

# County Clerk announces London Mayor Weddle will not appear on November ballot

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Staff Writer

LONDON — Laurel County Clerk Tony Brown announced last Wednesday that Mayor Randall Weddle will not appear on the Nov. 3, 2026 General Election ballot following a Laurel Circuit Court ruling that found Weddle is not a bona fide candidate for the office of mayor.

In a public notice issued Wednesday, Brown said he had received a certified copy of Laurel Circuit Court Judge Michael O. Caperton's June 23 order granting an Emergency Motion for Removal filed by petitioners challenging Weddle's residency qualifications.

"As Chair of the Laurel County Board of Elections, I am giving notice that Randall Weddle WILL NOT appear on the November 3rd, 2026 General Election Ballot for Mayor of London, KY," Brown wrote. "As a result of this order, Matt Orr will be the only Mayor of London candidate listed on the ballot."

The announcement follows a 14-page ruling entered Tuesday by Caperton, who concluded that Weddle's actual residence is located in Keavy rather than within the City of London as required by Kentucky law for mayoral candidates.

The case was brought by James Phelps and other petitioners, who argued that while Weddle owns property in London, he primarily resides at a home in the Keavy area. After hearings held May 12 and 13, additional briefing by both parties, and inspections of both properties, the court sided with the petitioners.

Kentucky law states that "a candidate for mayor shall be a resident of the city for not less than one (1) year prior to his or her election." In reviewing the evidence, Caperton heard testimony from neighbors, law enforcement officers, utility officials and Weddle himself. Witnesses testified that they observed little activity at the London property, while security details and other evidence pointed to the Keavy residence as Weddle's primary home.

The court also reviewed water usage records from both properties. Testimony from London Utility Commission Superintendent Larry Creech indicated that usage at the London property was substantially lower than what would be expected for a family of three, while water consumption at the Keavy residence was consistent



LONDON MAYOR RANDALL WEDDLE

with an occupied household.

Caperton additionally reviewed business filings, court records, deed transfers and conducted personal inspections of both residences.

"Ultimately, upon a thorough review of all of the evidence of record and the applicable law, it is the opinion of the Court that the totality of the circumstances demonstrates that the London property may be a place where Weddle transacts business, but it is not his home nor his residence," the judge wrote.

The ruling noted that the Keavy residence contained "closets full of clothes, fully furnished rooms, functioning appliances, vehicles in the driveway, pets, and all manner of other activity" that indicated it was the family's primary residence. By contrast, the court found that the London property "generally lacked many basic utilities, including a washing or drying machine," and contained "very few personal articles of any kind." The judge further noted there were no vehicles or pets present at the London property during the court's inspection.

The order ultimately states, "IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Emergency Motion for Removal filed by the Petitioners be, and hereby is, GRANTED, and that the Respondent, Randall Weddle is not, for the foregoing reasons, a bona fide candidate for the upcoming London mayoral election in November of 2026."

Shortly after the ruling was announced Tuesday, Weddle issued a public statement accepting the court's decision while expressing disagreement

with its conclusion.

"I have always believed that public service is about showing up, doing the work, and putting the people of London first," Weddle wrote. "While I respectfully disagree with today's decision, I accept it and remain grateful to Judge Caperton for his careful consideration of this matter."

Weddle also thanked London residents for their support.

"Most importantly, I want to thank the people of London for the trust you have placed in me. Serving as your mayor has been one of the greatest honors of my life," he stated.

Looking ahead, Weddle said his focus remains on serving the city through the remainder of his term.

"My focus now is exactly where it has always been: serving this city. I intend to finish my term strong, continue working every day on behalf of our community, and keep doing the job the people elected me to do."

Weddle's attorney, Carmine G. Iaccarino, later released a statement saying the mayor would accept the court's decision despite maintaining that he is a resident of the City of London.

"Mayor Weddle has dedicated his time, talent, and treasure to making city government work for the citizens of the City of London," Iaccarino said. "While he maintains that he is a resident of the City, Mayor Weddle will accept this decision, and expresses his thanks to Judge Caperton, and most importantly, the people of London. He intends to finish his term strong and will continue to do the work he was elected to do."

