

Grand jury returns no true bill in Trebolo case

BY MACEE SWAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

LONDON — The Laurel County Grand Jury recently returned a no true bill in the case involving a fatal shooting that occurred on Parker Road in March 2025, resulting in no charge being issued against Michael Madden.

According to a “Report of No True Bill and Order of Dismissal” filed June 18 in Laurel Circuit Court, the grand jury “has not returned an indictment” against Madden and requested dismissal of the matter due to “insufficient evidence was presented to warrant an indictment.”



WALTER TREBOLO III

The case stemmed from a March 18, 2025 shooting near the 500 block of Parker Road west of London. At the time, Laurel County Sheriff John Root and Kentucky State Police Post 11 announced that 45-year-old Walter Trebolo III had been found outside a residence suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. Investigators later recovered a rifle from the scene and indicated the case would be presented to a grand jury following completion of the investigation.

Following the grand jury’s decision, Trebolo’s mother, Charlotte Trebolo, expressed disappointment with the outcome and questioned whether all available information had been presented to jurors.

“I am still in shock that they dismiss it. I have no faith in our judicial system. It is broken,” Ms. Trebolo stated.

She further stated that she believed the grand jury “had enough information on my son’s case or they would have indicted him on something,” and said she had provided a statement to investigators during the course of the case.

As of press time, Madden’s attorney, Conrad Cessna, has not responded to a request for comment.

Cessna was quoted by WLEX 18 as saying the grand jury had every opportunity to consider a range of charges.

“The case was presented to 12 people. Twelve people had the opportunity to indict [and] chose not to,” Cessna told the station.

County Clerk Brown announces Weddle will not appear on November ballot

BY MACEE SWAFFORD
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 candi-



LONDON MAYOR
RANDALL WEDDLE

date 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 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

SEE WEDDLE, PAGE 14A

COMMONWEALTH OF
KENTUCKY
CITY OF LONDON


A SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE NO 2026-15

ENTITLED “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY’S ETHICS ORDINANCE 2023-10 and 2025-12 AS AUTHORIZED BY KRS 65.003.”

This Summary is prepared by Christy L. Shannon who is certified to practice law in this Commonwealth. This ordinance amends the City’s ethics ordinance by (i) providing a definition of “disclosure” that means a public disclosure that occurs at a city council meeting, (ii) expanding the definition of “employee” to make sure that the definition includes employees of City boards and commissions; (iii) updates the definition of “non-elected officers” to reflect and match the non-elected officers established under other City ordinances; (iv) expands the definition of “nepotism” to match a dictionary definition; (v) expands definitions of nepotism and prohibited conduct to extend the definition to unwarranted favors to family, friends, or political supporters; (vi) permits employees, officers, and others to make protected disclosures to federal or state law enforcement without violating the confidentiality provisions; (vii) creates an exception for the public presentation of awards to employees or others at City Council meetings with City Council approval; (viii) requires disclosure and approval of loans made by banks doing with the City; (ix) prohibits gifts including travel, lodging or refreshments to City officials unless they are \$50 or under or disclosure is made to the City Council and approval given for it; (x) moves enforcement and the ability to fine from the Code Enforcement Board to the Board of

Ethics; (xi) prohibits all nepotism unless disclosure is made and approval given by the City Council and prohibits and does not permit waiver of nepotism where one family member reports directly or indirectly to another; (xii) ensures compliance with the pay plan and the ethics ordinance by the Mayor; (xiii) changes appointment to and removal from the Ethics Board to the City Council by at least 5 votes; (ix) requires the City Clerk or designee to attend and support the Ethics Board; (x) requires advisory opinions to be in writing; (xi) changes the complaint procedure to ensure that complaints can be routed directly to the Ethics Board and remove the under-oath requirement but make an under oath requirement for a complaint subject to the discretion of the Ethics Board; (xii) prohibit complaints and make a violation for submitting a complaint that the complainant knows or is reckless in not knowing is beyond the jurisdiction of the Ethics Board; (xiii) provide for civil penalties in an amount not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars per violation for the first violation by the offender or five hundred dollars per violation for the second or later violation by the same offender that may also be assessed by the Ethics Board for violations of this ordinance and (xiv) makes technical changes.

The full and complete Ordinance 2026-15 and Exhibit thereto, is on file at the Office of the London City Clerk and can be viewed there during normal business hours.


Christy L. Shannon