

HENDERSON COUNTY FISCAL COURT–MINUTE & ORDER BOOK

Record of Regular Meeting Minutes from 1/13/2026

Court convened for a Regular Meeting at the Courthouse, Henderson, KY on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. County Judge/Executive Brad Schneider presiding.

Call To Order

County Judge/Executive Brad Schneider called the meeting to order.

Invocation

The invocation was given by Judge Schneider

Pledge Of Allegiance

Judge/Executive Schneider led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Magistrate Berry	Absent
Magistrate Puttman	Present
Magistrate Southard	Present
Magistrate Starks	Present
Magistrate Tompkins	Present

Minutes December 23, 2025 Regular Meeting

Magistrate Puttman made a motion to approve the December 25, 2025 Fiscal Court Regular Meeting minutes as submitted. Magistrate Southard seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all present voting in favor and the motion carried.

Judge's Scholar –Izabella Sutton – North Middle School

A proclamation was read and presented to Izabella Sutton, who was named the North Middle School Judge's Scholar.

WARM Grant Conflict of Interest – Judge Schneider

Under guidance from Department for Local Government, Judge Schneider disclosed that his wife, Kelly Schneider, is a sitting board member of Women's Addiction Recovery Manor (W.A.R.M.) This is a volunteer position, in which she derives no benefit, but because local government grant money flows through the Fiscal Court, Judge Schneider was advised to disclose in case there were any questions regarding a conflict of interest.

Emergency Sirens Upgrade – EMA Director Kenny Garrett

EMA Director, Kenny Garrett, recapped a power failure with the Henderson County Emergency Weather Siren Network System that occurred during storms at the end of December. He said that an outage interrupted and prevented the sirens from sounding. He was able to circumvent the system, making it work for the rest of the evening. Upon inspection the next day, Mr. Garrett detected battery failure. On January 5th the battery was replaced and the system was isolated as a stand-alone system rather than being shared with the hospital, as it had been. Mr. Garrett said this made him think of improvements and is proposing changes. He referred to the system Henderson County currently has as an "all or nothing" system which sounds the sirens at every location regardless of where the actual threat is occurring. Mr. Garrett said that this produces a bit of complacency because people begin to ignore them. He said he would like to upgrade to a system from Federal Signal Safety and Security designed to reduce the warning to the areas potentially affected. This upgrade is not a budgeted expense and the cost to purchase the software and computer is \$11,075.00. He said there is a \$6,300.00 annual software renewal fee included in the cost to purchase. Other add-ons offered include a lightning alerting siren that can be placed in areas of high congregation. The lightning Alerting Siren goes off if lightning strikes within so many miles of the system. The cost for that is \$2500.00. Judge Schneider said if the court votes to authorize the purchase it would be possible to transfer money from the Contingency Line to EMA's Budget.

Magistrate Puttman made a motion to authorize the purchase from Federal Signal Safety of the needed upgrade and one of the lightning alert sirens. Magistrate Southard seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all present voting in favor and the motion carried.

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Insurance Premium Tax Discussion – Judge Schneider

Judge Schneider recommended amending the tax ordinance to cut the insurance premium tax in half from 9.75% to 4.875% which will ultimately save the taxpayers in the county over \$2,000,000.00. He said the court has been discussing, for over a year, how they could reduce taxes. He added that it's possible to do so because of the county's performance financially and because of the addition of coal severance tax produced by the new mine in Henderson County. He voiced that, of the 3 main revenue streams (property tax, insurance premium tax and net profits/occupational tax), insurance premium tax would be the most advantageous to the taxpayers because not everyone in the county owns a home or operates a business but everyone has insurance of some type and pay taxes on the insurance. The Judge also stated that Magistrate Southard, a long-time champion of the tax cut, reminded him that this tax cut will alleviate the burden on many businesses in the county, such as farms or trucking companies that insure lots of equipment. Magistrate Puttman inquired when the process would take place? Judge Schneider said if the court wants to move forward, an amended ordinance would need to be approved before sending the intention to the Department of Insurance's deadline of March 23rd, 2026. The change would take place for taxpayers beginning July 1, 2026.

