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140 Walnut Street
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601-3240
Phone: (502) 573-2226
Fax: (502) 573-5622
www.kref.ky.gov

John R. Steffen
Executive Director
Leslie M. Saunders
General Counsel

ADVISORY OPINION 2022-002

Any Advisory Opinion rendered by the Registry under subsection (1) or (2) of this section may be relied upon only by the person or committee involved in the specific transaction or activity with respect to which the Advisory Opinion is required. See KRS 121.135(4).

April 20, 2022

VIA EMAIL (DONETHRASHER@YAHOO.COM)
AND FIRST CLASS U.S. MAIL

Mr. Donald Thrasher
1200 Colonel Cox Road N
Cox's Creek, KY 40013

In re: Request for Advisory Opinion: Endorsements by Permanent Committee Publications

Dear Mr. Thrasher:

This Advisory Opinion is sent in response to your recent request on behalf of Nelson County America First Action Committee ("the committee"), which you refer to as a "political action committee" or "PAC," but for purposes of Kentucky campaign finance law is defined as a "permanent committee" under KRS 121.015(3)(d). You serve as the committee chairperson, but are also as a candidate whom the committee wishes to endorse in its publication, an example of

Endorsements by Permanent Committee Publications (AO 2022-002)

which you provided along with your request.¹ The publication, entitled *Nelson County News-Sentinel* (“NCNS”), which purports to be “Nelson County’s Conservative News,” is a 12-page document with articles, photos, graphics, cartoons, polls, letters to the editor, and endorsements. It does not appear currently (in April 2022, Volume 1, Edition 4) to contain paid advertising purchased by candidates, although it contains a KRS 121.190(1) “paid for by” disclaimer naming the committee as the advertising sponsor on its endorsements page. Its lead story is “Trump Ally Don Thrasher Running for Nelson County Judge Executive.” Other headlines include:

- Is a Republican Wave Going to Hit The Nelson County Fiscal Court?
- Tim Hutchins Left Nelson County Politics for Eight Years After He Put Out a Fake Poll in 2014
- Cattle Famer Philip Bischoff Is Looking for a Repeat Victory in The Republican Primary for District 3 Magistrate
- The Mayor of Bardstown’s Cousin and Business Partner, Bill Conway, Was Given Nearly \$100,000 by the City – But Annette Beavers Did Something Similar and She Is Threatened with Jail
- Former Bardstown CFO Arrested for Theft and Wire Fraud; Only Spent Hours in Jail Before Being Released – She’s Still Living in Million Dollar Home
- Former Nelson County Sheriff’s Detective Jon Snow Running for 5th District Magistrate
- 20 Republican Candidates & Office Holders Attended the 1st Annual Nelson County American First Candidate Forum At Wickland
- How Much Are the Salaries For Elected Officials In Nelson County?
- Why Are Nelson County School Property Taxes in the Top Five of County School Taxes in the State?

On Page A5, the NCNS states:

The Nelson County News Sentinel is published and paid for by The Nelson County America First PAC. The newspaper is sent to over 4,000 homes in Nelson County free of charge. The address for the Nelson County America First PAC is PO Box 21, Cox’s Creek, KY 40013. The editorial staff can be reached at editor@americafirstky.org.

In your March 21, 2022, advisory opinion request, you asked the following questions:

- 1) May a Kentucky permanent committee charge candidates for advertising in a newspaper² published by the permanent committee?

¹ See Appendix A for a copy of that example.

² You refer to the NCNS as a “newspaper” in your letter. Black’s Law Dictionary defines a “newspaper” as “a publication for general circulation, usu. in sheet form, appearing at regular intervals, usu. daily or weekly, and containing matters of general public interest, such as current events.” See *NEWSPAPER*, Black’s Law Dictionary (11th ed. 2019). A “newsletter,” by contrast, is defined as “a small publication (such as a leaflet or newspaper containing news of interest chiefly to a special group.” See *Merriam-Webster.com*. 2022. <https://www.merriam-webster.com> (12 April 2022). The NCNS might be more correctly referred to as a “newsletter.” While

Endorsements by Permanent Committee Publications (AO 2022-002) |

Yes.

