

TERM OF COMMISSION: May Session of the January Adjourned Term

PLACE OF MEETING; Roger B. Wilson Boone County Government Center
Boone County Commission Chambers

PRESENT WERE: Presiding Commissioner Kip Kendrick
District I Commissioner Justin Aldred
District II Commissioner Janet Thompson
Joint Communications Director Christie Davis (via phone)
Court Administrator Derek Hux
Sheriff Dwayne Carey

Conference Call Information:

Number: 425-585-6224 Access Code: 802-162-168

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. and roll call was taken.

Joint Communications

1. First Reading: Asset transfer agreement with City of Columbia for assets located at the former Joint Communications site

Joint Communications Director Christie Davis stated she is presenting an asset transfer cooperative agreement with the City of Columbia for a shelter and generator located at the Walnut Water Tower site. All radio equipment has been removed, and the location has been decommissioned. City of Columbia Power and Light has expressed interest in keeping the equipment and shelter instead of Boone County selling or demolishing them. Commissioner Kendrick requested the Deputy Clerk to place the matter on the May 21, 2026, Commission meeting agenda for a second reading.

Purchasing

2. Second Reading: Award of Contract C001098 from Cooperative Contract 011124-GAL for Uniforms with Related Products and Services -Term & Supply with Galls, LLC. – **First Read 05.14.2026**

Commissioner Aldred moved now on this day, the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby approve Contract C001098 from Cooperative Contract 011124-GAL for Uniforms with Related Products and Services – Term & Supply with Galls, LLC. The terms of the agreement are set out in the attached contract and the Presiding Commissioner is authorized to sign the same.

Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion
The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #254-2026**

3. Second Reading: Amendment #1 to C000746 (060122-BAI) – BOMAG Tandem Roller with CMW Equipment for the Boone County Road and Bridge Department – **First Read 05.14.2026**

Commissioner Thompson moved now on this day, the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby approve the award of Amendment #1 for C000746 (060122-BAI) – BOMAG Tandem Roller for the Boone County Road and Bridge Department. The contract amendment is set out in the attached and the Presiding Commissioner is authorized to sign the same.

Commissioner Aldred seconded the motion
The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #253-2026**

Circuit Court

4. Second Reading: Budget Amendment for Dept 1242 (Juvenile Detention) Final ARPA Distribution – **First Read 05.07.2026 (Open Public Hearing)**

Court Administrator Derek Hux requested that the Commissioners not proceed with the second reading of this amendment. A different amendment is being prepared to be filed. Commissioner Kendrick requested the Deputy Clerk to remove the amendment request from the agenda.

Resource Management

5. Second Reading: Adopt-a-Road Program – Approve application for Clellie Harmon Road – **First Read 05.14.2026**

Commissioner Aldred moved now on this day, the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby approve the attached Adopt-a-Road request by Southern Boone Senior Beta Club to adopt Clellie Harmon Road from Crump Lane to Edwards Lane.

Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion
The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #256-2026**

Sheriff's Office

6. First Reading and Public Hearing: Calling for a special election on August 4, 2026, on the question of whether to impose a law enforcement services sales tax.

Sheriff Dwayne Carey requested a special election on the question of whether to impose an expanded law enforcement services sales tax. He acknowledged that the request comes at a difficult time. Sheriff Carey stated that, if there were an alternative to this request, he would do that instead, but his office has reached a tipping point that must be addressed. Sheriff Carey thanked the jail administrators that he has worked with over the last 21 years and stated that the overcrowding in the facilities is not a new problem.

Sheriff Carey stated that a new jail was built in 1991 to address overcrowding in the existing facility. This increased capacity from 72 to 182. Fifty of these beds were designed for work release-eligible detainees. These were detainees who left the facilities during the day to go to work and returned at night, so the spaces were not meant to accommodate full-time living quarters. This program is no longer used, so the space has been converted into triple-bunk rooms. These primarily house the female population.

