

OBITUARY

Robin Stallins, 41

With sadness in our hearts, our daughter, Robin Stallins, 41 years old, passed away on Saturday morning May 2, 2026.

Robin is survived by her father, Don Stallins; her mother, Kathy Stallins; her sister, Valerie Risky (Mike); niece, Stacy Risky; great-nephew, Donnie Risky; her grandmother, Martha Webb; and many aunts and an uncle and cousins.

Robin is loved and will be missed greatly, but she will always be with us in our hearts.



At this time there will be no services.

COURT

FROM PAGE A1

This year's awardees include Adopt Me! Bluegrass Pet Rescue, American Legion Post 39, Art Association of Oldham County, Brownsboro Alliance, Brownsboro Community Center, CASA of the River Region, Community Chest of Oldham County, Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve, Critically Loved, Crossroads Pregnancy Center, Good News Homes, Highpoint Charitable Services, Hope Health Clinic, Humane Society of Oldham County, Oldham County Community Scholarships, Oldham County History Center, Operation Parent, Pillar, Rapha Farm Corporation, Safe Passage, South Oldham Little League, Yew Dell Botanical Gardens and Oldham County Family YMCA.

After each allocation was read, Judge Executive David Voegel asked to amend the amounts to round up the three allocations less than \$1,000. "I'm just trying to say let's make everybody \$1,000 instead — I think it's embarrassing to send out a check for \$923.75 on a grant ..." he said.

The court then calculated that doing so would be a \$465.50 increase to the original total of \$74,956. After Magistrate Michael Logsdon rescinded his original motion, Voegel made the motion to approve the new amount, which passed unanimously.

In other news, the court approved a \$20,000 allocation of opioid abatement funds to the North Central Kentucky Drug Task Force — a recently formed task force formed between Kentucky State Police Post 5, Henry, Oldham, Carroll and Trimble Counties to combat the sale and use of drugs.

In February 2025, the court allocated \$40,000 from the county's general fund for the task force alongside similar payments from Carroll and Trimble counties. Since then, the task force has been seeking to hire a director and increased the position's pay range to encourage more applicants.

County Attorney D. Berry Baxter, who is the secretary of the task force, reported that they have 10 applicants as of May 5 and have appointed a committee to screen the applicants.

The court also approved an agreement with Bacon Farmer Workman (BFW) Engineering for the right-of-way services needed for the Old La Grange Road multi-use trail project intended to connect the 10-foot-wide shared-use path from in La Grange into Crestwood — part of the Oldham County Greenways project.

Oldham County Engineer Jim Silliman explained that this section of the project extends from the corner of Veterans Memorial Parkway and Highway 146 down the east side of Veterans Memorial Parkway, turning left onto Old La Grange Road and extending until the pedestrian bridge near North Camden Lane.

The right-of-way services are expected to cost \$115,481, leaving the county with a \$23,096 cost thanks to the 80% state reimbursement for the project. Silliman said that the expense does not include the purchase of the right-of-way, only the administrative fees.

"The estimates we had for the right-of-way purchase, I think, was somewhere around \$700,000 for the actual land —

In February 2025, the court allocated \$40,000 from the county's general fund for the task force alongside similar payments from Carroll and Trimble counties. Since then, the task force has been seeking to hire a director and increased the position's pay range to encourage more applicants.

permanent and temporary easements," Silliman said.

"Once this stage is done, we can actually enter into that stage of actual purchase, and hopefully some of those businesses [along Old La Grange Road] would want to donate." Silliman later stated that the expected construction cost was around \$1.3 million.

The court also approved an assignment of software licenses from Central Square for Oldham County Central Dispatch's computer-aided dispatch or "CAD."

"Currently, Oldham County Central Dispatch is receiving a bill for an integration between the ambulances — their automatic vehicle locator and our CAD system. The recurring bill is actually going to be paid for by Oldham County EMS," said Dispatch Director Greg Beck.

In order to charge the bill to Oldham County EMS, Central Square requested Voegel's signature. Beck also explained that the automatic vehicle locator allows dispatch to assign runs to the closest available ambulance to help ensure speedy emergency response.

The court also approved an annual resolution that allows the county to facilitate the reimbursement for the costs of transportation of parochial school students. The reimbursements are funded by the state, but the county has approved the resolution each year to facilitate the funding.

The court also approved an application for an Emergency Management Performance Grant, which is a statewide grant the county is participating in and expects to receive about \$25,000 from, according to Emergency Management Director Zack Wilt.

The court also approved a \$285 per month contract for preventative water treatment at the Oldham County Judicial Center, which will be reimbursed by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

The court also approved the release of an erosion control surety in the form of a \$26,000 bond for Machine Tool Emporium, located at 2196 Commerce Parkway. Erosion control sureties are funds held during construction to ensure that builders follow regulations to prevent erosion and runoff.

The court also approved the hiring of Carl Meeks to the Parks Department as a building monitor and Cody Devine to the Roads Department as an equipment operator 1.

The Oldham County Fiscal Court's next meeting is scheduled for May 19 at 2 p.m.