- 2) If a permanent committee publishes a newspaper with articles that the articles do not contain any language that expressly advocates for the election or defeat of a candidate, but the publication contains one page of the permanent committee's endorsements, do the endorsed candidates have to report those endorsements as in-kind contributions?

Possibly. The committee could have to report the portion of the publication making endorsements as an independent expenditure. See discussion below.

- 3) If one of the endorsed candidates is an officer of the permanent committee, would that officer/candidate have to report that endorsement as an in-kind contribution? If yes, what is the value of the contribution?

Yes. See discussion below.

- 4) If the officer/candidate in Question 3 above did not contribute to the permanent committee, but did work in his capacity as the committee chairperson on the publication, would any of his reporting requirements change?

No.

32 KAR 2:060, Sec. 3, allows the public ten days to comment on advisory opinion requests. Six comments were received in this instance.³ In general terms, the comments were distressed by the NCNS. Several suggested that it was political advertising disguised as a newspaper and that it was biased against certain candidates in favor of a particular "slate" of candidates. At least one commenter made the point that your positions as candidate, committee chairman, editor, and subject of the articles suggested that the primary purpose of the publication was to promote your candidacy.

The committee registered with the Registry in June 2021 and has filed four quarterly campaign finance statements since that time. Over the course of those four statements, the committee has received approximately \$4780 in contributions and has made approximately \$4750 in expenditures. Among those expenditures is \$2,897.71 (more than sixty percent of total expenditures) that went directly to printing and mailing costs for NCNS. Also of note in those statements is that three of the committee's top four contributors are endorsed in the sample

NCNS categorizes itself as a publication that appeals to conservatives, and appears to have published only four times since the committee's inception last year, it also is received by a significant portion of the Nelson County population (apparently unsolicited by some number of them) and is not restricted to members of the committee. For purposes of this opinion, the distinction between the terms will not make a difference.

³ See Appendix B for public comments received.

Endorsements by Permanent Committee Publications (AO 2022-002) |

edition:⁴ you (candidate for Judge Executive), Bischoff (candidate for Magistrate, District 3), and Candy Massaroni, (candidate for State Representative, District 50).

With these facts in mind, I now turn to your questions.

1) May a Kentucky permanent committee charge candidates for advertising in a newspaper published by the permanent committee?

Yes. To the extent that a candidate would wish to purchase advertising in the NCNS and the publication would wish to sell it, Kentucky campaign law permits it. This question is similar to requests previously answered in older advisory opinions and is answered consistently with them: In AO 1998-009, the Registry stated that an executive committee could sell advertisements to corporations in its newsletter, despite the KRS 121.150 prohibition on executive committees accepting corporate contributions. Advertising sold in the newsletter approximately made up for the cost of publication. To the extent that the executive committee charged the corporate ad-buyers comparable rates to anyone else who might buy ads in the publication, these transactions were held not to be contributions.

Further, in AO 2005-003, a candidate who was an officer of a non-profit corporation asked whether he could purchase advertising expressly advocating his election to office on a bus owned by the non-profit corporation. As that opinion notes, the burden is on regulated entities to demonstrate that the rate paid for the advertising represents fair market value, or “the price that a seller is willing to accept and a buyer is willing to pay on the open market and in an arm's-length transaction.”⁵ KRS 121.065 also requires that a seller of communication services charge no more for political advertising than it charges to any other advertiser at the time the advertising is purchased.

2) If a permanent committee publishes a newspaper with articles that do not contain any language that expressly advocate for the election or defeat of a candidate, but the publication contains one page of the permanent committee’s endorsements, do the endorsed candidates have to report those endorsements as in-kind contributions?

