



Called City Commission Meeting Highlights with McCracken County Fiscal Court

Tuesday, August 26, 2019, at 4:30 p.m. at McCracken Co. Courthouse

Note: City Commissioner Gerald Watkins was unable to attend this meeting.

Photo: Members of the Paducah Board of Commissioners and McCracken County Fiscal Court celebrate improving and developing recreational facilities in the area by kicking soccer balls into a goal on the Courthouse lawn.



Ordinances Associated with Transient Room Tax and Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau

Over the past few months, the Paducah Board of Commissioners and the McCracken County Fiscal Court have been discussing sports and recreation opportunities in the City and County including the creation of an indoor aquatic and recreation center and new fields for baseball/softball and soccer. At this meeting, ordinances were adopted that put in place important elements including a five-party interlocal agreement, changes to the transient room tax structure to create additional revenue, the splitting of the Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau to become a city entity instead of a joint city-county entity, and the creation of a new agency to be known as the McCracken County Sports Tourism Commission.

Paducah Mayor Brandi Harless said, “This is definitely a new path for Paducah. How many years have we been talking about sports tourism?” Mayor Harless added that the missing piece of the puzzle was revenue which is now in place with the adoption of the interlocal agreement.”

County Commissioner Eddie Jones said, “Very few people in McCracken County will pay this tax. This is a tax on people travelling through this town. We will pour this money back into sports tourism.”

McCracken County Judge Executive Craig Clymer said, “It’s a terrific moment of City/County cooperation to get this done.”

The first ordinance adopted by both the City and County was a five-party Interlocal Agreement among the City of Paducah, McCracken County, the Paducah Convention and Visitors Bureau, Paducah-McCracken County Convention Center Corporation, and the McCracken County Sports Tourism Commission. This agreement empowers the new agency, the McCracken County Sports Tourism Commission, to pursue the long-term development, design, construction, operation, maintenance, sales, and marketing of tournament-worthy sports facilities. Plus, the agreement assures the continued collection of the portion of the transient room tax dedicated to debt payments for the Carson Center and Convention Center.

The interlocal agreement changes the transient room tax structure and the total collections. The transient room tax is a tax paid by guests who stay at local hotel and motel establishments. McCracken County collects the tax. There will be a County Room Tax on all rooms within the County (including rooms within the City) with the percentages designated as follows:

- 3% for McCracken County Sports Tourism Commission;
- 2% for debt payments for Carson Center and Convention Center; and
- 1% for a designated Convention Center facility.

Furthermore, there would be a City Room Tax on all rooms with the Paducah city limits with the percentages as follows:



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- 3% for Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau and
- 1% for the Paducah-McCracken County Convention Center facilities.

The City room tax would be in addition to the County room tax for rooms within the Paducah city limits leading to a 10% total transient tax for rooms within Paducah.

To clarify the changes, the Paducah Board of Commissioners approved an ordinance renaming the Paducah-McCracken County Convention & Visitors Bureau as the Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau. The City will have the sole authority to appoint the board, and all current board members will remain on the Board for the duration of their current terms. This ordinance also amends Paducah's Code of Ordinances Sections 2-441 and 2-445 to reflect the changes.

The final ordinance adopted by the City Commission establishes the City of Paducah Transient Room Tax as outlined in the interlocal agreement. The City Transient Room Tax is 4 percent with funds supporting the Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Convention Center facilities.

At the City Commission meeting on Tuesday, August 27, the Paducah Board of Commissioners will be reviewing a contract with a company to design an indoor aquatic and recreation facility. Furthermore, this Friday is the deadline for companies to submit their qualifications to design baseball/softball and soccer fields.

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