Sheriff Carey stated that there are currently 201 detainees housed in other counties and 183 housed in the Boone County jail. The historic high has been more than 240 housed outside of Boone County. There are currently detainees being housed in 12 Missouri counties with another soon to be included. Currently, 98-99% of the jail population are charged with felonies. There are currently 29 detainees charged with homicide and 25 are being held for mental health concerns while waiting for transfer to the Department of Mental Health. An estimated 20% of the population have mental health concerns but are not certified for transfers. Sixty-three detainees have been charged with armed criminal action, 24 charged with unlawful use of a weapon, 31 robbery suspects, 27 charged with domestic violence with physical injury, seven rape suspects, and six statutory rape suspects. These detainees cannot be released into society to lower population levels.

Sheriff Carey stated that the Boone County Jail was the first in the State of Missouri to be NIJO (National Institute for Jail Operations) certified. All policies and procedures are based upon case law and best practices. When detainees are sent to other county jails, those facilities may not be

held to similar standards. Before any detainees are sent to a new facility, administrators are sent to said facility to inspect safety and standards.

Sheriff Carey stated that all extra spaces in surrounding mid-Missouri county jails have been filled by detainees from Boone County, so counties further away have been contracted with. Sheriff Carey stated that Jackson County just moved into a new jail slightly over a week ago, and they are already overcrowded. Boone County detainees have been sent to Lincoln County and Jefferson County near St. Louis. Sheriff Carey stated that he may need to establish communication with counties in Iowa and Illinois.

Sheriff Carey stated that, when numbers are lower, he evaluates the cost of building a new brick-and-mortar facility versus housing detainees outside the county. If there are 40-50 out-of-county detainees, the cost threshold is not met. Sheriff Carey stated that, over the last three to four years, the number of detainees has risen sharply. In 2025, around \$2.5 million was spent on out-of-county housing. The projected spending in 2026 is \$4 million. Operating costs have risen, so where it used to cost \$30 per day to house a detainee out-of-county, it now costs \$100 per day.

Sheriff Carey stated that due process is negatively affected when detainees are housed outside of the county. As an example, when a public defender is required to travel to Greene County, they must travel three to four hours each way, so it is an all-day trip. This causes a further delay in due process, and the system will never catch up to the needs. When detainees are housed in Boone County, they have access to their representation, support networks, and a higher standard of care.

Sheriff Carey stated that mental health is also a big concern. In the 1960s and 1970s, mental health was deinstitutionalized with a promise for state and federal funding to help in the transition. That funding has never been delivered, and significant cuts have been made in the last decade. The Boone County Sheriff's Office does not have a facility designed for detainees with mental health concerns. There are some staff who provide mental healthcare, but it is not adequate for their needs. Sheriff Carey stated that they are sometimes able to help detainees get regulated while they are in detention but, as soon as they are released, services are not available in the community, so they deregulate, reoffend, and are detained again. Sheriff Carey stated that he believes this cycle must be addressed at a county level as well as in a new jail with a dedicated mental health facility. Sheriff Carey stated that, as part of the NIJO certification, he and his staff participate in many trainings such as crisis intervention and deescalation. A dedicated mental health facility would allow a focus on diversion, treatment, and reentry.

Sheriff Carey stated that his office does not receive a per diem payment for holding detainees who are awaiting transfers to the Department of Mental Health (DMH) for mental health treatment. Sheriff Carey stated that he does not want money from DMH, but rather for that Department to provide adequate bed space to accommodate their own needs.

Sheriff Carey stated that his top talking points include cost, due process, mental health concerns, and re-entry prevention. Sheriff Carey stated that this request would reduce the time expenditure for the defendants, the attorneys, and his staff. Sheriff Carey stated that, even if a defendant appears via video court, a byproduct of the COVID-19 pandemic, once they are released, a member of his staff must travel to the county in which they are currently housed and bring them back to Boone County. This is often a road deputy or a civil process officer, which results in those tasks being delayed. Sheriff Carey stated that the \$4 million cost previously discussed to house defendants in other counties does not include travel time, overtime for staff, or vehicle maintenance. An estimated 750 transports were completed in 2025.