Probably not, but these endorsements likely represent an independent expenditure by the permanent committee. KRS 121.015(3)(d) defines a “permanent committee” as:

. . . a group of individuals, including an association, committee, or organization, other than a campaign committee, political issues committee, inaugural committee, caucus campaign committee, or party executive committee, which is established as, or intended to be, a permanent organization *having as a primary purpose* expressly advocating the election or defeat of one (1) or more clearly

⁴ See Appendix B, Page A12. Note that the NCNS is already treating this page already as if it is political advertising and is including the political advertising disclaimer “paid for by the Nelson County America First PAC” on the bottom of the page. See KRS 121.190(1).

⁵ See VALUE, Black's Law Dictionary (11th ed. 2019)

Endorsements by Permanent Committee Publications (AO 2022-002) |

identified candidates, slates of candidates, or political parties, which functions on a regular basis throughout the year.

[Emphasis added.] Thus, while the committee may engage in other purposes, its primary purpose must be advocating the election or defeat of candidates. To say it another way, joining together to endorse candidates is what a permanent committee's political activities are. Here, the primary mechanism the committee has used to engage in its political activities is the NCNS. Further, one can see a relationship between the committee's contributors and its endorsements.

Recognizing that candidates and committees could wish to engage in longer-form messaging, KRS 121.175 includes "newsletters" in the non-exhaustive list of allowable campaign expenditures for candidates and committees.⁶ Further, KRS 121.065(2) defines "political advertising" as "any communication intended to support or defeat a candidate for public office." These endorsements, which give each of the endorsed candidates the committee's express approval and an "A" or "A+" grade, are communications by the committee to support those candidates and fall under Kentucky campaign finance law's reporting requirements.⁷

A fine line, however, separates an independent expenditure from an in-kind contribution. An independent expenditure is specifically excluded from the definition of a "contribution" under Kentucky law. See KRS 121.015(7)(c). KRS 121.015(12) defines "independent expenditure" as:

the expenditure of money or other things of value for a communication which expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate or slate of candidates, and which *is made without any coordination, consultation, or cooperation* with any candidate, slate of candidates, campaign committee, or any authorized person acting on behalf of any of them, and which *is not made in concert with, or at the request or suggestion* of any candidate, slate of candidates, campaign committee, or any authorized person acting on behalf of any of them.

[Emphasis added.] An in-kind contribution results, however, when a candidate utilizes goods or services valued at more than \$100 in any one (1) election, when those goods or services are paid for by a person other than the candidate or his authorized treasurer. See KRS 121.015(6)(d).

Kentucky law requires the reporting of independent expenditures when a person makes independent expenditures exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500) in the aggregate in any one (1) election. See KRS 121.150(1). The core purpose of the law is not to ban any communication between the candidate and potential spender, but rather to disallow contributions not made

⁶ Note that this is not an instance in which a media outlet corporation also administers a permanent committee and thus fills a news function separate and apart from the permanent committee's interests. This is a situation in which a permanent committee, which by definition has a primary function of supporting or opposing candidates, is using a publication to do so.

⁷ You have not asked, and this opinion does not address, whether the articles that mention candidates that fill the other pages should be construed as advertising. The Registry will note that none in the example provided contain language expressly advocating for the election or defeat of candidates, although many do cast candidates in favorable or negative lights. But see AO 2001-008 for the premise that nothing in KRS Chapter 121 prohibits an organization from communicating with its membership or requires it to give equal space to all candidates.

Endorsements by Permanent Committee Publications (AO 2022-002)

through a campaign's manager or treasurer. *Martin v. Commonwealth*, 96 S.W.3d 38, 52 (Ky. 2003). By contrast, prearranged or coordinated expenditures are considered, for purposes of First Amendment analysis, the same as contributions. *Id.*, 96 S.W.3d at 48. See also *Buckley v. Valeo*, 424 U.S. 1, 36-37 (1976). Proof of coordination in campaign activities requires more than showing a prior communication, meeting, or consultation. The evidence must show that a candidate or his agent consulted with the spender "regarding the content, timing, place, nature or volume of communications to be made." *Martin, supra*, at 56 (citing *Federal Election Comm'n v. Christian Coalition*, 52 F. Supp. 2d 45, 92 (D.D.C. 1999)).

