Mayor, Housing Authority director address HUD concerns

BY MACEE SWAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

LONDON — London Mayor Tracie Handley has raised concerns regarding the governance and compliance of the London Housing Authority, prompting a response from Housing Authority Executive Director Katie Johnson, who disputed the way the organization's current condition was characterized.

In a statement following a HUD meeting held Aug. 24, Mayor Handley outlined what she described as multiple concerns involving the Housing Authority, including alleged violations of Kentucky's Open Meetings Act, compliance with federal housing requirements and the validity of appointments made by former Mayor Randall Weddle.

Handley specifically pointed to a Jan. 12 Housing Authority meeting, alleging it was not properly called, did not include or post an agenda as required and that notice was not mailed to all members of the board. She said one board member was not informed of the meeting.

She also raised concerns about meetings she said occurred Feb. 13, March 4 and April 7. Handley said she could not confirm whether the February and March meetings complied with open-meetings requirements because minutes were not maintained or provided when she requested them.

"The London Housing Authority received Open Meetings Complaints in July, 2026, and rather than correcting the issues identified, has decided to proceed without correction," Handley stated.

Mayor Handley further claimed that the Housing Authority had failed to comply with requirements contained in its PHA Plan, Administrative Plan and Admission and Continued Occupancy Plan. She specifically cited what she described as failures to adopt an annual plan and budget and update the authority's five-year plan.

Handley also questioned the validity of Housing Authority board appointments made by Weddle, citing his removal from office and subsequent legal proceedings as the basis for her position.

"I have issued removal letters and set hearings for any remaining board members," Mayor Handley stated.

Handley said her goal was to work with the City Council to establish a new board and bring the Housing Authority into compliance.

Johnson, however, said Handley's statement did not adequately distinguish between historical problems within the Housing Authority and the work undertaken by the current administration to address those problems.

Johnson joined the Housing Authority as Finance Director in January and became Executive Director in June. She said stabilization efforts began immediately after she arrived, including reconstructing historical records, strengthening financial controls, addressing reporting and system-access issues and preparing the organization for professional audit and regulatory review.

She said the work expanded after she became executive director to include HUD reporting, occupancy records, payroll and retirement reconciliation, Capital Fund administration, procurement, policies and records preservation.

Johnson also said some historical records are part of an ongoing federal investigation.

"That investigation resulted from discoveries made and reported by the current administration," Johnson stated.

She added that the Housing Authority has cooperated with federal authorities and will continue to do so.

Regarding Mayor Handley's concerns over board composition and appointments, Johnson said those matters should be addressed by the board and appropriate legal authorities rather than through a public dispute.

"As Executive Director, I do not believe it is appropriate for me to publicly litigate those issues," she stated.

Johnson instead focused her response on Handley's broader characterization of the Housing Authority, saying the current administration should not be held responsible for deficiencies it inherited and subsequently worked to identify and correct.

"A fair evaluation of the current Housing Authority must distinguish between discovering a problem, inheriting a problem, and causing a problem," Johnson stated.

According to Johnson, the Housing Authority has since strengthened financial oversight, reconstructed historical records, improved HUD reporting and system access, reviewed procurement and internal controls, engaged professional accounting and auditing assistance and preserved records requested by investigators.

Johnson also pointed to improvements in occupancy — adding that the Housing Authority had 21 vacant units when stabilization efforts began in January. While six units currently remain vacant, each has a pending applicant.

Johnson acknowledged that work remains and said she would not characterize every issue as resolved.

"Transparency requires us to acknowledge that. But transparency also requires

SEE **HUD,** PAGE **16A**

Public health officials are investigating rare cancer cases in eastern Ky. children

BY SARAH LADD
KENTUCKY LANTERN

The Kentucky Department for Public Health is investigating reports of an unusually high number of brain tumors diagnosed in Eastern Kentucky children.

Beth Fisher, a spokeswoman with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, told the Lantern the state is "aware of reports concerning a potential increase in pediatric brain tumor cases."

It's unclear how many cases are under investigation in that area.

Several public social media posts indicate four to five recent cases of Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG) within a small area of Southeastern Kentucky. DIPG is a rare and incurable cancer mainly found in children around ages 6-7. Patients who have DIPG may have trouble walking, weakness or drooping in the face, blurred vision and other eye problems and other issues. Survival at two years is about 10%, according to DIPG.org, and 2% at five years.

Kentucky has 44 total "participants" in the international DIPG registry, which represents both self-referrals and referrals from physicians. ZIP Code and county breakdown

SEE **CANCER,** PAGE **16A**

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

The London-Corbin Airport Board will accept sealed bids for the Phase I - Taxilane Reconstruction and Hangar Replacements Project at the London-Corbin Airport, London, Kentucky. Bids will be received by the London-Corbin Airport Board at the London-Corbin Airport Terminal Building located at 566 Hal Rogers Drive, London, KY 40744 until **1:00 P.M. (EST) on Wednesday, September 23, 2026**.

Bids which are delivered in advance shall be delivered to the London-Corbin Airport Board, 566 Hal Rogers Drive London, KY 40744, Attention: Henry Heaberlin, Chairman. Electronic or faxed bid packages will not be accepted.