Magistrate Southard made a motion to amend the tax ordinance to cut insurance premium tax from 9.75% to 4.875%. Magistrate Tompkins seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all voting in favor and the motion carried.

Bid Opening – 2026 Road Department Material Bids - County Engineer Nick Stallings

Nick opened the following sealed material bids for rock, concrete and culverts that were received.

Rock material bids were received and opened for various sizes of rock material, river sand & gravel from Audubon Sand and Gravel & Mulzer Crushed Stone, Inc.

Ohio Valley Drainage LLC and Winwater Hartford supplied bids for culvert pipe.

Meuth Concrete was the only bidder for concrete

All bid prices were read aloud to the court and the clerk will make sure copies of each bid are available to each Magistrate.

Nick would like to take these bids under review and return to court at a later date with his recommendations. He also wants to look at the State Contract for metal culverts.

Coroner's Report – Coroner Sheila Patterson

Coroner Patterson recapped the number of cases for calendar year 2025, saying they had a total of 139. She reported that they continue to sign for cremations over and above the cases that they work. She said they had a total of 164 that they signed for in 2025. Ms. Patterson also reported that they have started out strong for the new year with 7 cases, so far.

Approval of the County Fee Office Budget (Sheriff's Office) – Sheriff Chip Stauffer

Sheriff Stauffer presented the proposed fee budget as required by the State Local Finance Office. They have increased the budget by 10% over what they estimated last year's submitted January revenue budget to be. Judge Schneider explained the true budget for the Sheriff will be determined during the county's budgeting process.

A motion was made by Magistrate Southard to approve the Sheriff's Proposed 2026 Fee Budget. Magistrate Starks seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all present voting in favor and the motion carried.

County Sheriff's Monthly Report – Sheriff Chip Stauffer

The Sheriff's monthly reports were presented to the court for acceptance.

Magistrate Puttman made a motion to accept the Sheriff's monthly report into the record. Magistrate Tompkins seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all present voting in favor and the motion carried.

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County Attorney Steve Gold presented a report of payments dated January 13, 2026 and turned over \$22,575.99 in various checks to the court.

Magistrate Puttman made a motion to accept the County Attorney's monthly report into the record. Magistrate Tompkins seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all present voting in favor and the motion carried.

Fund Transfers – Treasurer Brenda Rider

This is redistributing appropriations within the existing budget. There were cash transfers from the State Grants Fund to the Jail Fund for \$24,197.72 to the LGEA Fund for \$24,234.52 to correct errors of the state making deposits into the wrong accounts.

Magistrate Puttman made a motion to approve the transfers. Magistrate Southard seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all present voting in favor and the motion carried.

Claims – Treasurer Brenda Rider

Treasurer Brenda Rider presented the following for payment.

General Fund:	\$530.33	Lowes (Judicial Center repairs)
	\$600.00	Toni Hudspeth (Sheriff Dept. Travel & Training)
Road Fund:	\$5,152.67	Nick Stallings (Training Incentive)
Jail Fund:	\$900.66	Advanced Document Solutions (Copier Expenses)
	\$6,492.23	U. S. Bank (Credit Card)

Magistrate Southard made a motion to pay the claims. Magistrate Puttman seconded the motion. A voice vote was held. All present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Old Business

Judge Schneider reminded the court that they voted on two measures at the last meeting. One was to refer to the Planning Commission Staff the request to develop text involving a cap on the amount of acreage in the county that can be developed for solar farms. The Planning Commission is in the process of honoring that request. He explained that a resolution will be required for the second item which is creating a moratorium on BESS applications, while text changes and updates are considered to the BESS ordinance.

Resolution # 26-01 -BESS Moratorium

RESOLUTION ORIGINATING PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT TO HENDERSON COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE (FOUND IN THE HENDERSON COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES IN APPENDIX A THEREOF) WHICH WOULD AMEND ARTICLE XXXII BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS(BESS) OF SAID ORDINANCE TO INSTITUTE A MORATORIUM ON TIER 2 BESS SYSTEMS AND REFERRAL TO THE HENDERSON CITY-COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION (HCCPC) IN COMPLIANCE WITH KRS 100.211; AND DIRECTING THE HCCPC, THE HENDERSON COUNTY CODES ADMINISTRATOR AND COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT NOT TO ACCEPT OR PROCESS APPLICATIONS FOR BESS PROJECTS DURING HEARING PROCESS

Judge Schneider read the resolution into record.

