

**GALLATIN COUNTY FISCAL COURT**  
**February 9, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Gallatin County Fiscal Court was called to order by Judge Ryan Morris on February 9, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Gallatin County Extension Office Annex, Warsaw, Kentucky. The meeting was also streamed on Facebook Live. Magistrates present were Joel Shinkle, Ethan Moore, M. J Haddix and Donnie Sullivan. County Attorney Grant Axon was also present. Everyone stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

**Minutes:** M. J Haddix moved to approve the minutes from January 12, 2023. Donnie Sullivan seconded his motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:** Motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Ethan Moore and seconded by Joel Shinkle. All Ayes.

**Recognition of Audience:** Dave Bishop of Sayersville Road came before the court to bring to their attention the property across from him. He stated that it is a complete mess and getting worse, with nothing being done. He provided pictures to the court that dated from 2012 to the present and noted that the property is vacant. The further stated that the court needs to take action as there are legal steps that can and should be taken.

Magistrate Joel Shinkle asked Mr. Bishop if the house is the one that burnt. Mr. Bishop answered that it is. Judge Morris addressed Mr. Bishop, stating that his request is obviously reasonable and valid. It would fall under Code Enforcement and there are currently some developments there that should help us to make progress.

Magistrate M. J Haddix spoke in regard to Code Enforcement and referenced comments from the previous meeting. He asked if it was known how many citations were issued this month. Judge Morris stated that he did not know the number off hand, but acknowledged that more could be done. He further stated that action can and should be taken between now and the next meeting by all of the members of the court, as we can do better. Magistrate Sullivan echoed his comments and added that the county is a mess. Judge Morris also noted that a Code Enforcement Officer is in place and that pay is based on the number of hours worked in that capacity.

County Attorney Axon stated that his office is actively working on code enforcement matters now and looking at ordinance and structure change which will allow the county to be more effective.

**Vendor Claims:** Claims were presented for approval to pay which included the added blue sheet provided. Magistrate Shinkle made a motion to pay the bills as presented. Magistrate Haddix seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**January 2023 Financial Reporting**

1. Fund Cash Statement Summary – Treasurer Lesa Bullard presented the Fund Cash Statement Summary for the month ending January 31, 2023. Donnie Sullivan made a motion to approve the report and Ethan Moore seconded the motion. All ayes.
2. Budget Transfers – Joel Shinkle made a motion to approve the budget transfers for the month of January. Ethan Moore seconded his motion. All ayes.

3. Interfund Cash Transfers – M. J Haddix made a motion to approve the interfund cash transfers for the month of January. Donnie Sullivan seconded the motion. All ayes.
4. Budget Amendment #01122023 #8 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading. Insurance Proceeds Jail Vehicle. Motion to approve the budget amendment made by M. J Haddix and seconded by Donnie Sullivan. All ayes.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **2<sup>ND</sup> READING TOURISM ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

Judge Morris presented the Tourism Ordinance Amendment for its 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading. He noted that there were no changes from the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading.

Magistrate Haddix asked if there has been a discussion of how this could affect tax revenue. Judge Morris answered that there had not been, but this could add more eligible properties.

Magistrate Sullivan asked how the Tourism Tax is broken down. He was answered that the state gets 3% and the county gets 1%. Mr. Haddix followed-up by asked how much additional revenue will tourism then receive. Judge Morris answered that this would add Airbnb properties and campgrounds within the Transient Room Tax that addresses hotels and motels.

County Attorney Axon noted that this mimics the state's statute. Mr. Sullivan noted that since it affects his personal business he has researched this and most of the surrounding counties are already doing this.

County Treasurer Lesa Bullard explained that the Treasurer and Tourism coordinate to inform those who have business licenses, this must be paid so enforcement would be via the Judge's Office.

The court discussed the matter further with Magistrate Haddix noted that further options should be explored to soften the blow for those already paying. Magistrate Haddix then moved to table the discussion. Motion died for lack of second.

Mary Jane Day with Gallatin County Tourism noted that the tax is not applicable if the stay is over 30 days.

Judge Morris added that he is pretty firm on the tax due to it being paid by the transient and not the citizen operating the business. The question was then raised as to a required time for passage of the ordinance once the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading has taken place. Mr. Axon opined that there appears to be no maximum time frame for passage once the minimum time has passed.

Ethan Moore made a motion to table the item. M. J Haddix seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **DUKE ENERGY EASEMENT UPDATE**

Judge Morris informed the court that the easement documentation has been received and is being reviewed by County Attorney Axon.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **MELANIE STAFFORD OF TRIAD**

Melanie Stafford of Triad Health Systems came before the court and first off thanked Gallatin County for their support and stated how happy that Triad is to be part of the community. She provided information about what they offer including lesser known services such as Dentistry, Optometry Behavioral and Psychiatric therapy, as well as the new Pharmacy including free delivery in Gallatin County. Joe Shinkle thanked Mrs. Stafford for coming and stated to keep up the good work. His comments were echoed by the rest of the court. Judge Morris stated that he is certainly glad that Triad is in the county and thankful for the services provided. The impact is immeasurable.