Sheriff Carey stated that the ballot issue is data-driven and any questions that may be asked can be answered with supporting documentation. Sheriff Carey welcomed any questions from the Commission or members of the public.

Commissioner Kendrick asked Sheriff Carey what the capacity for the proposed facility would be. Sheriff Carey stated that the expected negotiation process is to ask for a large number that will eventually be reduced. The initial request was a facility that would hold 1,200 beds. This has since been reduced to 1,000 beds. Sheriff Carey stated that he would like to make plans for 30 to 40 years in the future, not just the immediate needs. The proposed plans would initially hold 570 beds spread among three different units. This would include a dedicated space for female detainees with 88 beds, a space for detainees with mental health concerns with 50 beds, and a medical infirmary with 10 beds. Sheriff Carey stated that there are currently four juveniles held in the Boone County Jail that will be tried as adults. These juveniles are not permitted to be within sight or sound of adult detainees. The new facility would include space for these juveniles with 10 beds and a dedicated recreation area. These spaces could be used for mental health needs if no juveniles are currently detained.

Sheriff Carey stated that the plans are in the infant stages now, but he does have schematics. The current design allows for the 570 beds previously described. However, the infrastructure, such as kitchens and laundry rooms, must be built with the intention of expansion to 1,200 beds. The current design would allow expansion along hallways to open more units as needed, and the operations in the facility would not be affected. This would prepare the facility for three to four decades of expansion.

Sheriff Carey stated that he suspects the current facility was built at a lower capacity than was originally requested. A 2017 study published by Judge Gary Oxenhandler stated that the current jail reached capacity four months after opening in January 1991. Sheriff Carey stated that he appreciated his staff and those who have maintained operations over the last 35 years. Sheriff Carey stated that he understands that prices are rising for necessities such as gas and food. Sheriff Carey stated that he understands this is not an ideal time for this request when the State of Missouri is considering raising sales taxes and the City of Columbia is proposing a public safety tax increase.

Commissioner Kendrick stated that he has reviewed the 1997 report led by then-private citizen Gary Oxenhandler and the 2017 report from Oxenhandler Law Firm after Mr. Oxenhandler stepped down from the bench as a judge. Commissioner Kendrick estimated that plans for the current facility began in the late 1980s. The current facility was completed in late 1990 and opened for use on January 1, 1991. By four months in, the facility was full. The 1997 report discussed the overcrowding. The report discussed methods to reduce the population by differentiating between those “you are mad at versus those who are deemed to be a threat to public.”

Commissioner Kendrick clarified that Sheriff Carey does not make decisions on who is detained; instead those decisions come from the Courts. Sheriff Carey thanked Commissioner Kendrick for that clarification and stated that many people believe he makes those decisions. Sheriff Carey stated that his job, by statute, is to hold individuals in the jail who have been so ordered by the courts. Sheriff Carey stated that he does not have authority to detain nor release any defendants.

Commissioner Kendrick discussed the change from 70% of the detainee population being charged with misdemeanors in the 1990s to 98-99% of the detainee population being charged with felonies currently. This demonstrates the move from detaining those the courts are mad at and those that it feels are a risk to public safety. Sheriff Carey stated that this has been a long-term discussion with judges, and alternatives to incarceration have been evaluated, with examples being house arrest, Drug Court, and Mental Health Court. Sheriff Carey stated that Boone County has done a good job of diverting defendants so that now the ones who are detained are the ones who need to be incarcerated. Commissioner Kendrick stated that judges in the 13th Judicial Circuit were leaders in alternative sentences, not just in Missouri but across the country. Commissioner Kendrick referenced his background in social work during which he worked with clients going through Mental Health Court, a program set up in the late 1990s. Other diversion courts include Drug Court and Veterans Treatment Court. These courts help relieve detainee population by diverting those charged with misdemeanors and non-violent felonies from the jail. Commissioner Kendrick stated that some of the participants may have found the alternative sentencing programs harder to complete than traditional detainment, but it was critical to helping them complete their treatment and enter recovery.