Magistrate Tompkins made a motion to approve the resolution. Magistrate Southard seconded the motion. A voice vote was held with all voting in favor and the motion carried.

Good of the County

Reverend Charles Johnson, Executive Director for Henderson Human Rights Commission – Extended an invitation to everyone for the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration to be held at 12:00 pm., Monday January 19, at First United Methodist Church.

Cindy Bickwermert – said Jeremy Harnes from Geronimo Power Unbridled Solar reported in August that 4,000 solar panels were damaged by hail and 32 by gunfire and were to be sent to Arizona for recycling. She said she spoke to the Communication Engagement Specialist for the company on Friday and was told that a total of 9600 have been replaced and wanted to know if

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Fiscal Court was aware of the change in numbers. Judge Schneider replied, "NO." Ms. Bickwermert opined she had been following, in good faith, and correct info was either not given or given incorrectly. She also remarked that it doesn't seem to be very transparent. She did not report whether she inquired with the company as to what the change in numbers could be from, only that they were different from what was reported in August. Ms. Bickwermert went on to say that she has been informed the model of damaged solar panel is a First Series 7-TR1 and is concerned about environmental impacts such as leeching from what she referred to as chemicals, (elements) such as cadmium and tellurium. She stated that proper testing must be done. Judge Schneider asked her if she notified State EPA regarding her concerns. She had not. Ms. Bickwermert inquired whether a Magistrate or the County Codes Department could go out and check for leeching. Judge Schneider told her that neither Magistrates nor County Codes have the expertise required to do so and she needed to contact State EPA and that he would send her the information on how to do so. Ms. Bickwermert added that the time for testing is while the moratorium is in place.

David Mays – lives on Middle Delaware Road, which has recently been blacktopped. He said he asked one of the employees from the asphalt company, who was performing the work, why they were blacktopping it and he said they told him they did not know. Mr. Mays then alleged that the road is being prepared for the Wind Turbine Project. He said that he feels the amount of blacktop that was placed on the road was 5 or 6 inches deep and, in his opinion, is an unusual amount which has created a danger on the road shoulder. The County Engineer, Nick Stallings, came up to the microphone to explain that Mr. Mays was incorrect and presented facts that refute what Mr. Mays thought to be true. He said that the calculated tonnage of asphalt for the 4.67 miles of road at 1 ½ inches thick equated to 3,990 tons. The invoiced amount from the contractor was for 3,860 tons of asphalt. Mr. Stallings added further, that if the road was asphalted at 4 to 5 inches thick, as Mr. Mays alleges, then the contractor would have had to provide a massive amount of free asphalt and contractors are not in the business of giving away free product. Mr. Mays then asked why they blacktopped as far as they did. Mr. Stallings said that they paved to the intersection and it is his goal to pave any gravel roads in the county when the county can afford to do so. Further, he tries to coordinate the paving with other paving projects that are underway in order to save the contractors from just sitting idle and not being paid. Mr. Mays agreed that that made sense. Mr. Stallings also told Mr. Mays that the issue is on the shoulder of the road and explained that the operator, trained on the shoulder widening machine who was tasked with working on that particular road, became ill mid project, to the point that he has had to retire. He said they are now trying to get others trained to complete the work and it takes time. Mr. Stallings added that no one has ever instructed him to do any county job for preparation of the Wind Turbine Project and he has not even seen the map of the proposed sites issued by Cordelio. He agreed to meet with Mr. Mays and do a core sample as proof. Mr. Mays wanted to continue discussing the Wind Turbine Project and Judge Schneider cut him off, reminding him that now that the matter has been referred to the Planning Commission for Public Hearings it should not be continued in Fiscal Court and encouraged Mr. Mays to attend those hearings and give his opinion there.

There being no further business to come before the court, Magistrate Tompkins made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Magistrate Southard.


 Brad Schneider
 County Judge Executive

ATTEST:


 Angela Comer
 Fiscal Court Clerk