According to a report

from WKYT, Weddle's an appeal.

attorney confirmed that he would not be filing for Attorney General Brandon Voelker, who represent-

ed the petitioners, did not respond to requests for comment by press time.

**CITY OF**

**RICHMOND**

**KENTUCKY**

EST 1798

**ORDINANCE NO. 26-20**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, KENTUCKY DECLARING THE CITY'S INTENT TO ANNEX 217 PLEASURE DRIVE PROPERTY INTO CITY LIMITS AND REFERRING THE ANNEXATION TO THE RICHMOND PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR A ZONING RECOMMENDATION**

By Ordinance 26-20, the Board of Commissioners for the City of Richmond, Kentucky adopted on June 23, 2026, an Intent to Annex Hillcrest Subdivision, Addition #3: **217 Pleasure Drive**, Lot 27, **Richard and Julie O'Toole**, in Madison County, Richmond, Kentucky into the City limits. The property owners have consented to the voluntary annexation at their request. The Ordinance further adopted the matter be referred to the Richmond Planning and Zoning Commissioner for that body's recommendation as to the appropriate zoning classification.

**ORDINANCE NO. 26-21**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, KENTUCKY DECLARING THE CITY'S INTENT TO ANNEX 223 PLEASURE DRIVE AND 611 BENJAMIN DRIVE PROPERTY INTO CITY LIMITS AND REFERRING THE ANNEXATION TO THE RICHMOND PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR A ZONING RECOMMENDATION**

By Ordinance 26-21, the Board of Commissioners for the City of Richmond, Kentucky adopted on June 23, 2026, an Intent to Annex Hillcrest Subdivision, Addition #3: **223 Pleasure Drive**, Lot 30 and **611 Benjamin Drive**, Lot 28, **Kenneth and Caryn Allen**, in Madison County, Richmond, Kentucky into the City limits. The property owners have consented to the voluntary annexation at their request. The Ordinance further adopted the matter be referred to the Richmond Planning and Zoning Commissioner for that body's recommendation as to the appropriate zoning classification.

**ORDINANCE NO. 26-22**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND CREATING A CODE ENFORCEMENT LIEN REBATE PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF BLIGHTED CITY PROPERTY**

This Ordinance 26-22 adopted on June 23, 2026, establishes a **Code Enforcement Lien Rebate Program** in the City of Richmond to encourage the redevelopment of blighted, underutilized, or deteriorated properties burdened by code enforcement liens. The City grounds its authority in Kentucky's Home Rule Statute (KRS 82.082) and case law recognizing that economic development and revitalization of blighted areas serve a legitimate public purpose.

#### Purpose

The program is designed to remove barriers to redevelopment by allowing purchasers who pay off existing city code enforcement liens on distressed properties to apply for a rebate of those lien payments once they complete agreedupon improvements. The City finds that revitalizing these properties will reduce blight, promote private investment, increase property values, and grow the tax base.

#### Key Provisions

- **Program Creation:** Purchasers of city properties encumbered by code enforcement liens may receive a rebate equal to the lien amount they paid at the time of purchase.
- **Eligibility Window:** Only properties purchased on or after **January 1, 2026** qualify.
- **PreAgreement with City:**
  - Prospective participants must meet with the city manager or city attorney to review redevelopment plans and determine required improvements.
  - The City will consult any necessary staff to establish timelines and improvement benchmarks.
  - A **written agreement** will detail required improvements, thresholds, and deadlines (no more than 18 months to complete qualifying work).
- **Potential Threshold Requirements:** Thresholds may include:
  - Minimum investment level
  - Zoning and land use compliance
  - Building and safety code compliance
  - Environmental remediation
  - Structural improvement
  - Historic preservation standards (if applicable)
  - Economic impact criteria
  - Design standards
  - Timely completion of benchmarks
- **Verification and Approval Process:**
  - After improvements are completed, the developer sends a letter to the City Attorney documenting how thresholds were met.
  - The City may inspect the property to verify compliance.
  - Upon verification, the city manager submits the rebate for approval by the **Board of Commissioners**.
- **Rebate Issuance:** Once approved, the City must pay the rebate within **30 days**.

Richmond City Attorney Chris Johnson prepared this summary as an attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Kentucky as authorized by KRS 83A.060(9).