

**KENTON COUNTY FISCAL COURT**  
**Kenton County Government Center**  
**Second Floor Chambers**  
**1840 Simon Kenton Way**  
**Covington, KY 41011**

**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 24 , 2023**  
**5:30 P.M.**

**Call to Order**

Judge/Executive Kris Knochelmann called to order the October 24, 2023, meeting of the Kenton County Fiscal Court. Treasurer Roy Cox led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Judge/Executive Kris Knochelmann  
Commissioner Beth Sewell, District 1  
Commissioner Joe Nienaber, District 3  
County Attorney, Stacy Tapke

Staff: Joe Shriver, County Administrator/Deputy Judge  
Scott Gunning, Assistant County Administrator  
Roy Cox, Treasurer  
Sue Kaiser, Fiscal Court Clerk

**Approval of Minutes**

**A. Approval of the Minutes from the meeting of October 10 , 2023.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**Citizens Address**

No citizens came before the Fiscal Court at this time.

**General Business**

**A. Request for approval, pursuant to SB 167, permitting the Kenton County Library Board to execute their Latonia project.**

Kenton County Library Director Dave Schroeder introduced the President of their Board, Maureen Hebert. He then stated that they have a proposal to establish a new Library Branch in Covington. They are planning to lease an 11,500 square foot retail space in the Latonia Commerce Center beginning in December of 2023. He worked with PDS, and did a considerable amount of research on his own to find what neighborhoods could be served the best. The more they looked, the community chosen seemed to be the best fit. There will be a significant children's area for the community to give more support for the children in need. There will be a teen and adult room and a community room that will seat about 75 people. There will also be small study rooms and technology. They anticipate an opening in the summer of 2024. He is bringing this to the court's attention because of a bill passed last year. Senate Bill 167 requires that if a Library District is expending more than one million dollars, they have to get the Fiscal Court's approval.

Judge Knochelmann stated that they realized a need in Latonia for this.

Mr. Schroeder stated that they are getting a good deal on this space. In researching this concept, he has seen that it does work. It is cost effective, and is on a bus line and gets a lot of traffic.

Judge Knochelmann asked if the city has been supportive of it.

Mr. Schroeder answered that they have been supportive.

Commissioner Sewell stated that it is a good neighborhood to put a library due to the close proximity to schools.

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**B. Resolution No. 23-33 (Action Requested)  
A Resolution supporting the use of site development funds by the Northern Kentucky Port Authority to fund the Fort Mitchell redevelopment project at 2477 Royal Dr., Fort Mitchell, Kentucky (\*formerly the Drawbridge Inn).**

Greg Berling, who represents the developer, stated that the sewer line is being upgraded due to regulations.

Judge Knochelmann stated that the county is using site development funds for this project.

Mr. Berling stated that there are a combination of funds going into this site. Funds from themselves, the State, the City and the County. There is a gap from the construction funds and the TIF, and this is helping to close that gap. On the site itself, it will be a combination of retail and restaurants. There will be a continuing care facility, partnering with St. Elizabeth. It is a top of the line facility. There is also an office building. It will be a great addition to Ft. Mitchell and the County.

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**C. Presentation regarding developments with the Kenton County Animal Services Department.**

Director of Animal Services, Kelsey Maccombs, presented on the history and accomplishments of the Kenton County Animal Services Department.

Judge Knochelmann stated that the County is mandated to have an Animal Shelter, and commended Kelsey and her team on all of their hard work.

Ms. Maccombs stated that she has worked for a lot of shelters, and she commends the Fiscal Court for all of their support.

**D. Claims List - Dated October 20, 2023**

There were no questions on the Claims List

**Resolutions**

**A. Resolution No. 23-01T**

## **A Resolution for the Kenton County Fiscal Court concerning Fiscal Year Budget Adjustments.**

Treasurer Roy Cox stated that the budget adjustment is \$1,012,165.00 to align the budget with the total ARPA Broadband Fiber Project cost.

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

### **Ordinances**

- A. Ordinance 226.17 - Second Reading  
An Ordinance of the Kenton County Fiscal Court, County of Kenton, Kentucky, amending Ordinances 78-6-1, 220.8, 223.0, 223.7, 225.19, 225.25, 225.48, 225.50, and 226.07 imposing regulations and license taxes (fees) on those engaged in franchises, trades, occupations, professions and other businesses in Kenton County.**

Treasurer Roy Cox stated that on the 60.197 KRS last year for 2023 we increased it to .8%, and increased it to 50% of the Social Security cap. What has been done with this is lowering the rate back down to .59%, and we are taking the Social Security all the way up to the cap on the payroll piece of it but on the net profit piece we are eliminating that. Although they will still be required to fill out the information for us so we can do the appropriations for the cities, the net profit tax for Kenton County is essentially being eliminated for Kenton County.