Commissioner Kendrick stated that the population in Boone County has increased 72% from 1991 to 2026, which translates to 82,000-83,000 residents. A 9% population growth has been experienced from 2017 to 2026. Commissioner Kendrick stated that an important part of the system was the “judges’ meeting,” but that practice has been discontinued. Commissioner Kendrick asked Sheriff Carey what happened and what would be required to reestablish this practice. A new facility is, at a minimum, four to five years from completion, so if trends continue during that time, a plan must be established to address the immediate concerns in the interim. Sheriff Carey agreed that a collaboration must be established between the courts and jail administrators. Sheriff Carey stated that he plans to reestablish the judges’ meetings and to lead them himself. These meetings would include previous judges, current judges and

prosecutors, and others. Sheriff Carey stated that the previous meetings were open to too much discussion, often going off topic. Attendees felt that the meetings were not productive nor a good use of time, so attendance waned and eventually the group disbanded. Sheriff Carey stated that the new iteration of these meetings will be more focused and direct. Sheriff Carey stated that the overcrowding problem is not the responsibility of the judges but, instead, of the Commission, the Sheriff's Office, and the budget, but he would be asking for help to prevent the problem from escalating. Sheriff Carey stated that his goal is to keep the population from continuing to increase exponentially. Sheriff Carey stated that he has heard concerns that a larger facility would result in more detainees being sent from the courts in order to fill the spaces. Sheriff Carey stated his goal is to prevent this from happening. Sheriff Carey stated that the goal of incarceration is to detain those who provide a risk to public safety while keeping others out of detention. Sheriff Carey stated that often national conversations and concerns are discussed in the local conversations.

Commissioner Thompson stated that the overcrowding issue is not isolated to the Sheriff's Office but is instead everyone's problem. When detainees are housed out of county, every docket gets delayed. It does not only affect the individual, but it also affects others that are on that public defender's, assistant prosecutor's, and court's dockets. The cost from these delays increases, and the cumulative effect slows the entire system down.

Commissioner Thompson expressed hope for a renewed commitment to preventing a jail overcrowding issue. Boone County has been a leader in alternative sentencing, and other jurisdictions have used Boone County's practices as an example for their own uses. Continuing to evaluate who can be sent through alternative courts to avoid detention in the jail should be prioritized.

Commissioner Thompson stated that a bill has been introduced to the House and the Senate for Assisted Outpatient Treatment. This would help people from continuing down a path that is not good for themselves or the community. A conversation must be had about reentry after detention. The Community Mental Health Act of the 1960s closed mental health institutions but did not fulfill the promise of mental health support. As facilities closed, the caseload of both social workers and detention facilities increased. Mental health support must be a collaborative approach, not just from the Sheriff's Office but from the 13th Judicial Circuit and everyone else involved. This will ensure that "the people we are scared of (will be) in jail, not the people we are mad at." Commissioner Thompson stated that the funding that has been provided by the federal government has not been sent to Boone County nor other local jurisdictions across the state. Commissioner Thompson expressed hope that a collaborative effort to encourage the use of these funds on a local level would help those in the community, including law enforcement.

Commissioner Kendrick stated that funds from the opioid settlement could be used to fund reentry navigators. A contract is expected for Commission review in June to finalize those plans. Commissioners Kendrick and Thompson stated that similar programs have worked at the state level. Commissioner Thompson stated her opinion is that the funds should have been

provided through DMH. Commissioner Thompson stated that reentry services are needed, such as health care, shelter, job training, and education. If these are not provided, the individual will reoffend and return to detention.

