

“Sheriff”

(Cont. from front)

shows a budget for 2014 of \$471,740. The budget figure, showing a much larger monthly contribution by the court (\$9,777) and includes a \$1 hourly wage increase for employees, brought the budget figure to \$524,560.

McNew said the extra contribution would be used to hire more part time personnel.

The court didn't take any action on the 2014 budget. They will be in special session next Tuesday to go over the sheriff's budget and the budget of Danetta Allen, County Clerk.

Rockcastle County Industrial Development Authority Executive Director Holly Hopkins was present to present the court with the monthly contribution required for the authority of \$8,983. Hopkins also made a report on employees at SourceHOV. She said the figure was now up to 312, all working overtime, and the company was “still looking for employees.”

Hopkins said she would be at a Job Fair in Hazard on Dec. 17th where local companies, Plastisud, Anchor, EST Tool and SourceHOV would all be interviewing miners with a mechanical bent to fill machinist position they have available.

Robert Lawson, Executive Director of the Kentucky Music Hall of Fame (KMHF) was before the court to ask for financial assistance.

Lawson said that KMHF did not get any state funds and were in the process of kicking off a Capital Fund Raising Campaign which would include a telethon at which several artists had agreed to perform.

Lawson's main request was for \$11,189 to upgrade their “Point of Sale” system. “Our POS system is shot. We are using the same credit card system we had 12 years ago.”

Lawson said they ap-

plied for grants from the state every year but were always told there was no help available. “However, they give \$5 million to the Artisan Center in Berea plus \$2.3 million from the Transportation Cabinet because they are designated as a rest area. They also gave \$125,000 to a two-day poetry festival in Owensboro this year. We only asked for \$100,000 and we operate year round.”

County Judge/Executive Buzz Carloftis said he would contact Elaine Wilson, a state tourism official, to make her aware of the facility and see if any help could be obtained. County Attorney Billy Reynolds suggested that the KMHF try to get a rest area designation for their facility. “The John Lair House is a lot closer to the interstate than the Artisan Center,” Reynolds remarked.

The court asked to see the organization's budget for the year as a prerequisite to making the \$11,000 donation.

As one of the final items of business, the court transferred \$150,000 from the occupational tax fund to the general fund. \$110,000 of that amount will be transferred to the detention center to meet two payrolls, health insurance and retirement and \$40,000 will remain in the general fund.

“Stabbing”

(Cont. from front)

in charge of the investigation.

After being stabbed multiple times, Childress said Mason is able to talk and stand for short periods of time. He said they were also able to get a search warrant for Mason's home so they could survey the crime scene.

Childress went on to say they have a suspect in the robbery and attempted murder but that they couldn't release their name at this time due to the nature of the investigation.

“Rates”

(Cont. from front)

crease from \$5.32 to \$5.63 per thousand.

Outside the city, customers will pay a base rate of \$27.37 for 2,000 gallons or less instead of \$25.83, \$8.75 per thousand instead of \$8.26 for the next 8,000 gallons, 40,000 gallons of water or more will increase from \$6.51 to \$6.90 per thousand and 50,000 gallons or more will increase from \$5.78 to \$6.12 per thousand.

The base sewer rate for customers using 2,000 gallons or less will be \$24.19, up from \$22.83. For customers using over 2,000 gallons, the sewer rate will be \$4.35 per thousand instead of \$4.11.

Brodhead Clerk Becky Bussell also pointed out to the council that the combined monthly base rate for city water and sewer customers will increase to \$45.59, which is only a \$2.56 increase from \$43.03.

The proposed water and sewer rate increase came as a result of the water rate study that was presented to the commissioners at the September council meeting.

GRW engineers told the council that if they didn't increase their rates, they will have an estimated net revenue of -\$14,914 in 2013, -\$14,014 in 2014, -\$17,184 in 2015, -\$20,150 in 2016 and -\$23,206 in 2017.

They also said the figures in the rate study included projected operation and maintenance expenses of 3 percent each year, the 36% increase, implemented by Mt. Vernon Waterworks in September 2012 and the loan from Rural Development that was used to construct a new storage tank in 2009, helped spin the figures into the negative since the future principal and interest payments will total approximately \$10,260 annually until 2047.

After no discussion, the council agreed unanimously to approve the first reading

of the water and sewer rate increase. Bussell said if the second reading is passed by the council during the January council meeting then the ordinance will go into effect in February 2014.

“Audit”

(Cont. from front)

expenditures, compliance issues, food service issues, grant issues or other financial issues. The audit also showed a balance of almost \$4 million which is slightly down from last year's \$4.2 million. The reduction in the balance represented a stimulus used for some teachers' salaries which had to be put back into the school district's regular payroll fund.

“Overall this was a very good audit. Any audit where we can issue a clean opinion is a good audit,” Shackleford said. “In other words if things are not in good shape we have to qualify our opinion. We don't have that situation here. You guys have a good school system and are doing a good job.”

However, board member Angela Mink questioned the section in the audit that listed issues with several of the county school's activity funds. The school activity fund comments in the audit includes bank statements not being examined and initialed by principals, receipt forms not being completed properly, purchase orders being improperly executed and ticket requisitions not properly completed.

Shackleford said these issues are required to be noted in the audit so they can be corrected the following year. He said they are minor issues and that out of the twelve school districts he has audited, eleven of them have also had the same or similar issues.

Chief Financial Officer Melanie Lyons agreed with Shackleford and told the board that each school that has issues with school activity funds has been contacted and informed of those par-

ticular issues. She said this is a common thing on the audit and that they are correctable mistakes.

“Every school with these issues have been made aware of the situation and the findings in the audit. These findings need to be taken with a grain of salt but we still need to be conscientious of them,” Lyons said. “These things are viewed on a random basis by auditors. A principal might sign and initial everything right all year. But one day while they have fifteen other interruptions they might forget to sign a certain form that the auditors then notice during the audit. That's what a lot of these things consist of but they are all correctable.”

After much discussion, the board approved the 2012-2013 audit.

Lyons also presented the 2014 workers compensation insurance to the board. She said the district will continue to stay with Kentucky Employers' Mutual Insurance and that the \$110,756 premium is over \$7,000 less than last year's premium of \$117,083.

“Claims have been going down since 2012 which has a lot to do with the reduced premium,” Lyons said. “All the education and safety training for employees has also helped as well. Everything we have been doing has paid off for us in the long run.”

The board agreed unani-

mously to approve the proposed workers compensation plan for 2014.

In the final item of business, Superintendent David Pensol recommended that the board allow him and district staff to begin designing a plan to implement all-day kindergarten classes in Rockcastle County Schools.

Pensol said that he believes this is a high priority because of the “significant disadvantage” the kindergartners currently have in the school system. He also pointed out to the board that Rockcastle County Schools, along with six other school districts, are the only school systems in the state that are not already operating an all-day kindergarten program.

“We have known for years that Rockcastle was one of a few districts maintaining a half day program. But we can no longer allow this practice to place our children at such an academic risk,” Pensol said. “Rockcastle County schools must pull together to make all-day kindergarten a reality for our children.”

The board agreed unanimously to allow Pensol and other district staff members to design a plan for all-day kindergarten to be presented at the next board meeting. Pensol said they will meet with all the elementary principals and kindergarten staff later this week and that many of them will also likely be present during the proposed plan during next month's board meeting.

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