Judge Knochemann stated that there were some that thought our calculations were incorrect, but this last nine or ten months have proven that Roy Cox does an excellent job of looking to the future and estimating revenue. It has allowed us to validate it, and starting in January of 2024 we will have the lowest payroll tax rate in Kenton County since 1995. We are also doing away with the net profits tax. We have had the payroll cap at \$25,000 for almost 40 years, and have fixed it.

Treasurer Roy Cox stated that they were projecting for a \$10.6 million increase for the revenue for 2023, and the latest projections are \$12.1 million. That what allows the net profit tax to be brought down to zero. The number next year should be \$10.3 million.

Judge Knochemann stated that they have been talking about handling this how they did the increase, which was to do work behind the scenes and get it done. He plans to inform the cities tomorrow. He thanked Roy and Kurt for the great work.

Commissioner Sewell asked if businesses will still have to report, even though they aren't paying?

Judge Knochemann answered that they will need to report profits, but won't owe money.

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

### **Consent Agenda**

- A. Exhibit No. 23-186  
Request approval to award the Consultant Services-General Engineering/On-Call Services to Prime AE, Gresham Smith, GRW Engineers, and Palmer Engineering to perform the subject services for the Kenton County Fiscal Court.**

- B. Exhibit No. 23-187**  
Request approval to add the payroll module to the existing UKG Ready software system for the Kenton County Technology Services Department.
- C. Exhibit No. 23-188**  
Request approval to surplus a 2018 Dodge Charger for the Kenton County Sheriff's Office.
- D. Exhibit No. 23-189**  
Request approval of an agreement with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet for the Public Works Department to perform snow and ice removal operations on specific routes.
- E. Exhibit No. 23-190**  
Request approval to surplus a Plasma Cutter for the Kenton County Fleet Department.

All items on the Consent Agenda were voted on together.

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

#### Executive Orders

- A. Executive Order 23-127**  
Request approval of the reappointment of Dr. Kevin Wall, Dr. Shelly Voet and Gary Hampton to the Local Board of Health.

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

- B. Executive Order 23-128**  
Request approval of the resignation of Chris Goshorn as a Part-Time Evidence Custodian for the Northern Kentucky Drug Strike Force.

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

- C. Executive Order 23-129**  
Request approval of the appointment of Lisa Combs as a Part-Time Tax Clerk for the Kenton County Treasury Department.

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

- D. Executive Order 23-130**  
Request approval of the appointment of Shane McQueary as a Public Services Technician I for the Kenton County Public Works Department.

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

- E. Executive Order 23-131**

**Request approval of the promotion of James Rider from a Public Services Technician III to a Public Services Assistant Crew Leader for the Kenton County Public Works Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**F. Executive Order 23-132  
Request approval of the resignation of Hannah Feilhauer as the Human Resources Generalist/Recruiter for the Kenton County Administration.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**G. Executive Order 23-133  
Request approval of the step increase for Rebekah Carey as a Dispatcher II for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**H. Executive Order 23-134  
Request approval of the step increase for Trevor Baxter as a Dispatcher II for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**I. Executive Order 23-135  
Request approval of the step increase for Zachary Lawson as a Dispatcher II for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**J. Executive Order 23-136  
Request approval of the resignation of John Hooper as a Dispatcher for the Kenton County Emergency Communications Department.**

Commissioner Nienaber made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Sewell. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**K. Executive Order 23-137 (Action Requested)  
Request approval of the appointment of Dr. Holly Danneman to the Local Board of Health.**

Commissioner Sewell made the motion for approval; seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochemann called for a voice vote, and the motion passed unanimously 3 -0.

**Administrative Reporting**

**Emergency Communications**

Ashley Hawks stated that one of their hot topics has always been staffing. They have taken their time filling the Assistant Director position, because they wanted to make sure that they were giving the opportunity to everyone and find the best candidate. She introduced Kim Dornheggen as the new Assistant Director of Operations.

Kim Dornheggen stated that she has been with the County since 2012, and comes from Covington. She is grateful for the opportunity.

