26-P-00108 dated October 5, 2026, Terry D. Young was appointed Executor of the estate of Dewey Ralph Young. All claims against the estate of Dewey Ralph Young, deceased, must

be presented to Terry D. Young, 1723 Calico Road, Berea, KY 40403, Executor of the Estate of Dewey Ralph Young or to the attorney Jimmy Dale Williams, P.O. Box 266, Richmond, KY 40476 within 6 months

after October 5, 2026. /s/Bethany Denny Circuit Clerk Garrard District Court Garrard Justice Center 54 Stanford Street Lancaster, KY 40444

SEEKING INFORMATION

Any person having information as to the whereabouts of Tiffany McCoy, or anyone having a legal interest of the above named, to Garrard Circuit Action 25-CI-00296: Rocket Mortgage LLC v. Tiffany McCoy et al is requested to contact the Warning Order Attorney, Sarah Bryant, Sarah Bryant Law, PLLC, 73 Public Square, Lancaster, KY 40444 at (859) 583-7912 as soon as possible but no later than ten (10) days following the posting of this notice.

Public Notice

Garrard County Sanitation District Meeting
Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Garrard County Sanitation District (GCSD) is scheduled to be held on Friday, October 16, 2026, at 10:00 am to 11:00 am EST at the Garrard County Extension Office, 1302 Stanford Road, Lancaster, KY 40444.

The agenda for the meeting will be:

1. Call to Order
2. Budget Review
3. Inspection and Maintenance Update
4. Updates on GCSD Master Plan and Paint Lick Sewer Project Phase II
5. Board Membership
6. New Business
7. Next Meeting

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- Danny & Judy Browning's property at end of Conn's Lane
- Carolyn Sparks property at 5252 Lexington Road
- Paul Black Farms, Hwy. 1355 (Sugar Creek Road)
- Paul And Suzanne Wells at 4129 White Lick Road, Paint Lick
- Tammy Fowler, 749 Nina Ridge Road
- Mike and Pam Fathergill, 111 Lynnwood Drive
- Chris and Joy Fathergill, 317 Richmond Street
- Mary Alice (Paul) Drew, 810 Carry Nation Road Property
- Kathy Tuggle & Paula Tudor - Jim Clark Road
- David M. and Rose Walker, 1163 Wolf Trail Road
- The Kenton Property, 795 and 719 C Valley Drive, Berea
- Grover Drew Farm, Carry Nation Road.
- Doug and Anna Graves, 319 Richmond Road, Loop 2
- The Brenda Farms, 4870 Harmons Lick Rd & Hamilton Valley Rd
- Vockery property on Polly's Bend Road
- Hugh and Amy Johnson, 6198 Lexington Road
- Dale Marie Hellard - Barbara French & William Randall Causey Farms at 2178 Hamilton Valley Road, 2636 Hamilton Valley Road And 1454 Hamilton Valley Road
- Frank and Altheia Rice, 390 Leavell Ridge Road, 372 Leavell Ridge Road and Rice Farm at Three Forks,
- Norma McFadden Property, 9700 Nicholasville Road
- Deborah Kelly property at 472 Hobert Estes Road

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