REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

branding graphics, introductory materials, and digital formatting. The contract also covered development and implementation of a social media strategy representing the cabinet and its agencies, as well as management of digital communications channels. The auditor's report states it appears the competitive bidding process was not used to obtain the services.

Beshear responded to this finding, noting that false information was given under oath. "They spent $93,000 to create training and educational videos for the public. The videos were for prospective medical cannabis licenses. They were for law enforcement about what's legal and what's not. They were for patients, providers, and for local government officials."

He also denied the claim that the bidding didn't go through a competitive process.

The report also highlights more than $34.3 million in IT-related services at CHFS despite the cabinet having internal IT resources, and raises concerns about billing practices tied to certain contracted services within the Department for Community Based Services.

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services paid $249,950 for a campaign that included messaging encouraging COVID-19 vaccinations. The Kentucky Historical Society paid $83,500 for digital media and professional services.

CHFS offices also paid a vendor $339,365.90 for video production, branding and social media strategy services. The auditor's report states that it appears the competitive bidding process was not used to obtain those services.

The Council on Postsecondary Education paid $300,000 to promote the value of postsecondary education. CHFS's Department for Aging and Independent Living spent $198,000 on a media campaign for the Senior Meals Program, despite previously citing a program shortfall, and $17,275 on promotional items. The Department for Community Based Services spent $45,635.20 on promotional products.

Beshear said the $198,000 for the Department of Aging and Independent Living was the membership fee paid to be included in a federally required public education program.

The auditor's findings summarize extensive spending across multiple categories and call attention to procurement practices, oversight and internal controls within state government.

Ball told members of the Kentucky House Appropriations and Revenue Committee this week that some executive branch agencies are spending taxpayer dollars excessively, citing examples of travel, conference and event expenses.

"It is clear that some executive branch agencies are spending tax dollars extravagantly and this needs to stop," Ball said in her presentation. "Public servants should be safeguarding money as if it was coming from their own pockets, rather than doling it out on extravagant travel and other unnecessary expenses."

The Auditor's Office reviewed executive branch spending data in the state's eMARS accounting system, focusing on categories it identified as prone to wasteful or excessive spending, including out-of-state travel and advertising.

JOBEnews.com

Horse Cave City Council

Departmental Review of Ice Storm

BY **KATRINA ENGLAND**
FREELANCE CONTRIBUTOR

The Horse Cave City Council met in regular session on Monday, February 9, 2026. All Council Members were in attendance, as well as Mayor Randall Curry.

The Council moved to unanimously approve Municipal Order 2026-03, which addresses appointments to the Horse Cave Board of Architectural Review. Under this order, Ken Russell and Sandra Wilson were reappointed to three-year terms spanning 2026 through 2028. Additionally, George Havris and Mary Mate were appointed to the Board to serve three-year terms.

PHOTO | KATRINA ENGLAND
The Council expressed gratitude to city departments for their diligent work during the ice storm.

PHOTO | KATRINA ENGLAND
Fire Chief Mason Michael presented the monthly Fire Report, which included a total of 63 runs, as he highlighted the department's response to the recent ice storm.

Department Report

Police Chief Heather Childress reported a significant increase in call volume, primarily driven by recent severe weather. Despite these challenges, the department maintained consistent coverage, conducting welfare checks and assisting elderly residents. Increased patrols also continued throughout the city in response to specific requests from both the Council and the community.

Regarding equipment, Childress announced that Louisville Metro has donated approximately $60,000 worth of tasers to the department.

While the hardware was provided at no cost, the city will be responsible for purchasing batteries and chargers.

Childress explained that she expects a formal quote soon, estimating a cost of roughly $5,600 over a five-year period. She emphasized that this donation represents a major cost-avoidance success for the city's budget.

Fire Chief Mason Michael presented the monthly Fire Report, which included a total of 63 runs. He highlighted the department's response to the recent