### **Emergency Management**

Steve Hensley stated that they were notified last week by the Governor's office that they will be transferring the Park and Ride located at 4111 Madison Pike, to Kenton County. Also, several technology updates have been made in the EOC. They have replaced all of the currently existing televisions with "smart televisions". This was accomplished with a 50% matching grant funded by Kentucky Emergency Management. They have also installed a video wall, exactly the same as the one in the Fiscal Court Chambers. This video wall is connected to both the Fiscal Court Chambers and the EOC, which will provide for overflow capacity should it be necessary. This project was paid for with a grant they received through the DUKE Energy Community Foundation.

### **Police Department**

Captain Gary Helton stated that Captain Chris Pittaluga will graduate from the Southern Police Institute's 150th Administrative Officers Course on November 10, 2023. The Administrative Officer's Course is a 480 hour leadership development course. The course curriculum is designed to develop informed, effective, ethically and technically competent law enforcement managers who are capable of assuming a position of leadership in their respective agencies. They would like to say congratulations to Captain Pittaluga on this accomplishment. Also, Recruit Jacob Brown will graduate from the Basic Police Academy at the Department of Criminal Justice Training on November 9, 2023. Recruit Brown will return to the Kenton County Police Department, and will finish his field training in the coming months.

Captain Helton then stated that with Halloween just one week away he wanted to share some basic Halloween safety tips:

### **Halloween Safety Tips**

1. Only Trick-or-Treat during your city's designated time period.
2. Children should be escorted by an adult while trick-or-treating.
3. Parents/Guardians should examine all candy before it is devoured.
4. Stick to the sidewalk or other safe walking areas. Avoid backyards or alleys.
6. Masks (although very scary) should not restrict vision or hearing.
7. Have a route planned with your kids.
8. Never invite children into your home and instruct children to never go into a stranger's home.
9. Carry a flash light!
13. Always look both ways before crossing the street.
14. Don't let your children stray from their group.
15. Carry your cell phone with you in case you need to summon Police or Emergency Medical Services.
16. Have fun, be seen and be safe!

### **Detention Center**

Chief Deputy Jailer Todd Rice stated that their population today is 541. As of today, they have 86 Deputies, so their numbers are increasing. They are still short, but it is a better position than they have been in since 2021. They have a new medical company named 3C that took over on

October 9<sup>th</sup>. The transition has gone very smoothly, and they are finally fully staffed in the medical department. It has been since 2015 since they have been fully staffed for medical. They will soon be renovating the yards. Also, he and Jailer Fields attended the Kentucky Jailer's Conference in Owensboro this month, and Billie Jo Kaiser attended the mental health conference put on by the American Jailer's Association. Lastly, they had their third annual Trunk or Treat event last Wednesday, and had over 800 children in attendance. They had many community partners such as the Police Departments throughout the county and the Life Learning Center. They also had a pumpkin carving contest.

### **County Attorney 's Report**

County Attorney Stacy Tapke had nothing to report.

### **Commissioners ' Reports**

#### **Commissioner Beth Sewell**

Commissioner Sewell had nothing to report.

#### **Commissioner Joe Nienaber**

Commissioner Nienaber stated that he got to witness first hand the work of the Dispatch Center and the Police Department, and congratulations to Kim Dornheggen. They do a wonderful job. Also, the Fiscal Court took a lot of heat about the taxes and he pays taxes on all of his businesses. One of the most complicated places to operate a small business is Kenton County. The fact that he doesn't have to pay net profits tax as a business owner is great. What the court did today is helping all the citizens of the cities, and it also makes Kenton County more attractive to businesses. That was always in the plan. The rooftops in Kenton County are taxed less by the Fiscal Court now than they have been in probably 28 years. It is more tax friendly place for businesses and for people to live. The dispatch fee has already been lowered. None of this is haphazard, and takes place over the course of time. Had they not taken the chances that they did, everybody that lives in Kenton County would be paying more property tax, a higher dispatch fee and the businesses in the county would still be looking at net profits. He does appreciate as a business owner the services they get in the county.

#### **Judge/Executive Knochelmann**

Judge Knochelmann had nothing to report.

### **Adjournment**

Having completed all business before the Court, Commissioner Sewell offered a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Nienaber. Judge Knochelmann requested a voice vote whereupon all members present voted in the affirmative with a 3-0 vote.

Text for all proposed and recently passed ordinances may be acquired by accessing the Fiscal Court web page at <http://www.kentoncounty.org> or by contacting the administrative offices at 859.392.1400.

### **CLERK CERTIFICATION**

I, Sue J. Kaiser, having been appointed to the office of Fiscal Court Clerk, do hereby certify that this is a true and accurate record of the actions taken by the Kenton County Fiscal Court at the meeting of October 24, 2023.

*Sue Kaiser*

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Sue J. Kaiser  
Fiscal Court Clerk