Unless a candidate coordinated in this way with the NCNS to publish the Page A12 endorsements, he or she would not report an in-kind contribution. Instead, the committee would report an independent expenditure once it has met the \$500 reporting threshold.

3) If one of the endorsed candidates is an officer of the permanent committee, would that officer/candidate have to report that endorsement as an in-kind contribution?

Unlike the other candidates, there is no question whether you as the committee's chairperson were involved in your endorsement in the committee's publication. You selected the content, time, place, nature and volume of the communication. Your appearance in the list on Page A12 could potentially be an in-kind contribution from the committee. One of the definitions of "contribution," given in KRS 121.015(6)(c) is "[g]oods, advertising, or services with a value of more than one hundred dollars (\$100) in the aggregate in any one (1) election which are furnished to a candidate . . . without charge, or at a rate which is less than the rate normally charged for the goods or services[.]" [Emphasis added.] To the extent that the committee never gave you goods or services more than \$100 in total, you would not need to report a contribution.

4) If the officer/candidates has to report an in-kind contribution, how would he value it?

Unlike paid advertising for which you can reasonably estimate a fair market value, valuing your inclusion on Page A12 with your photo and the committee's endorsement is harder. One reasonable way to do it might be to determine how much of the printing costs are attributable to the endorsements, but any method that accounts for the cost would be acceptable.

5) If the officer/candidate in Question 3 above did not contribute to the permanent committee, but did work in his capacity as the committee chairperson on the publication, would any of his reporting requirements change?

No, except to the extent that the work on the publication shows coordination with your campaign, as discussed above. However, the committee's campaign finance statements show no expenditures related to your services and you have not indicated that they were anything besides volunteer services. To the extent that you provide volunteer services to the committee, the committee would not be required to report a contribution from you. (See KRS 121.015(7)(a): "Notwithstanding the foregoing means of 'contribution,' the word shall not be construed to include. . . [s]ervices provided without compensation by individuals volunteering a portion or all

Endorsements by Permanent Committee Publications (AO 2022-002) |

of their time on behalf of a candidate, a slate of candidates, committee, or contributing organization[.]”)

Please keep in mind that this Advisory Opinion is based on the specific facts set forth in your written request, does not cover past conduct, and only may be applied to cover the conduct in the transaction you describe. If you have any questions concerning this Advisory Opinion, please do not hesitate to contact the Registry. Thank you.

Very truly yours,



LESLIE M. SAUNDERS
General Counsel

Cc: Registry Members
John R. Steffen, Executive Director

APPENDIX A



Free Edition



Nelson County News-Sentinel

Nelson County's Conservative News April 2022 Vol #1 Edition 4

Trump Ally Don Thrasher Running for Nelson County Judge Executive



Don Thrasher, the former Chairman of the Republican Party of Nelson County, is running for judge executive. A Trump ally, Thrasher is the co-founder and former Chief Operating Officer of Zevia, a soda company that is listed on the NYSE with a current market cap of \$500 Million.

Under Thrasher's leadership, the Republican Party of Nelson County saw tremendous gains in voter registration. Thrasher led the effort to stop a proposed statewide gas tax in 2019. He also was an active voice advocating for Nelson County to become a Second Amendment Sanctuary County and is a staunch supporter of the 2nd Amendment.

Thrasher believes his business background, in which he started a soda company from scratch, gives him a great perspective to help make Nelson County a more entrepreneurial-friendly county.

Continued Page 2

A Rising Star Among Local Conservatives, Candy Massaroni Wants to be Nelson County's State Rep in Frankfort

Candy Massaroni's speech at the Nelson County America First Candidate Forum was considered by many to be one of the highlights of the 20 Republican candidates speaking. Viewed by many conservatives as a rising star, Massaroni captivated the standing-room-only crowd.

Massaroni, a US Air Force Veteran, is running for the Republican nomination for House District 50, which is exclusively Nelson County. Massaroni is a conservative that plans to vote against any tax hikes on the state level. She is liberty-minded and a big proponent of medical freedom on the subject of vaccinations. Her position on masks have been known through active engagement with the local school boards.



