

Paris City Commission
525 High Street Paris, KY 40361
Commission Chambers – Room 121
Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Present:

City: Mayor, John Plummer; Commissioner, Sharon Fields; Commissioner, Tim Gray; Commissioner, Stan Galbraith.

County: Judge Executive, Michael Williams; Magistrate, Bart Horne; Magistrate, Lewis Stubblefield; Magistrate, Henry Lovell.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Joint Agency: Central Dispatch (E911)

Judge Williams discussed E911 services, including alternative call routing through Dry Ridge and the program's ongoing funding. He explained that the E911 Board operates under an interlocal agreement and is currently funded through landline phone fees. He noted that the City of Paris has voluntarily chosen to partner with Bourbon County to continue providing E911 services, though it is not required to do so.

Joint Agency: Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

A new ambulance has been ordered and is expected to arrive in August or September, with another unit on order that is projected to take approximately two years for delivery. Rising costs remain a concern, and preparations are being made to manage those increases.

There is a significant outstanding balance owed to the City of Paris by the agency. Mike Withrow reported that over \$800,000 is still owed by the County. He emphasized the need to generate additional revenue to maintain service levels and stated that it is the County's responsibility to provide EMS services, including the creation of a taxing district.

Commissioner Fields inquired whether Millersburg and North Middletown could contribute to EMS funding. Judge Williams responded that limited financial resources prevent those municipalities from participating at this time.

Commissioner Galbraith expressed concern that the County's current monthly payment made to the EMS Board is insufficient to cover the agency's ongoing financial deficit.

Joint Agency: Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Board appointments are split between the City and County, making it difficult to reach a quorum for meetings. A quorum requires five members present, based on total board positions, not just those in attendance. Due to the lack of a quorum, the board was unable to vote on awarding the fireworks contract. If a quorum is not met at the August meeting, fireworks approval will not move forward.

There was a question about whether appointees must live within city limits; the response was that it is preferred, but not required.

Judge Williams expressed interest in placing the County-owned property on Millersburg Road under the Parks and Recreation Board's oversight. The goal is for the board to manage and maintain the park moving forward.

Mike Withrow noted that new board members are only involved in voting but need more staff guidance to stay focused on objectives.

Sharon raised concerns about a Parks and Recreation audit, which cited safety issues and outdated equipment. Judge Williams responded that while some issues have been addressed, repairs and replacements are costly equipment upgrades alone could total \$250,000. Improvements are being made gradually as funding allows. The board voted to dismantle the bleachers due to the high cost of refurbishment; spectators will now be expected to bring their own chairs.

Mayor Plummer asked if the county was still considering hiring for the Parks Director position. Judge Williams stated that the Fiscal Court interviewed candidates and made a recommendation. The Fiscal Court declined to approve the hire twice. The position remains vacant, with no current discussions underway to fill it.

Project Status: County Park - 1054 Millersburg Rd

A permanent restroom facility is planned for the park, and existing infrastructure is already in use by various groups, including the high school tennis team, pickleball tournaments, Project Graduation, and other community activities.

Hinkle Construction has completed the turn lanes into the park from US 68. Phase 2 of the project includes building two multipurpose athletic fields, allowing different sports to be played simultaneously. This \$7 million project is funded by

state and federal sources, with \$3 million included in the current year's budget through support from Senator Steve West and Representative Matt Koch. The project does not impact local taxes.

The fields will accommodate up to six soccer games or four baseball games at once. Plans include artificial turf with removable striping and a drainage system to reduce rainouts. Parking will include a mix of paved and gravel areas, with paved spaces designated for handicap access. However, there is currently not enough funding for a permanent building.

A land-use agreement is in place with Paris Independent Schools, and one is being developed with Bourbon County Schools. In the meantime, Bourbon County agriculture students are using the property to grow corn and soybeans.

Phase 2 is expected to be completed by November 27, 2025.

Project Status: Cleaner Water Project - Sanitary Sewer

A sewer line is being planned to serve Millersburg Park. The project is still in the design and specification phase, and it involves coordination with the Kentucky Highway Department. A pump station is being considered as part of the system. An application will be submitted to the Kentucky Division of Water within the next four weeks, with bidding expected by the end of the year. The project is estimated to take 270 days, with completion anticipated by the end of 2026. Funding is expected to fully cover the project, with no shortfall anticipated.

Judge Williams explained that the project is funded through federal money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Each county received funds based on population, but cities did not receive direct allocations. The County chose to partner with the City of Paris as the utility provider. A second request was made to allocate all remaining ARPA funds to this sanitary sewer project.

Project Status: Former Transfer Station - 1004 Stewart Street

Both the City and County have approved the conveyance of the old transfer station property. Pat Darnell is completing a new survey, which is required before the deed can be recorded. Phase 1 of the project is already underway, with Tetra Tech managing the work.

The City cannot apply for grants while owning the property, so the Fiscal Court will submit the grant application. The grant deadline is September 1st. Once the project is complete, ownership of the property will transfer back to the City of Paris.

Request for Connection: Skyview Drive to a City Street

Skyview Drive is a county-maintained road, and MDATT, LLC is proposing to connect it to a new development in the City. The Paris Fire Department requested a secondary access point for emergency situations in case the primary entrance is blocked. The Fiscal Court must now decide whether to allow this connection, as it impacts traffic flow and neighborhood residents.

A concern was raised about the necessity of the connection. An alternative solution was proposed to allow the connection but install a locked gate that would only be opened in emergencies. A petition opposing the connection and an email from resident Lynda Lyndco were submitted and entered into the record.

Fire Chief Duffy explained that developments require multiple access points for safety. Past incidents have shown that if a fire hydrant or road becomes inaccessible, the entire area can be cut off. While a gated emergency entrance would help, Skyview Drive is not ideal for through traffic. Still, the connection was part of the initial subdivision design and approved by the Planning Commission.

Planning and Zoning Director Michelle Thornsburg confirmed that the second entrance onto Skyview Drive was part of the approved plan on July 21, 2022.

It was noted that once traffic reaches 80 trips, a third-party study is recommended, and the study identified Skyview Drive as the best emergency route. However, it was acknowledged the decision should have been vetted earlier in the process. It was recommended allowing access with a locked emergency gate, marked "No Parking," and equipped with a Knox Box for fire department access.

No actions or decisions were taken. This connection is an action item for the fiscal court.

Community Participation: 250th Anniversary of the Country

The year 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of 1775. To honor this historic milestone, there is interest in planning special events and activities for July 4th. It was recommended that the City of Paris and Bourbon County work together to organize a meaningful celebration.

Commissioner Fields shared that the anniversary is on the agenda for this week's Tourism and Chamber of Commerce meetings.

Judge Williams encouraged all groups to combine their resources to create a county-wide event stating there may also be grant funding available to help support the celebration. Early planning and collaboration will be key to making the event a success.

General Discussion: Other

Bart Horne recognized Ashley Jacobey for her outstanding efforts in organizing the girls' softball program, noting that she successfully registered 120 participants. He commended her dedication and contribution to youth sports in the community.

Judge Williams suggested consolidation of city and county governments. No responses were given.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Stan Galbraith, seconded by Bart Horne to adjourn the meeting at 12:19 p.m.