### **GALLATIN COUNTY BABY BOX**

Lisa Klee came before the court to introduce the Sage Haven Baby Box Program. She explained that abandonment has become a greater issue than ever, and Kentucky has safe haven laws in place. She explained that the box is \$12,000 which she will fundraise for but will need funding for advertising as exposure is very important. She added that there is a 24/7 hotline and those counselors do everything they can to keep from abandonment being the ultimate result. Judge Morris informed the court that he and Treasurer Bullard have discussed that the EMS building could be utilized, with the court's approval of the location and the fundraising campaign.

Magistrate Haddix asked for confirmation that there is currently an abandonment program available with EMS and Fire. Sheriff Bud Webster answered that it is in place. Ms. Klee noted that while that option is great the Safe Haven boxes help to alleviate the face to face aspect which can often be a deterrent.

Magistrate Joel Shinkle moved to approve the fundraising campaign and located the box at the EMS building. Magistrate Haddix seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **COUNTY CLERK CHRISTINA MCENTIRE, VOTING MACHINES**

Gallatin County Clerk Christina McEntire came before the court to request funding for e-poll books for signing in during elections. She explained that the state has a contract, but it is up in May and early voting will occur prior to that. She further explained that the state has grant funds to cover the expense and there are two approved options. She has researched those options and the Board of Elections is in agreement with her selection which is supported by the software company that her office currently uses and has for many years. She added that the approval was for 20 which the county will have to pay for the up front and then be reimbursed by the state. Ethan Moore moved to approve the request for the 20 new e-poll books. Donnie Sullivan seconded the motion. All ayes.

### **PLANNING AND ZONING APPOINTMENT**

Judge Morris offered DeRhonda Lowe as an appointment to Planning and Zoning representing the Sparta area to replace Patrick Craig who has moved out of the county. Donnie Sullivan moved to approve the appointment. Joel Shinkle seconded. All ayes.

### **COMMENTS**

Magistrate Ethan Moore asked for an update on the airport project. Judge Morris informed he and the court that grading around the runway and taxiway is currently underway. The access road is being finished up and hope to have it done by spring. Lighting will follow, and other grants are in process to help with additional needs. The tentative opening date is June 13, 2023 but could be subject to change due to the lack of services, such as fuel, hangar, etc. Jim Hansen noted that there are 13 or so requests for hangar space currently.

Magistrate Sullivan asked who will maintain it. Judge Morris explained that the Airport Board is currently working on a business plan but without the mentioned items in place yet, many decisions cannot yet be made.

Magistrate Moore asked for an update on the County Sports Complex. Judge Morris stated that it is ready to be advertised for bids which will be handled by the City of Warsaw. He also noted that efforts are currently underway to get the poles for the approved lighting in order to get those up in by the time the seasons start this year. He mentioned further that other planning is on-going regarding the facility.

Magistrate Haddix brought up the issue of the School Resource Officer positions. He stated that he thinks it's a disgrace what is going on here and is happy to say that publicly. Specifically, in what the county is paying versus what the school is paying. He added that 60% of the property tax bills go to the school, not the county. Continuing, that the county has done a good job of saving and minding the budget while the school has a surplus while the program is costing the county an additional \$49,000.

Judge Morris stated that a discussion about the program should take place annually. With the tax rate change it became an issue in November and December, when it should have been addressed in the summer.

Mr. Haddix then stated that the county needs to be competitive in paying its deputies and it's really hard to do so when there is ample funding at the school level. The safety of children and staff are possibly being affected due to these issues. Magistrate Joel Shinkle added that it is a slap in the face.

Sheriff Webster explained to the court that he believes the date to close out the previous year's books is March 15 and the difference currently causing the hold up is due to the change in the school's tax rate.

Magistrate Haddix announced to the court that the School Board is having a special meeting tomorrow, February 10, 2023 at 2 pm. He encouraged everyone able to be in attendance.

Magistrate Joel Shinkle made a motion to go into closed session to discuss property acquisition per KRS 61.810 (1) (b). Donnie Sullivan seconded the motion. All ayes.

Magistrate Donnie Sullivan made a motion to come out of closed session. Ethan Moore seconded his motion. All ayes.

With no further business before the court, Joel Shinkle made a motion to adjourn. Ethan Moore seconded his motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Doug Miles  
Gallatin County Fiscal Court Clerk