The bid package and shipping envelope shall be clearly labeled: **Phase I - Taxilane Reconstruction and Hangar Replacements Project – London-Corbin Airport - DO NOT OPEN.**

Important Notice to Bidders: A **MANDATORY** Pre-Bid Conference will be held at **1:00 P.M.(EST), Thursday, September 10, 2026**, at the London-Corbin Airport Terminal Building for the purpose of discussing the scope of the project and answering questions.

ATTENDANCE AT THIS CONFERENCE BY AN APPROPRIATE CONTRACTOR REPRESENTATIVE IS MANDATORY IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE TO SUBMIT A BID.

Project Description: This project consists of the construction of two 80' x 100' box hangars and construction of a new taxilane and apron including site prep, base stone, and concrete paving. Additional project items include associated drainage improvements, taxilane markings, erosion control, and site stabilization.

Contractors intending on submitting a bid must purchase contract documents from Goodwyn Mills Cawood, LLC, 6 Cadillac Drive, St. 350, Brentwood, TN 37027, telephone (615) 614-0121, at a non-refundable cost of $200 per set.

It is the intent to make the plans/specifications available for review at the locations listed below:

London-Corbin Airport
566 Hal Rogers Drive
London, KY 40744
(606) 878-9100

KY – Department of Aviation
90 Airport Road, Building 400
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-4480

Goodwyn Mills Cawood, LLC
6 Cadillac Drive, St. 350
Brentwood, TN 37027
(615) 614-0121

Builders Exchange
2300 Meadow Drive, Suite 100
Louisville, KY 40218
(502) 459-9800

The London-Corbin Airport Board, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 USC §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders or offerors that it will affirmatively ensure that for any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and no businesses will be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), creed, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), age, or disability in consideration for an award.

Each proposal must be accompanied by a Bidders Bond on the form contained in the Proposal Book from a surety company acceptable to the London-Corbin Airport Board or a cashier's check or certified check made payable to the London-Corbin Airport Board for not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount of the bid. A 100% Contract Bond will be required of the successful Contractor. Liquidated damages for delay in contract completion shall be as stated in the Proposal.

The project is funded partially with federal funds, therefore is subject to the following provisions:

Buy American Preference, Davis Bacon Act, Debarment and Suspension, Federal Fair Labor Standards Act, Foreign Trade Restriction, Lobbying Federal Employees, and Procurement of Recovered Materials.

No bids will be considered unless the bidder, whether resident or non-resident of Kentucky, is properly qualified to submit a proposal for this construction in accordance with all applicable laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The prime contractor shall perform, with their organization, an amount of work equal to at least 30 percent of the total contract cost. The prime contractor must either be prequalified with KYTC or adhere to the requirements set forth in Section 20-02 (Proposal Requirements and Conditions – Qualification of Bidders) of the Project Manual. KYTC prequalification is not a requirement for bidding.

The proposal, which shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope, shall be clearly labeled on the outside of the envelope, at a minimum, with the name of the project, contractor's name and address, classification and expiration date (if applicable), and the date and time of the Bid Opening (so as to guard against premature opening of any bid). ***Failure to show these items on the outside of the envelope will result in the bid being returned to the Bidder unopened.***

Withdrawal of Bid: Any Bidder, upon his or her authorized representative's written request, will be given permission to withdraw his proposal not later than the time set for opening thereto. At the time of the opening of proposals, provided written request has been submitted prior to the time of the opening, when such proposal is reached it will be returned to the Bidder unopened. Unless contrary to the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky including local charter provisions no Bidder may withdraw a bid submitted for a period of **one hundred twenty (120)** days after the actual bid opening without the Owner's consent.

The London-Corbin Airport Board reserves the right to reject any/and or all proposals, to waive any formalities and informalities in the proposals received, and to accept any proposal which in its opinion may be in their best interest.

London-Corbin Airport Board

Henry Heaberlin
Chairman

Public Hearing

Septemer 17, 2026
London Community Center,
Main Room(Upstairs)
529 S. Main Street, London, KY 40741
at 5:00 PM EST

Pursuant to KRS 132.027, the City of London, KY will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 17, 2026, at 5:00 PM, eastern time, at the London Community Center, Main Room (Upstairs), 529 South Main Street, London, Kentucky, to hear comments from the public regarding a proposed property tax rate of $.078 per $100 valuation and proposed personal property tax rate of $.078 per $100 valuation. As required by law, this includes the following information:

	Tax Rate $100 Assessed Valuation	Revenue
Preceding Years' Tax Rate And Revenue Generated	$.078 (Real) $.078 (Personal)	$ 645,757 $139,783
Proposed Tax Rate for 2026 And Expected Revenue	$.078 (Real) $.078 (Personal)	$ 693,252 $131,964
Compensating Tax Rate and Expected Revenue	$.074 (Real) $.074 (Personal)	$657,700 $125,197

All revenues in excess of those generated in the previous year will be allocated to all City operating departments, including Police, Fire, Public Works, and General Administration. The Kentucky General Assembly has required publication of this advertisement and the information contained herein.

All interested individuals are invited to attend.