Council conducts first reading of proposed \$11M budget

Pay classification plan tabled, annexation proposed

BY GRANT GERSTNER
EDITOR

LA GRANGE — The La Grange City Council conducted the first reading of their proposed general budget for the upcoming fiscal year that will span from July 1 until June 30, 2027, which includes several capital projects and pay increases.

The proposed budget includes a projected revenue over \$9.8 million, with the highest income coming from the 1% compensation tax generating over \$3.2 million; the 10% insurance tax generating \$2.4 million; and personal and real property taxes generating \$1.95 million.

The proposed budget also includes nearly \$2 million being transferred from the city's reserves. Mayor John Black outlined that the majority of that amount — specifically, \$1.2 million — would go to utility improvements in Oldham Reserve — the 1,000-acre business and residential development shared by the city and county.

Black said that approximately \$300,000 is proposed to be used to repave Commerce Parkway and about \$150,000 is proposed to pay for the purchase of adjoining park property. Another \$300,000 is proposed to install a city-themed archway entrance on Highway 53.

"I think that in the interest of our city and the 200th anniversary of the city ... that maybe it would be an appropriate entryway placed at wherever we choose coming up the hill to try to make something significant there as you enter the city ..." Black said.

"I did talk to the tourism commission and they felt like it's not part of their duty to expend money in this area, so if that's the way it is, then the city — you all would have to front it to get it done."

A total of about \$208,000 is proposed to be earmarked for raises, with \$126,000 for those with director positions and \$82,000 for all other employees — a 6% increase for police officers and 5% increase for other city employees.

Finance Director Cindy Alvano noted that other large items impacting the general budget are new property tax software expected to cost \$50,000; "phase two of playground maintenance and equipment" for \$280,000; three new police vehicles for \$244,000; and new Public Works equipment for \$100,000.

In other news, the council also had an over-hour-long discussion regarding the second reading of the city's proposed pay classification plan before deciding

The La Grange City Council's next meeting is scheduled for June 1 at 6:30 p.m.

to table the ordinance until the council's next meeting.

As previously reported, the pay scale was largely formed with the advice from Hanna Resource Group, an HR firm in Louisville and Lexington, and were slightly adjusted by the Personnel Committee. The pay grade for each position was determined by the job description for each role.

HR Director Katie Bechtold explained that the city first began considering creating a pay classification scale at the end of last year when they were revising the 12-year-old personnel policy. Currently, the city only has job descriptions with pay ranges listed.

Bechtold said that when Hanna Resource Group's recommendations came to the city's Personnel Committee, the committee ultimately wanted the code enforcement officer and city clerk positions upped by two pay grades and the dual HR and transportation director position decreased by one pay grade.

Bechtold and Black met with each director for feedback and "the majority were very happy with the results."

After Councilor Jason Taylor inquired, Bechtold said that Hanna Resource Group's services cost \$6,600 and, though compensation at other similar cities was taken into account, benefits were not considered.

When asked how the city's benefits compare to other cities, Bechtold answered that the city's benefits are "outstanding ... I try to preach to the employees that that's huge, and I think most of them understand that."

During the public hearing on the ordinance, a few spoke in support. Former Judge Executive Mary Ellen Kinser noted that she was in support, but wanted to ensure that the city was conducting performance reviews for its employees.

"We have a performance review in the back of our handbook," Bechtold said. "I've been here eight years and never had a performance review [and] I don't know of a lot of employees having them ... but it is something that we should do so our employees know how they are [doing]."

Parks Director Steve Mahoney also voiced support, noting that they are used in several other industries like healthcare and education, and that it holds employees accountable.

He also said that he asked Black for a 90-day review "and ultimately the mayor

did not have a guideline to give me a 90-day review," he said. "... It caused a lot of hurt feelings and turmoil because there wasn't a guide. Don't miss the fact that there needs to be a guide."

When brought back to the council for discussion, Councilor Lucy Ricketts expressed concern regarding a document circulating with specific salaries for each position, which councilors Jason Kinser and Kenneth Powell said showed large pay raises — one over 50%.

After multiple members of the council questioned where the document came from, Black began saying that it came from the budget committee, but was quickly refuted by Councilor and Budget Committee Chair Trey Kamer.

"I'm not going to suggest what all happened during the budget committee, Trey, but I wanted to give those number to you all as budget committee members because those numbers are part of our budget first reading tonight," Black said.

Kamer denied having discussed the specific compensation amounts as a committee, and Ricketts denied having approved the part of the ordinance that determined which pay grade each position fell into at the Personnel Committee.

With several disagreements and concerns, the council unanimously approved a motion to table the ordinance and to bring it back up at the council's next meeting.

The council also conducted a first reading for the annexation of 67.8 acres of undeveloped land off of East Jericho Road into the city.

Though the land is currently owned by Parkside Estates, Welsh Development has already been approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission to develop a 198-lot subdivision, which they said will take place through six phases over seven to eight years.

Welsh Development representatives said that the subdivision is proposed to have only one entrance on Jericho Road, and each lot is planned to be approximately 50 feet wide and 120 feet deep.

Councilor Latosha Booker-Bishop asked why the developers wanted to be part of the city and Black explained that being within the city limits would make the water and sewer utilities cheaper for the future homeowners.