Commissioner Kendrick stated that the 25 individuals currently held in the Boone County Jail that were deemed incapable of standing trial and are awaiting a transfer to a mental health facility are being held for more than a year. Commissioner Thompson stated that there are more than 500 individuals in Missouri jails awaiting transfers by DMH. A lawsuit has been filed by the Department of Justice against the State, and the ACLU of St. Louis is assisting on the grounds that holding these individuals in that way is unconstitutional. Commissioner Kendrick stated that there are many individuals with co-occurring diagnoses and mental health concerns that will not be certified and have been deemed fit to stand trial, so this will not solve all the problems. The proposed solution is to find ways to release those certified unfit to stand trial back into the general population instead of transferring them to a mental health facility. Commissioner Thompson stated that another proposal was to put these individuals in the custody and control of the Department of Corrections. Commissioner Thompson stated that the issue began in the 1960s and the country has never owned its responsibilities. Commissioner Aldred asked to clarify if the Sheriff's Office receives a per diem for the individuals awaiting a transfer to a DMH facility. Sheriff Carey stated that no money has been received from the Department of Mental Health. Commissioner Thompson stated that the only time a "per diem" is paid is when an individual is transferred to the Department of Corrections. Commissioner Aldred asked how long the delay was between the request and the transfer of an individual, and Sheriff Carey stated that they expect an average of one and a half to two years. Some individuals charged with homicide are awaiting pre-trial for two to three years.

Sheriff Carey stated that some individuals may ask why funds were spent on a new training center instead of a new detention facility. Sheriff Carey stated that the office was using the Boone County Fairgrounds as a training center, but that asset was no longer available after the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding for the new training center was awarded before the determination that a new detention facility was necessary.

Commissioner Kendrick asked if there were any further questions. Commissioners Aldred and Thompson did not have any further questions at that time. Commissioner Kendrick thanked Sheriff Carey for his time. Commissioner Kendrick opened the floor for a public hearing on the agenda item with a request for comments to be kept within three to five minutes.

Cheri Toalson Reisch stated that she is a former state representative, former mayor, and former court administrator and currently runs a law firm, which has some clients housed in other counties. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she has been asked to serve as a spokesperson for some citizens who are unable to attend the public meetings due to work or other commitments. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she is neither for nor against the agenda item but instead appears for informational purposes. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that, under Missouri law, jails are mandated and required. Regional training centers and childcare centers are not. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked

if the regional training center was being provided to other institutions, and if so if they would be provided use at no cost or if they would be charged a fee. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she did not believe adequate notice nor discussion had been provided for the childcare center, and she only became aware of the proposal when Commissioner Kendrick contacted her to write a letter of support for the project. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that people do not plan to fail, they fail to plan.

Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the timeline that has been laid out for the current facility as it was proposed and built in the 1990s indicates that the population was already overcrowded and reaching a problem level very soon after opening the new facility. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she has been involved in local government and taxpayer watchdog groups for almost 45 years and has lived in Boone County her entire life. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she remembered that when the current facility was built, the then sheriff discussed the possibility of expansion on that building via adding additions. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that this proposal includes building an entirely new facility, so she questioned what happened to the previous plan of expanding the current facility.

Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the county had a budget in 2014 to house detainees out of county, and in 2021 or 2022 it became a larger problem. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she has not seen a total cost estimate for the proposal. Ms. Toalson stated that this proposal would add a 3/8 cent tax on top of the existing 1/8 cent tax, which would total 1/2 cent and asked for confirmation that this addition is correct. Commissioner Kendrick confirmed that the ask would total 1/2 cent. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the City of Columbia is proposing a one-cent sales tax increase. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she believes the public needs more information before voting on the proposal.

Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the 911/Joint Communications sales tax was permitted to be charged up to the maximum amount. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the amount has never been lowered below the maximum amount. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked if the project had been paid for and if the tax levy has a sunset. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked if this proposal would have a sunset or if this would be put in place and never be removed or reduced. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the new Joint Communications building has been completed and equipped with state-of-the-art amenities, but the tax is still being assessed. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked the Commissioners why the tax has not been lowered as permitted in the ordinance. Commissioner Kendrick stated that the reason the 911/Joint Communications tax has not been sunset is because technology has changed and the facility is in the process of an 800 MHz upgrade. This is an \$8.5 million contract to upgrade, a \$12 million contract for partner radios, and a \$2 million cost to replace two towers and build a new one. A total upgrade will cost around \$25 million. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked why that tax could not be lowered before a new proposal was implemented.

Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the current 1/8 cent tax has brought in \$80 million since it was implemented in the early 2000s. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked why some of that money had not been set aside in a reserve fund for future jail expansions. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked where the

\$80 million had gone and if the full \$80 million had been used for the daycare and training center and not toward other things.

Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she knows the County has a homeless problem, such as the recent break in at Art Underground. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she knows there is an illegal alien problem in the jail. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the county has a crime problem and people need to be incarcerated. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that her law firm has dealings with the different treatment courts, and the problems should have been addressed 10-15 years ago. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that the City of Columbia has been having conversations for a long time, but Boone County is putting the proposal on the ballot too soon, "putting the cart before the horse" without defined plans. Ms. Toalson Reisch asked what the plans will cost and if the money would be collected before designs were completed. Ms. Toalson Reisch stated that she believes the public needs more information before they can make an informed decision.

Molly Housh Gordon stated that she is appearing as a private citizen, but she also serves the community as a pastor and as a volunteer and board member with CoMo Mobile Aid Collective (COMAC), a direct aid organization that serves unhoused neighbors. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that when she is out on the streets taking food to those with almost no resources or receiving phone calls at her church requesting assistance from those who need their basic survival needs met, she witnesses first hand daily the desperation created by lack of access to basic needs such as a safe shelter and nourishing food, physical and mental health care, and connection within the community. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that this desperation sometimes leads to violence and is the root cause of most, if not all, crime. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that this should be considered when discussing public safety. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that an increase in sales tax to build a new jail will make it harder for those already struggling to meet their basic needs, and this will increase desperation in the community.

Ms. Housh Gordon stated that she opposes the tax, because she believes it will have the opposite effect and increase violence and danger to public health. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that she is further opposed to the tax because she has witnessed that cycles of imprisonment deepen the lack of access to basic needs and the attendant desperation already plaguing the community. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that she has witnessed through her work with COMAC how many people have ended up in jail, not because they are a danger to the community, but because they acted inappropriately and desperately to meet their needs for resources or shelter and are now being held on charges that pile up due to poverty and lack of stability. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that while individuals are detained, they lose access to resources that provided some measure of stability, often permanently, and the vicious cycle continues. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that the cycle is not a result of reentry services, though she is in support of those services, but a result of a system that prioritizes incarceration over basic needs.

Ms. Housh Gordon stated that before the community discusses the size of jail needed in Boone County, it should have a discussion about the work of prevention that includes providing for basic needs and the number of individuals being detained as a result of poverty and instability.

Ms. Housh Gordon stated that she encourages the Commission to engage in these conversations and declines to add to the desperation and poverty in the community by moving forward with the proposal. Ms. Housh Gordon stated that public safety is only in reach when resources are invested in the community to meet individuals' basic needs and encourages the citizens of Boone County to focus their energy there.

James Roark-Gruender asked if the entire jail is currently being used. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that his husband served on a grand jury two years ago, and they visited the current facility. A wing of the jail was closed at that time. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that the training center and the childcare center are needed, but if the new jail had been built first, the \$5 million dollars being spent to house detainees in other counties could have been saved and spent on the other projects.

Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that he is neither for nor against the proposal but is looking for more information. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that he is concerned with long-term planning. An increase in capacity from 200 to 500 does not make sense. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that regardless of whether individuals want a jail or not, it is needed and will happen. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that previous comments are valid, but the Commission cannot address all of the issues raised. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that the reality of the situation is that there are individuals in jail, the County is spending \$5 million to house individuals out of county, and the issue must be addressed. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that the discussion should have begun five to seven years ago. Mr. Roark-Gruender asked why discussions kept being delayed and pared down, resulting in the County not spending its money wisely.

Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that he would like to know if this money would be added to a budget or taken away. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that the City of Columbia asked for a one-cent increase that will go to a dedicated fund, but he believes the equivalent amount that was going to the fund from the general revenue will be diverted elsewhere. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that the lottery funds were meant to go toward education, but the revenue was used as a replacement when the existing funding was diverted from that account.

Mr. Roark-Gruender asked what the difference in cost is for housing an individual in Boone County versus out of county. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that the public should have better numbers to understand that aspect of the request. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that the County needs to spend its money better and plan better. Mr. Roark-Gruender stated that a new training facility is needed, but when \$5 million has been spent housing detainees out of the county, it does not make sense to build extras and things that are not gaining money.

Susan Maze stated that she lives in Columbia and has been working closely with the homeless and jail population for six years. Ms. Maze stated that the issue is not incarceration, but that the State of Missouri and the judges are taking too long to enact due process. Ms. Maze stated that those in the jail are supposed to be awaiting trial, not staying in the jail long-term.

Ms. Maze stated that the larger issue is mental health, which affects many of the 400 chronically homeless people in the county. Ms. Maze stated that the county government voted against funding the Opportunity Campus, and this is a huge drain on resources, which is mostly supported by volunteers and churches. Ms. Maze stated that she bails people out of jail mid-hallucination after they have been ejected from MU Psychiatric Center due to violence and out-of-control behavior. Ms. Maze stated that if individuals could control their behavior, they would not be in the Psychiatric Center. Ms. Maze stated that the system is broken, and the only solution proposed by City or County government is more police officers and more jails. Ms. Maze stated that she would like to see an alternative solution. Ms. Maze stated that the problem is the State, the judges, and the lack of mental health care.

Ms. Maze stated that she would like to see a study that details forecasted trends and anticipated needs. Ms. Maze stated that the COVID-19 pandemic caused a crime spike across the country. The current numbers may be the tail end of this spike due to the length of time it has taken to work through the charges. Ms. Maze asked what data has been provided that shows that the County will need an increase in spaces. Ms. Maze stated that she would like to see a detail of services that will be provided. Ms. Maze stated that having mental health services in a jail will not help the situation, as people do not want to be coerced into mental health treatment. Ms. Maze asked what would be provided at the new facility, what would be taking place within the facility, and how the projected needs were calculated. Ms. Maze stated that there were 190 people in the jail before the COVID-19 pandemic, but now there are 400. Ms. Maze stated that she doubts only 1% of the current jail population are charged with misdemeanors, but she knows of a pregnant woman that was held for four days on a \$500 bail. Ms. Maze stated that these need to be addressed before charging money, because if a new facility is built, more people will be put in it.

John Amick stated that he is a volunteer with the Boone County Community Bail Fund and appears in opposition to the proposal. Mr. Amick stated that he has seen up close the harm done by the County's dedication to incarceration and punishment as a way to hide social problems in a deeply unequal society. Mr. Amick stated that the harm has a ripple effect beyond those incarcerated in the jail, also effecting the detainee's loved ones and the broader community, which imperils public safety. Mr. Amick stated that many are trapped in jail pre-trial because they cannot afford (often low-level) bail. Mr. Amick stated that the system punishes poverty, causing individuals to lose housing, custody of their children, jobs, and basic freedom and self-dignity. Mr. Amick stated that the jail population is overwhelmingly poor and disproportionately Black, and a new jail will not change these statistics. Mr. Amick stated that a larger jail will result in more detentions, especially if there are more City police officers, as is being requested. Mr. Amick stated that the request for the new jail coincides with federal policies that enhance repression and paramilitary-like operations from such organizations as ICE, and a larger jail likely will result in more opportunities for the local government to cooperate with federal policies that will endanger local individuals.