Continued Page 5

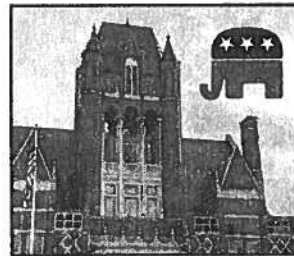
Is A Republican Red Wave Going To Hit The Nelson County Fiscal Court?

With longtime Judge Executive Dean Watts and Bernard Ice retiring, all but one magistrate seat is up for election in November. District 1's Keith Metcalfe is the only current magistrate without an opponent. District 5 magistrate Eric Shelburne is the Democrat running for Watts' seat in the fall against the Republican victor, so he is ineligible to run for re-election. District 2's Gary Coulter is up against a Republican in the fall as well. Coulter is up against Adam Wheatley, who recently retired from KY Farm Bureau Insurance. District 4's Jeff Lear is facing a Democrat in the fall, unlike in 2018 when he was unopposed.

The question of who faces some of the Democrats in the fall is up to Republican voters on May 17th. Some moderate Republicans are facing conservative Republican opponents. Some local political observers think that the direction of the

Republican party of Nelson County will be decided in May. If the Conservatives can convince the voters that they are the better choice, most feel that the Nelson County Republican party will lean conservative for years to come. If the moderate Republicans take control, some conservatives fear that the Red Wave may be in vain if that happens.

The more moderate Republicans in Nelson County want the candidates and the county party to stay away from national issues. But, local strong conservatives want to make an issue of any of the local Democrats running for office that voted for Joe Biden. With Nelson County overwhelmingly rejecting Biden by over 64%, the conservative Republicans may have a better chance against the Democrats in the fall by pointing this out. Other "national issues" the local moderate Republicans want avoided are the Pledge



of Allegiance and Second Amendment Sanctuary Resolution.

What is clear from national polling is that the moderate Republicans in the party are battling the very Red Wave they are hoping to ride by shunning "national issues." On May 17th, 2022, Nelson County Republican voters will decide if they prefer moderate Republicanism or Conservative Republicanism.

INSIDE THIS EDITION of the Nelson County Sentinel:



City of Bardstown CFO Update



Philip Bischoff Running For Dist 3 Magistrate



Remembering Tim Hutchins Fake Poll in 2014



Nelson County Property Taxes Are Among The Highest In The State

THRASHER cont.

Thrasher feels Nelson County property taxes are too high. Nelson County's overall property taxes are some of the highest in the state. He points to the Library District as an example of excessive spending. Hardin County has a population of 115,000 and spends around \$1 million per year for library expenditures. Nelson spends around \$3 Million and has a population of 45,000. In 2018, Thrasher pointed out several items he called excessive such as \$4,000 for fireworks and hiring face painters for \$100 an hour.

The Judge Executive appoints the Nelson County Library board from a list of names provided by the district. Thrasher says he will only agree to appoint members that will reign in the spending. On a related note, the Judge Executive appoints the county's five members on the Joint Planning and Zoning Commission. Thrasher says he will appoint members with the goal of limited regulation and easing regulation for unincorporated Nelson County residents.

Thrasher also wants to return public comments to the Fiscal Court. About three years ago, the Fiscal Court changed policy and only allows speakers that get approval from the Judge Executive to speak. Thrasher wants to make that change on day one, stating that public comments and participation are the hallmark of a government of We The People. Thrasher also wants to move to night meetings to allow more public participation in the process of county government.



Don Thrasher (L) with Todd Harper (C) and Alan Brown Jr. (R). Thrasher led a statewide effort to stop a proposed gas tax increase in 2019.

Thrasher's management and financial skills are evidenced by his business experience. He started Thrasher Beverage Corporation on a shoestring budget. His company produced and developed the first stevia-sweetened all-natural soda. At the time of inception, stevia—a plant native to Brazil and Paraguay—was not yet approved in the US as a food additive. Thrasher innovated and called it a "carbonated dietary supplement," an approved use by the FDA. Shortly before stevia was approved by the FDA, he and other investors merged his company into the new DrinkZevia, LLC., which later became Zevia, one of the best-selling natural products in the United States.