The council also conducted the first reading for several other budgets, including the \$482,710 alcohol regulatory fees budget, which notably includes \$40,000 for a new police car; a \$159,892 city bus budget that anticipates a successful \$100,000 grant; a \$410,000 budget that includes \$254,000 from reserves; and a \$302,000 storm water budget.

The La Grange City Council's next meeting is scheduled for June 1 at 6:30 p.m.

FIRED

FROM PAGE A1

The letter further details that an "internal investigation uncovered" multiple other instances of "serious misconduct," including:

"Corroborating accounts of immoral conduct and inappropriate physical touch with a supervisor in the workplace.

"Immoral misconduct on 12/16/2025, which includes an eyewitness account of inappropriate sexual intimacy with said employee, on Oldham County Schools property.

"Persistent failure to respond and lack of urgency when support is needed within your department, leaving multiple staff members without necessary information for them to do their jobs effectively.

"Specific examples include bus routes that were incomplete and inaccurate during preschool open house and preschool routes that were completed at the last minute which left them without important information to have a safe and successful opening day ...

"Inefficient work habits that have negatively impacted department operations, including working on items such as wrapping gifts, making quilts, and sewing while on the clock.

"Frequent comings-and-going during the day that greatly affect your unavailability, telling coworkers you have to step out ... and other times not telling them you were leaving ..."

The letter concludes that the school district "conducted a full investigation which included interviewing numerous witnesses, including you. We have found these witness accounts to be credible and consistent. Further, we also took into account your participation in the investigation.

"We are confident in these findings based on the volume

of evidence and the decision to terminate is final."

Several typed statements from the Transportation Department staff were also obtained by the Era's recent Open Records Request. A majority of the statements are dated in December 2025, and all of the testimonies are stamped and signed as being notarized on Jan. 9.

"Last Tuesday Christa sent me a text to come see her," one testimony from a bus driver reads. After coming into the transportation department office, the bus driver spoke with a receptionist, who called "upstairs," but received no answer.

"I went up the stairs in my combat boots which are not quiet," the statement continues. "When I went into the office, Christa was in her desk chair. [Webb] was standing beside Christa behind Christa's desk [and] he came around her desk, but would not turn around where his front was facing me.

"He then tried to sit down without turning around and almost fell trying to get in the chair. He never spoke to me and never made eye contact. He bent over in the chair with his elbows on his knees to hide his front after he sat down and tried to hide a T-shirt under his legs ...

"These situations make the work environment very uncomfortable," the bus driver wrote.

Several of the statements reference other instances that made the department staff uncomfortable, such as seeing Webb and Long "holding hands/rubbing her leg while they were driving to [a] training session" and standing "too close for a professional interaction" both in and outside the office.

Multiple statements say that Long and Webb were often seen walking to each other's offices multiple times a day.

"The energy between them is much more than coworkers," one staff member wrote. "I have worked for [Webb] for years and he has never treated other women in this way."

Almost every statement uses the phrases "favoritism" or "preferential treatment," and several describe instances where Long had vacation days approved despite not having vacation days left and Long coming in late or leaving the office unexpectedly.

One statement references Webb requesting other district staff to give Long access to the transportation department building's security cameras, and allowing the district's auto repair staff to work on his family members' and Long's personal

vehicles during the work day.

Another statement mentions that Webb "overruled" two other staff members' opinions on promoting a different staff member to the Transportation Dispatcher position and "brought [Long] up instead."

Another statement alleges Webb authorized Long to use a district-owned "work truck" despite her allegedly not helping with snow plowing very often.

Though the Era originally requested documents regarding Christa Long's termination in January and February, none of the Era's requests occurred before Long's severance agreement became finalized.

Specifically, the Era's Feb. 4 request for records "regarding Christa Long and the Dec. 16, 2025, incident/allegations that led to the termination of former Transportation Director Jeff Webb" was made days before the end of the severance agreement's seven-day revocation period — as provided by federal law — elapsed.

The Era then did not make another Open Records Request until Long was included on the Oldham County Board of Education's monthly personnel actions in late April, as seen on the Kentucky School Board Association (KSBA) Public Portal.

VOTE HOUGHENS FOR JUDGE EXECUTIVE!
Paid for by Elect Rob Houghens

The Oldham Era
Your News Since 1876.
105 S. Walnut, La Grange KY 40031
502-222-7183
Publisher: Jane Ashley Pace - publisher@oldhamera.com, 502-222-7184
Editor: Grant Gerstner - editor@oldhamera.com, 502-839-1688
Sports Editor: Wyatt Sparkman - sports@oldhamera.com, 502-219-6338
Advertising Representative: Barbara Duncan - advertising@oldhamera.com, 502-222-7185
Obituaries: obits@oldhamera.com
POSTMASTER: Send corrections to: The Oldham Era, 105 S. Walnut, La Grange KY 40031. Periodicals postage paid at La Grange KY 40031 - USPS 407-700.
Subscription: The Oldham Era is published every Thursday. Digital only subscription: \$25.44
In-county print and digital subscription: \$50.88
Out-of-county print and digital subscription: \$85.00