

Ky. Supreme Court blocks judge's impeachment

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT – The Kentucky Supreme Court issued an opinion and order on Monday, which throws out the impeachment resolution (H.R. 124) approved by the Kentucky House of Representatives against Fayette Circuit Judge Julie Goodman.

In her filing for what is known as a supervisory writ petition, Goodman sought a declaration that H.R. 124 constituted an encroachment upon the powers of the Judicial

Branch, that it was a violation of the separation of powers doctrine, and that it violated her right to due process of law. She further requests that H.R. 124 and the articles of impeachment issued against her be declared void.

The High Court held that Section 110(2)(a) of the Constitution contains a provision which grants the Supreme Court supervisory control of the Court of Justice, virtually any matter within that context would be subject to its jurisdiction[,] and that “the Court should

exercise its supervisory power sparingly, and, generally only in cases where no other court has power to proceed.”

The Justices stated, “As the Legislature is attempting to supersede our authority to both supervise and correct, when warranted, the behavior of sitting judges, as well as the means by which the Judicial Branch addresses ordinary error correction through the appellate process, our authority to issue supervisory writs pursuant to Section 110 in ‘aid of [our]

appellate jurisdiction, or the complete determination of any cause, or as may be required to exercise control of the Court of Justice” is properly invoked.”

As a result, the Justices held, “The General Assembly is hereby enjoined from any further proceedings in the current impeachment action against Judge Goodman.”

They added, “The General Assembly is hereby ENJOINED from further impeachment proceedings against Judge Goodman and is

ORDERED to dismiss the current impeachment proceedings against her.”

The Supreme Court decision came on a 5-1 vote, with Justice Shea Nickell dissenting from the majority. Justice Pamela Goodwine did not participate in the case.

You can read the entire 63-page opinion and order by going to: <https://appellatepublic.kycourts.net/api/api/v1/publicaccessdocuments/2639f7dc43e3583e47f7815f8e896f928062a9abfe46c35483fe84273bc00a71/download>.

COUNTY

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The court approved a pay request related to restroom and concession construction at John Preece Park. In addition, three filing cabinets were declared surplus property and transferred to the Soil Conservation Office.

The Jessamine South Elkhorn Water District presented its audit to the court.

A proclamation recognizing child abuse prevention efforts was also acknowledged. Officials noted that April 14 has been designated as Pinwheel Planting Day at the courthouse.

A motion was approved to distribute funds associated with House Bill 1.

In planning and zoning matters, the court approved an updated contract with Encode Plus, increasing the annual cost from \$1,500 to \$2,000. Officials said the update is intended to improve accessibility for mobile users.

The court also held a first reading on a proposed zone map amendment for property along Shun Pike, which would change zoning from A-1 to I-1. A second reading is scheduled for April 21.

During public comment, a property owner who lives near the Shun Pike site raised concerns from nearby residents, including complaints about rock dust affecting vehicles and property as well as noise from the site.

The meeting concluded with announcements of upcoming community events, including the county clean-up scheduled for April 11-18, a Liberty Tree ceremony at City-County Park on April 19, the Wilmore Foster Car Derby and High-bridge Festival on April 25, and a Liberty Tree ceremony at High Bridge on April 26.

NEW

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weather challenges to complete the project on schedule.

The new playground features modern, multi-level play equipment designed for children of varying ages. The space includes slides, climbing elements and interactive features that promote active play, along with shaded seating areas to provide a more comfortable environment for families and caregivers.

A notable addition is a

renovated section themed around Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, a national non-profit dedicated to raising awareness and funds for childhood cancer research. The foundation was inspired by Alex Scott, a young girl diagnosed with neuroblastoma who began a lemonade stand to help find a cure for cancer. Her efforts grew into a nationwide movement that continues to support research and families affected by childhood cancer.

Local organizers said

the themed section reflects the community's continued support for the foundation's mission and serves as a reminder of the importance of giving back.

Final preparations for the playground were completed in the days leading up to the opening through a collaborative effort between Parks and Recreation staff and inmates from the Jessamine County Detention Center. Crews spread mulch, leveled surfaces and ensured the area met safety standards before opening to

the public.

Officials said the project represents more than the addition of a recreational space, highlighting the role of community collaboration in bringing the effort to completion. They noted the partnership between public officials, parks staff and incarcerated individuals as a key component in creating a space intended to serve residents for years to come.

Commissioner Bethany Davis-Brown, Britton Brown and

Magistrate Adam Teater were recognized for their support of the project. Parks and Recreation staff and the inmates who assisted with preparation work were also acknowledged.

Bluegrass Recreation designed and installed the playground, while Dramatic Capture Photography documented the project's progress.

Officials said the investment reflects a broader commitment to maintaining safe, engaging and up-to-date recreational spaces across the community.

CONCERNS

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drainage, potentially increasing the risk of flooding or triggering surface collapse.

“When prominent sinkholes form a trend that aligns with dye trace results, those pathways can reliably indicate underground water movement,” Dugan said. “In this case, shallow groundwater flow paths stand a strong chance of being impacted by surface

activity such as construction of home sites, roadways and utilities.”

Dugan also warned that heavy equipment operating along these sinkhole trends could destabilize the ground, potentially leading to collapse. Such events, he said, could block subsurface drainage systems and cause groundwater to back up, increasing flood risks for properties located upstream of the development.

Residents have also raised concerns about

possible contamination of groundwater systems if septic or utility infrastructure is disrupted.

Questions remain about long-term liability should such issues occur. Residents have asked who would be responsible for addressing potential damage related to flooding, road failure or environmental impacts tied to the development.

“This is potentially very expensive to remediate,” one resident wrote in submitted comments. “Who will pay the cost for

increased flooding, road collapse, septic contamination of our water, and surface collapse along the sinkholes?”

Opponents of the proposal emphasize the unique nature of Jessamine County's geology, noting that the same karst features that support agriculture and scenic landscapes also require careful planning and protection.

They argue that insufficient investigation into subsurface conditions could pose risks not only

to future residents of the development but also to surrounding properties.

The next public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for April 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Jessamine County Courthouse, where residents and officials are expected to continue discussions.

The proposed development remains under review as planning officials consider feedback from residents, experts and the developer.

HIKERS

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points in an effort to locate the hikers, using mapping technology and coordinated search patterns across the trail system and surrounding creek areas.

Search teams navigated both marked and

unofficial trails, eventually locating the hikers near an intersection of Jessamine Creek and an unmarked path. One of the individuals was experiencing difficulty walking and showed signs of physical distress, prompting crews to slow their pace and request additional support.

Emergency personnel on scene provided medical assessment and care before coordinating the hikers' removal from the gorge. Utility task vehicles were used to transport both individuals and responders back to the staging area.

Both hikers were evaluated further by

EMS personnel upon arrival and were later released from care.

In total, four apparatus and nine personnel from the fire district were involved in the response, along with additional support from partner agencies.

The incident remained active for several hours, with crews working into

the evening to complete the search, provide care and ensure a safe exit from the rugged terrain.

Officials reminded visitors to remain on marked trails when visiting the Jessamine Gorge Trails and to take necessary precautions, including carrying water and being aware of changing conditions.

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