Mr. Amick asked whether, if the goal is to reduce overcrowding, the Commission could encourage efforts to reduce the jail population instead of dramatically expanding it. Mr. Amick asked if the Commission could examine how the punishment regime exacerbates poverty and ultimately leads to dehumanizing behavior. Mr. Amick asked if the Commission could consider resources for uplift and separate community investment from punishment and cruelty. Mr. Amick stated that a new jail would not address the poor treatment that occurs at the current jail, such as poor food and the charges and debts incurred upon the incarcerated individuals for health care. Mr. Amick stated that there has been talk of mental health care at the new facility, but he would like to know how much it will cost the incarcerated individuals to see a health care professional.

Mr. Amick stated that he encourages the Commission to resist the Sheriff's request for more jail space and ultimately more despair throughout the county. Mr. Amick stated that the Commission does not need to automatically accept the agenda, namely the war on the poor, people of color, and the profiteering of incarceration, ICE and federal oppression. Mr. Amick stated that he and others are committed to organizing against the request for a new jail.

Roger McKinney stated that he is opposed to a sales tax for a new jail. Mr. McKinney stated that Boone County residents are hurting from the effects of inflation. Mr. McKinney stated that he would be opposed to a new jail regardless of timing, but to punish people further with a regressive sales tax is heartless.

Commissioner Kendrick asked if there were any further public comments on the matter. Hearing none, Commissioner Kendrick concluded the public hearing and requested the Deputy Clerk to place the request on the agenda for Tuesday, May 26, 2026, for a second reading. Commissioner Kendrick asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Commission. Commissioner Aldred did not have any further questions. Commissioner Thompson stated that there is a policy entitled the Federal Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy. The National Association of Counties and the National Sheriffs' Association has advocated for Congress to pull back from this policy. According to this policy, if an individual is detained for more than 30 days, they lose access to their federal benefits. The collateral damage of being detained is exacerbated through the loss of these benefits, including those who are dependent upon them for those benefits. Bills have been proposed in both houses of Congress, but neither have passed, and neither of the Missouri Senators have been in support of stepping back from the policy.

Ms. Housh Gordon asked Commissioner Kendrick if the second reading on May 26 would be open for public engagement or if it would be a decision made by the Commission with no further public conversation. Commissioner Kendrick stated that typically the public hearing is only available on the first reading, but there is always a public comment section on any Commission agenda. Ms. Maze asked if there is a document with justification for the jail, such as a study, research papers, or discussion points. Commissioner Kendrick stated that the Commission was only provided the proposed Commission Order, but that Sheriff Carey may be

able to provide further documentation, such as cost and trends. Commissioners Kendrick and Thompson said that they would ask Sheriff Carey for further information.

Commission

- 7. First and Second Reading: Application for organizational use of the Boone County Government Center Chambers by the Boone County Democratic Party

Commissioner Thompson stated that the memo indicates that the application is on file and asked if this is the traditional request by this organization to utilize Commission Chambers. Commissioner Kendrick confirmed this to be the case.

Commissioner Thompson moved now on this day, the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby approve the application for organizational use of the Boone County Government Center Chambers by the Boone County Democratic Party on the following dates, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. for their monthly Central Committee meeting: 7/9/26, 8/3/26, 9/10/26, 11/12/26.

Commissioner Aldred seconded the motion
The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #257-2026**

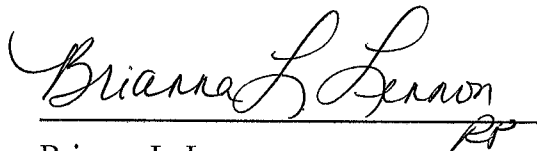
- 8. Public Comments

No public comments

- 9. Commissioner Reports

No Commissioner Reports


Attest:



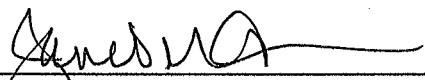
Brianna L. Lennon
Clerk of the County Commission



Kip Kendrick
Presiding Commissioner



Justin Aldred
District I Commissioner



Janet M. Thompson
District II Commissioner