COUNCIL
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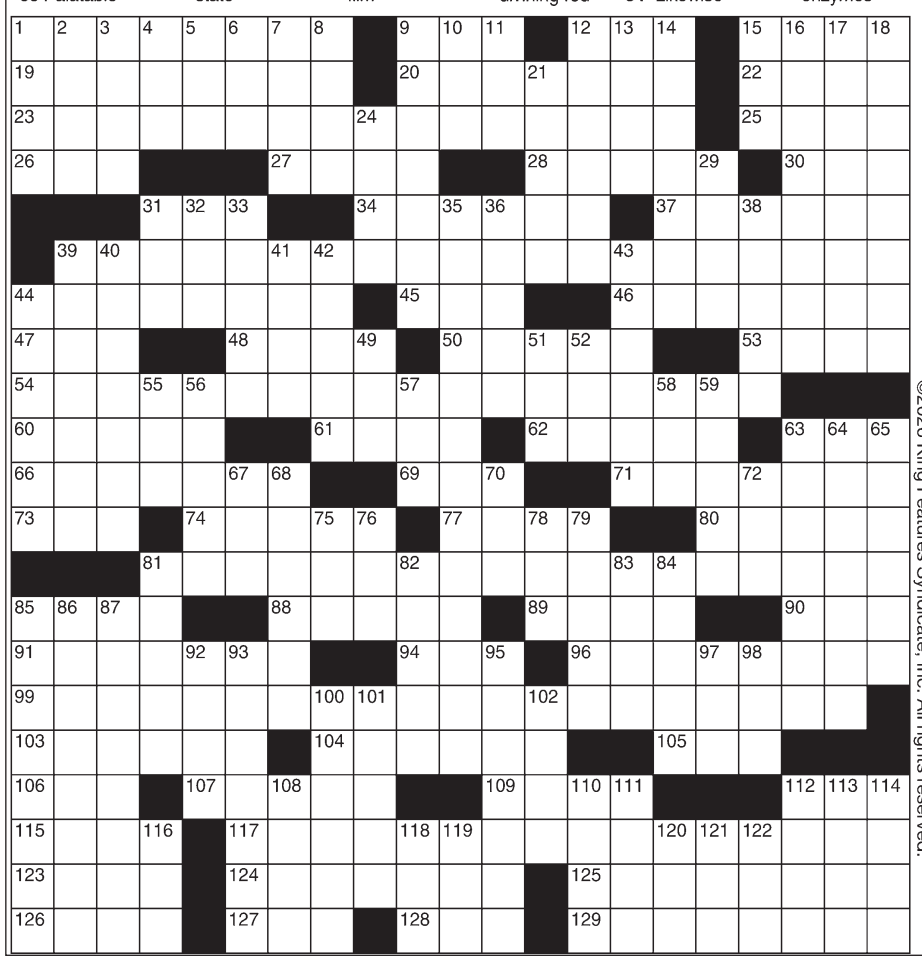
2/19/26 **Super Crossword** REPTILIAN EMPIRE

ACROSS
1 Soft drink giant
9 Pappy
12 "Botch- —" (old hit song)
15 Masticate
19 Oval wind instruments
20 Took too far
22 Put concrete on
23 Start of a riddle
25 Partially
26 Heir, often
27 Penta- plus one
28 Spitting beast
30 Everything
31 Unusual
34 "Our Gang" novelist Roth
37 Actress Peet of "Trust Me"
39 Riddle, part 2
44 Leonardo of "Titanic"
45 Curvy letter
46 Given a permanent post
47 Cereal grain
48 Computer menu option
50 Prefix with chemistry
53 Curiosity's planet
54 Riddle, part 3
60 Palatable
61 Computer menu option
62 Revise, as a manuscript
63 Yank's home
66 Try to be like
69 A couple of
71 Mice, e.g.
73 House divs.
74 Kinda
77 And higher, as in price
80 Perfect
81 Riddle, part 4
85 Dalai —
88 Contaminate
89 Big burden
90 Sports draw
91 Paper-folding craft
94 Part of BTW or OTC
96 "Allow me to assist"
99 End of the riddle
103 Allergy sufferer's device
104 White swan in "Swan Lake"
105 Audit org.
106 Spy's device
107 With 112-Across, "Hold on!"
109 Sneak attack
112 See 107-Across
115 Akron's state
117 Riddle's answer
123 Painter Vincent van —
124 Fastening feature of many a face mask
125 Ultimate consumers of products
126 With 83-Down, Italian veal dish
127 'Zine staffers
128 Antis' votes
129 Occupied, as an inn

DOWN
1 Female whales
2 Eight, in Peru
3 "Misery" actor James
4 Prado display
5 102, to Nero
6 Walk- — (small roles)
7 Plastering strip
8 Arthur of tennis
9 Troy of "A Summer Place"
10 Gardner or DuVernay of film
11 Biden's party: Abbr.
12 Basketball coach Rupp
13 Re-sol linkup
14 Boiled, salted soybeans
15 1040 pro
16 Dance similar to the tango
17 Unsaintly soul
18 Marshy habitats
21 Holy artifact
24 Trade show
29 "So true!"
31 Fertilizable cells
32 Chip go-with
33 Actress Bo
35 "The risks outweigh the benefits"
36 Intense beam
38 Some reunion-goers
39 U.S. women's soccer star at the Atlanta Olympics
40 Living ink squirter
41 Assistant
42 Idaho's capital
43 Person doing penance
44 One searching for water with a divining rod
49 Tariff
51 Sporty truck, in brief
52 Daiquiri base
55 "Cool" cash amount
56 Very little, as of salt
57 Tantrum
58 Brian of electronica
59 Give as a bonus
63 Like wasted food
64 In a theatrical manner
65 Snoozing
67 Shoe tip
68 Like Nin's writings
70 "Mind Train" singer Yoko
72 Baseball great Roush
75 Old Pan Am competitor
76 "Shy" singer DiFranco
78 ETs' craft
79 Fail to keep one's cool
81 Return to base after a fly ball
82 — nous
83 See 126-Across
84 "Likewise"
85 African capital on the Gulf of Guinea
86 Wyoming tribe members
87 Small swine breeds
92 Several
93 Plant-eating sea mammal
95 Catches in a snare
97 "Planet Money" airer
98 Includes
100 People lugging things
101 Politician Mo, Mark or Tom
102 Ship's rigging
108 "If only — known!"
110 — of March
111 Taboo thing
112 Litigated
113 Poet Pound
114 "— la vie!"
116 "Well well!"
118 Charged atom
119 Animal park
120 Rx watchdog
121 Dude
122 Suffix of enzymes



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