

THE STURGIS NEWS

Delivering For Sturgis and Union County

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UC Fiscal Court Awards Bids; Approves First Reading Of Budget

Union County Fiscal Court spent their Tuesday, May 26, court meeting approving bids, giving first reading to the FY 2027 budget, hearing an update on the new radio program for first responders, and setting salaries for the coming year.

The first item of business to come before the court was to correct a procedural error from a previous meeting. According to Judge/Executive Adam O’Nan, magistrates previously approved the 2026/27 county road aide resolution and agreement; however, they failed to do so by roll call vote. On Tuesday, that was corrected with the resolution being re-voted on by rollcall and the agreement for just over \$1,079,000 being accepted on a motion, second and all aye vote.

Magistrates also accepted road material bids for the new fiscal year, choosing to award the bid for pipe (circular steel, arch steel and plastic) from Energy Culvert Company. The award for bituminous hot mix and black top went to Scotty’s of Madisonville, and the salt bid went to Compass Minerals. All rock bids were rejected.

The court also approved the hiring of Nathan Shelton as a seasonal grounds keeper at Moffit Lake Recreational Area.

O’Nan announced that the 2025 Sheriff’s property tax settlement has been submitted for approval pending audit with 99.33 percent of taxes collected. The court approved the settlement. The sheriff also submitted the 2025 franchise tax settlement of 100 percent collections for approval. The court approved that settlement pending audit.

In other money related matters, magistrates okayed the fiscal year 2027 salary schedule which reflects a 2.7 percent CPI increase across the board. That increase in also reflected in the county’s FY 2027 budget that totals \$26,890,766.97. Magistrates approved first reading of the budget

that has increase by about \$700,000 over FY 2026. The first reading of the budget was approved on an all aye roll call vote.

As they prepare for the new fiscal year, magistrates gave the okay for payment of pre-approved expenses. Those expenses are set up to be paid on or before the due date to avoid penalties and include insurance payments, vehicle taxes, phone and electrical bills, and other payments to agencies that may not receive mailed checks in time to avoid a penalty.

IT director Jonathan Baird provided the court with an update on the county’s radio project. He noted that about two weeks ago a crew was in Union County and set up one of the new consoles at the dispatch center. The sheriff’s department is presently using the new system on their handheld radios and Baird says the mobile units will be activated soon. Baird explained that the sheriff’s department and fire departments will be the first agencies to use the new system, and he expects dispatch will be fully online by the end of June. The tower for the service should be completed by the end of the year, Baird said.

The court also received an update from Kim Humphrey on the Wellness Clinic that will be held in Union County June 11-14. This free clinic will be serviced by military personnel in medical training who will treat any individuals who need wellness checks, physicals, dental work, vision screening, hearing screening, etc. There is no cost to use the service which is open to everyone ages three and up. The services will be set up at Union County Middle School and will be provided on a first come first serve basis at no cost. The public is urged to take advantage of this service.

Before the meeting adjourned the court approved transfers and claims.

The next meeting of the Union County Fiscal Court will be Tuesday, June 9, at 9:00 a.m.

Board Of Education Hears Report From Superintendent

At their Tuesday, May 26, regular meeting, the Union County Board of Education presented a special award to a teacher; heard Dr. Terra Hancock’s monthly report, and approved a number of agenda items.

Following the pledge to the flag and the reading of the district’s mission statement, the board presented Ginny Johnson, a teacher at Union County Middle School, with an award for perfect attendance during the 2025-26 school year. Johnson was the only teacher to have perfect attendance.

In her report, Dr. Hancock reported on end of the year special events, graduation and promotion ceremonies. She also noted that teachers had concluded their work on Tuesday with all elementary teachers meeting together to review the district strategic plan and explore the UCPS resource hub. All UCHS CTE teachers toured the vocational school renovation,

Hancock said. She also told the board that community partners had been “incredible partners and champions” for county students.

Other information provided by Hancock included plans for summer including the UCMS career exploration lab, the summer meal program, a number of camps being held at the school and the Green River Area Wellness event. The district will also be filling two administrative positions—a principal’s position at Uniontown and an assistant principal position at UCHS.

During Tuesday’s meeting, the board also learned that the district’s average daily attendance for the year was 93.3 percent, the highest since the 2019-2020 school year.

Board members also heard the financial report presented by Amy Morris and a summary of the district’s tentative budget for fiscal

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DRA To Host Wellness Initiative In Western Kentucky

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) and the U.S. Department of War are partnering once again to bring another medical mission to Western Kentucky, thanks to the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program.

