

**GALLATIN COUNTY FISCAL COURT**  
**Special Meeting**  
**May 20, 2024**  
**5:00p.m.**

The Special Meeting of the Gallatin County Fiscal Court called to order by Judge Ryan Morris on May 20, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. at the Gallatin County Senior Center, 400 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Warsaw, Kentucky. Magistrates present were Ethan Moore, Donnie Sullivan, Joel Shinkle and M. J Haddix. County Attorney Grant Axon present. The meeting was recorded for later viewing. Everyone stood for the pledge of allegiance.

**Budget Caucus**

Ryan presented the first copy of the budget that had been submitted to DLG and approved. Magistrate M. J Haddix made the recommendation to raise the jail line to \$600,000.00 from \$550,000.00. M. J also stated he would like to lower the budget amendments. Magistrate Joel Shinkle asked about the State Police and City of Warsaw arresting people and the county is the one being charged to house the inmate. County Attorney Grant Axon advised there are ways to recoup some of the funds. There are ways to be reimbursed. Magistrate Ethan Moore asked about raising the Payroll Tax to 2.1%. Health insurance was the next topic discussed. Ryan advised he had checked with KACO it would be a 7% increase at \$798,000. Our current insurance with Anthem would be \$746,000.00. The new policy to take effect on June 1<sup>st</sup> for county employees taking health coverage will be with United Health Care costing the county \$649,000.00 that is a 13% decrease and that budget line is \$650,000.00. Magistrate Haddix asked about the fire, police and EMS chase vehicle that was discussed. He is wanting to know why both ambulances are going on calls. This is racking the miles on two new ambulances. M. J Haddix advised that EMS Director Brandon told him that it automatically populates squad 1. Judge Morris is going to contact Ryan Bailey and ask if there is a way that can be corrected. M. J asked where we were at with the NUCOR bonds. Ryan advised it can be discussed \$30,000.00 in lieu of payroll tax exemption 42 Kentucky employees and 30 out of state not eligible for exemption. Magistrate Haddix asked about an occupational tax? Magistrate Moore said it is hard to put a tax on people when times are already hard enough. Magistrate Haddix brought up a Fire Tax. He said there is room on the property tax bill to add it on. The ones who are complaining are the ones who are not paying the dues. He would like to see the fire dues put on the property tax bills. He asked how many parcels are in Gallatin County? Judge Morris advised around 49,000 parcels in Gallatin County. These are different ideas of generating more revenue. Glencoe and Gallatin County the number of bills sent out VS the number of bills paid is a large difference. M. J said maybe we do not give tax breaks every year. Magistrate Shinkle said we have the opportunities in Gallatin County. We have rail, interstate and water. Ryan said we are competing with our neighbor in Carroll County. Ryan advised he is going to meet with Carroll County Judge when he is back in office. He is currently out for health issues. Health insurance cost \$649,525.00 budget line is \$650,000.00. The insurance has increased due to the number of employees now working for the county. Ryan said it benefits us to have more officers and two fully staffed ambulances. Magistrate Shinkle stated he remembered paying for employee only and then next thing he knows we are paying whole family. It was never voted on. We currently have 7 family plans-\$22.29, 12 employee/dependent \$13.83, 5 employee/spouse \$16.14 and 18 employee \$7.76. An estimated 42 employees taking health insurance. Options were discussed about insurance to start charging a premium to the employee. Magistrate Haddix asked to get a survey from the

employees for the demographics to see where we stand. Judge Morris said it can be looked at as it has not been voted on yet. Magistrate Haddix brought up the Animal Shelter as the increase over the last few years. He asked Grant about cases with dogs that have went to court how long does the process take? Grant advised unfortunately longer than it should. He does not know a way to make it go any quicker. If we know a dog has bit someone or acted aggressively it does law enforcement to step in. M. J advised he is repeatedly seeing the same address come up for violent dog complaints. County Treasurer and Judge Morris told the court the Sheriff line they had been presented digital radios that would cost around \$130,000.00. These radios are safer and only law enforcement can hear. The scanners now everyone can hear and makes it easier for people to hear a name or address before law enforcement arrive. There are five towers in Gallatin County Eagle Tunnel, Hwy 455, Mars Dr, Knox Lillard and Hwy 465.

Magistrate Shinkle asked for a two minute recess

Judge Morris called meeting back to order resume Budget Caucus. Magistrate Haddix asked about the LGEA Special Project. Ryan advised the funds could be used with special projects at the sports complex or it could be used at the fairgrounds to update the fairgrounds land or go to help pay for rides. Magistrate Haddix asked about \$5,000.00 on each line for Baseball, Softball and T-Ball. Ryan advised there are 300 kids in all of the sports. No kid is turned away if they are unable to pay the \$25.00. There are bank accounts with debits and credits and this is audited in the annual big audit. Magistrate Haddix asked if there was a list of example Kid A-Paid, Kid B-Paid etc. Magistrate Shinkle said youth sports has gotten out of hand. Ryan said he does not agree. The program has grown from 100-300 and gets kids involved. M. J wants a better understanding of who has paid and who has not paid. Ryan advised that Youth Sports Director Dwayne Bowen could tell you how many kids have paid and have not paid. M. J said he does not want to situation of choosing public safety or youth sports he is picking public safety. Ryan can't imagine that we would get in that situation. The league insurance is \$5,000.00. LGEA funds are what paid off the fairgrounds. Special projects are things that come up that we didn't know would be needed. County Treasurer advised \$10,000.00 to Educational Excellence Program at the school and \$1,000.00 to Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Joel Shinkle said it is all on the parent involvement. Magistrate Donnie Sullivan said we need to keep youth sports and make it better. M. J asked Ryan how many kids are playing youth sports. Ryan said half of the schools population is playing predominantly 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Magistrate Haddix asked what are we doing to get kids involved in something other than sports. Magistrate Haddix is upset that he feels defeated and failed his people. He wanted the playground at the fairgrounds moved to the front and a splash pad that has been talked about for years at many meetings and nothing has happened. Ryan said they heard feedback from residents that they liked the playground by the walking track so parents could walk and the kids could play and they could keep an eye on them. Magistrate Haddix wants to support your budget but we have to find ways to generate funds. We need a grocery store. We are amking progress but we are just squeaking by. Ryan said he wanted to address this is not my budget this is our budget and this is why we are working together. Budget line for 911 the fees have dropped everything is going to cellular. Opioid (similar to CARES money) we have \$200,000.00 to spend with some stipulations. M. J asked if we could invest with no time table to spend. ARPA funds we have to know how we are going to spend by the end of the year. The next topics were brought up but no discussion: Ambulance, Airport Fund, Sewer Fund, Economic Development, Tourism, and AOC. Review of things discussed: Jail budget \$550,000.00 to

\$600,000.00, survey for insurance, What people are paying for Parks and Rec and Occupational Tax. Send to DLG with changes. Special Meeting Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Gallatin County Senior Center.

**Closed Session**

Magistrate M. J Haddix made a motion to exit in to Closed Session for discussion of KRS 61.810(1)(b). Magistrate Ethan Moore seconded the motion.

**Exit Closed Session**

Magistrate M. J Haddix made the motion to exit closed session. Magistrate Ethan Moore seconded the motion

**ADJOURN**

Magistrate M. J Haddix made a motion to adjourn. Magistrate Ethan Moore seconded. All ayes.