

SEBREE BANNER



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UNITED COMMUNITY BANK of West Kentucky opened in Sebree September 14, and on Friday night, they held a street concert with games, food trucks and live music. UCB's purchase of the Sebree branch of Sonata Bank (formerly Sebree Deposit Bank) began earlier this year and the changeover became effective on Monday. Over 30 UCB employees from their Union County and other Webster County branches as well as board of directors members and Webster County Chamber members were on hand for a ribbon cutting Friday afternoon that was followed by a community street party. UCB will continue to operate out of the former Sebree Deposit Bank building on Main Street.

WC Board Of Education Will Purchase AC Units

The Webster County Board of Education voted Monday night to move forward with the purchase of six new HVAC until for Webster County High and to move forward with bonding to pay for the project. Board members also heard from a concerned parent, heard updates on the HVAC issues in county schools and approved several action items that were discussed in the their work session

earlier this month.

At the opening of the meeting, two employees were named #1WC Difference Makers of the Month. Jamie Parkest, a teacher at WCMS was recognized for her work with children as a certified employee and Camilla Herron was named the #1WC classified Difference Maker. Both individuals received a certificate of recognition.

Moving into the business session, the

board heard a report from superintendent Michael Gooch regarding the HVAC issues the high school has experienced since school began in August. Gooch has already told the board that six units at the school are over 20 years old and some of those have failed. Classrooms have been cooled by portable units, but the extremely hot weather the area has experienced in August and September those

units do little to relieve the heat. Gooch present proposals from TRANE for replacement units noting that just the purchase of six units is about \$282,457—that number does not include installation labor with installation the total costs could reach \$645,877.

The superintendent told the board that the costs cited is for replacement units that are presently available, but the district will have to make a quick decision and make the purchase before December due to the changes in HVAC regulations for 410 units. Should the board opt for a different unit that requires extensive changes to ductwork, the cost could rise above \$850,000. In his comments the superintendent noted that the district could pay for half the units with funds pulled from the general fund, the construction fund and the building fund, but he advised that the district is “probably looking at a bonding project.” He also recommended

that all six units be replaced rather than just three. By purchasing the refrigerant models of which there are only ten in the US, the district would not have to make structural changes to the building (a complete redo).

Assistant superintendent Greg Bowles added that the Providence HVAC project still needs to be completed and one unit needs to be replaced at Clay, so it is possible that the district bond the project and include not just the high school replacement units but ad other projects in the bonding. By doing so, Bowles said all the 1990s models would be out of service and replaced with models that have 10 warranties and an expected service life of 15 to 20 years.

Gooch said the district has \$7 million in bonding capacity. While Gooch suggested bonding the project; he also said it might be advisable to move ahead with the purchase of the available units now. Board chair Tim

McCormick stressed that units must be purchased by December if the board chooses to the 410 units which are less expensive than other models. He also noted that “we could pull out these funds and stress our (financial) system, but I feel we should bond it (the HVAC project) to get the funds and do the project correctly.”

The superintendent also stressed that the district doesn’t want to try to use portable heat units when winter weather arrives, and Bowles added that the present duct work limits what the district can do in relation to replacement units.

Ultimately, the board unanimously agreed that the district needs to move ahead with the project and on a motion and second voted to move forward with the purchase of six units move forward with bonding the project.

In other board business, Amanda Coomes volunteered to serve on the calendar committee

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Distinguished Young Women Program Will Be Saturday

Webster County will host its 43rd Distinguished Young Women program on Saturday, September 26th. The 2:00 p.m. program in the high school annex will feature four WCHS senior girls competing for the title of Webster County DYW 2027.

The program will include each contestant presenting their talent, appearing in a fitness routine and self-expression. Prior to taking the stage on Saturday, they will have already been judged in the both the interview and scholastic

portions of the program.

A panel of judges will determine who the next Distinguished Young Woman of Webster County will be. The winner will participate in the state program in Lexington in January.

This years’ participants include Madelyn Shelton, Alyssa Cartwright, Bella Orcutt, and Arely Martinez

Doors open at 1:30. The public is encouraged to attend and support this scholarship program.

Sebree City Council Hears Audit Report; Approves Resolution

The Sebree City Council met in regular session on Monday night with Mayor Billy Smith presiding and all council members in attendance. Also present were City Clerk Mary Meredith and City Attorney Will Cox.

Following approval of the minutes from the August 17 meeting, the council dealt with a short agenda in a session that last more than an hour.

Ms. Meredith told members that the insurance company representing Green River Post is in negotiations with Kentucky Utilities Company concerning damages caused to KU infrastructure. According to information presented at an earlier meeting, those damages amount to more than \$20,000. As a result, KU will not make any repairs or provide electrical service at the softball field in Sebree Springs Park.

Mayor Smith noted the

process has moved very slowly, and there is no timeline as to when electricity might be restored in areas of the park.

Quintin Stone with ATA Audit Services was in attendance at the meeting to present the audit report for fiscal year 2025.

Stone told members to materials presented for the audit resulted in a clean opinion for the fiscal year. He noted, however, there are issues with the city’s record-keeping that have been or need to be addressed.

The first of those issues was a failure of have a budget for the city’s tourism committee. He also said outside funds, such as donations, can’t be “intermingled” with tourism funds. “The tourism fund has to be a component unit of the city,” he added.

He also said that not all funds associated with the city have been “run through” city accounts. He cited the

fire department fund as an example. When the department rescue vehicle was wrecked several months ago, the insurance proceeds went into a fire department account not on the city books. He also said the loan for the new rescue truck never showed up on the city books. Those issues have been rectified.

Stone emphasized the city’s net financial position shows “nothing unusual.” He reported the general fund was over budget by about \$200,000 in the final year. Stone said it is important that the council amend the budget to reflect changes prior to the end of the fiscal year.

He added issues facing the city are often caused by a lack of manpower. Among those issues is a lack of segregation of duties; lack of training to prepare financial statements; expenses exceed-

ing revenue; and interest income not recorded. He noted that the review of payroll and bank reconciliation has improved.

The council approved the audit report as presented on a 6-0 vote. That report will be submitted to the Department of Local Government, as required by law.

The council also approved a resolution authorizing the application for a land and water grant with the funds to be used for replacing existing fencing at Sebree Springs Park and the erection of fencing around the proposed soccer field when it is finished. The estimated cost of that project is \$232,900. The grant application would be for 50% of that amount with the city providing the remaining 50% either with funding for in-kind services.

The resolution was approved on a 5-1 vote. Council member Kord Cooper cast

the dissenting vote.

In final business, the council recommended accepting the compensating rate plus four percent for the 2026 tax rates. For real property, that rate would be \$0.3411 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation. For personal property, the rate would be \$0.4171 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation.

The rates for real property and personal property in 2025 were \$0.3280 and \$0.3140, respectively.

A final decision on the 2026 tax rates will be made at the October meeting.

No further business came before the council, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

The next regular meeting of Sebree City Council will be Monday, October 19, 5:30 P.M.