Led by the DRA, Air National Guard, Green River Area Development District (GRADD) and City of Henderson, the 2026 Green River Area Wellness IRT Mission will provide basic medical, dental, optometry, hearing and mental health services – at no cost – to residents of Henderson, Union and

Webster counties and nearby communities. This year, the IRT will offer care at three satellite locations, from June 11-21, at the following sites:

* June 11-21: North Middle School, 1701 2nd St., Henderson, Ky.

* June 11-14: Union County Middle School, 4465 US-60, Morganfield, Ky.

* June 16-19: Webster County High School, 1922 US-41 ALT, Dixon, Ky.

Services will be offered to patients ages 3 and up on a first-come, first-served basis. No income or residency

requirements will be needed to receive treatment.

“This upcoming mission highlights the continued partnership between the DRA and Department of War in bringing much-needed care to residents in Delta communities across Western Kentucky,” said Christina Wooden, DRA Health Programs Manager. “DRA is thankful for its partnership with the Department of War, which allows us to continue offering accessible care.”

As an IRT, the 2026 Green River Area Wellness Mission will provide key health care

services to underserved communities within the DRA region while simultaneously serving as a military training opportunity to increase deployment readiness.

“On behalf of the United States Air Force Active Duty, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, Navy Reserve, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard, we are honored to bring this Innovative Readiness Training medical mission to Henderson. We know this community is resilient, and as Henderson continues to recover from last year’s flood, we are

proud to support that recovery,” said Maj. Nathaniel Horwitz-Willis, Air Force Guard and Active Duty Air Force IRT Program Manager. “This IRT mission is about more than just training; it’s about our commitment to our country and its people. By providing no-cost medical, dental, and vision care, we are not only enhancing our readiness but also making a tangible difference in the lives of the people of Western Kentucky. This is a testament to the power of proactive collaboration, and

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UCMS TEACHER GINNY Johnson was recognized at last week’s school board meeting for having perfect attendance during the 2025-2026 school year. She was the only teacher in the district to accomplish this feat. Ms. Johnson is pictured with superintendent Dr. Terra Hancock and board member Chad Hagan.

UCBOE Approves Budget With Competitive Pay Increases

At its regular meeting on May 26, 2026, the Union County Board of Education officially approved a \$40.8 million tentative budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. The strategically crafted plan focuses heavily on investing in workforce retention, supporting key district instructional initiatives, and reinforcing the school system’s financial stability.

The budget was developed to directly address critical needs in personnel, instruction, transportation, facilities, and maintenance. Despite flat local property tax revenues, the district achieved its core funding goals through careful financial management and an increase in state SEEK (Support Education Excellence in Kentucky) revenue.

“Our primary goals with this budget were twofold: to make our salaries highly competitive with surrounding districts and to continue expanding our vital instructional programs,” highlighted Superintendent Dr. Terra Hancock. “Thanks to disciplined fiscal oversight at the district level and increased state support, we have delivered a budget that honors our staff while protecting our taxpayers.”

A major pillar of the 2026-2027 budget is a robust compensation package aimed at attracting and retaining premier educational talent. Key highlights of the approved salary and incentive plan include:

- * District-Wide Pay Increase: A minimum 3% pay raise for all UCPS certified and classified employees.
- * Support for New Educators:

Significantly higher starting salaries for beginning teachers to strengthen recruitment.

* Early-Career Acceleration: Accelerated pay increases for certified employees during the first 10 years of their careers.

* Stipend Continuations: Sustained funding for the district’s “Elevated Educators” milestone service, alongside stipends for Veteran/New Teacher Mentors.

* Specialized Classroom Support: Supplemental pay for certified teachers dedicated to Behavior Support and MSD special education classrooms.

In addition to these personnel investments, the approved plan actively strengthens the district’s long-term financial health by increasing its contingency funding to 6.87%. This healthy reserve ensures UCPS remains prepared for unexpected operational or facility needs.

District leaders expect that the targeted incentives built into the new budget will foster a supportive work environment, keep high-quality educators in Union County classrooms, and ultimately drive long-term academic success for all students.

The tentative budget will now move forward in the standard state approval pipeline as the district prepares for the upcoming school year.

To learn more about the district budget and salary schedule as well as how to apply for employment with Union County Public Schools, you may visit the school district website at union.kyschools.us.