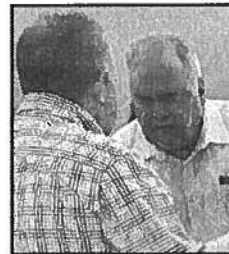
Thrasher is facing two opponents in the republican primary. The first is Tim Hutchins, a former magistrate who switched from Democrat to Independent in 2009, then changed again to Republican after losing two elections as an Independent. Bill Gentry is the third Republican in the primary; Gentry switched parties less than two weeks prior to filing to run for office. Gentry, a former Democrat, was a Bardstown City Council member over 20 years ago.

Tim Hutchins Failed Twice as an Independent for Judge - Now Running as a "Republican" - But His Story Keeps Changing on Why He Keeps Changing Party Affiliation

Tim Hutchins has been out of the Nelson County political scene for a while, but has come out to run for judge executive after two failed prior attempts as an Independent. Many local Republicans remember Hutchins jumping in the 2010 judge executive race as an Independent after Peter Trzop ran as the first Republican for that office. At the time, Trzop stated that he thought that Hutchins joined the race to keep a Republican from winning. Hutchins was a big supporter of Democrat Dean Watts, including being one of the magistrates to make a motion and vote to name Dean Watts Park after the long-time judge. Hutchins denies he entered the race to help Watts. In fact, Hutchins announced he was going to run as a Democrat in 2009 after Watts began an investigation into Hutchins' use of county property. Under Nelson County law, Hutchins' actions were a violation of the Ethics code, however, the statute of limitations seemed to have lapsed.

Whether Hutchins filed as revenge for Watts' investigation, or to block the Republican candidate, is still a topic of speculation.

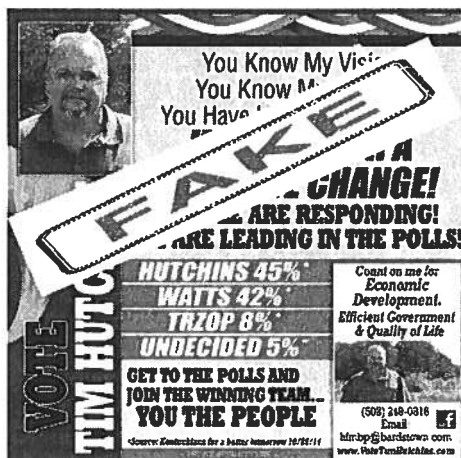
What is clear is that Hutchins' reasons for changing from Democrat to Independent to Republican have changed numerous times. In a radio interview with Bradford and Brooks in February 2022, Hutchins stated: "I switched parties to Independent...I didn't want to switch to Republican...I think it looks bad to switch parties at the last minute." The Kentucky Standard article on Oct 28, 2008, regarding the Watts investigation of Hutchins, stated that Hutchins told the paper he would be running for judge executive as a Democrat. Later in 2009, Rob Hamilton filed as a Democrat for judge executive against Watts. If Hutchins followed through with his statement and ran as a Democrat, it would have been a three-way Democrat primary with Watts. After Trzop filed as a Republican, only then did Hutchins file as an Independent. On Dec. 29, 2009, Hutchins told the Standard something different altogether and said "More people are dissatisfied with both parties, so I ran as an Independent".



Tim Hutchins

Hutchins ran again as an Independent in 2014, changing his reasons by stating "There are good and bad in both parties, that is why I am running as an Independent". Now that he is running as a Republican, he changed his story again; he recently told Bradford and Brooks that he switched parties because the Democrat party left him.

Tim Hutchins Left Nelson County Politics for Eight Years After He Put Out a Fake Poll in 2014



Tim Hutchins put out a fake poll a week before the 2014 election which stated Hutchins had a 45% lead and showed the Republican candidate Trzop as only having 8%. These numbers proved extremely inaccurate after the election numbers came in. With Watts winning, Hutchins obtained 23% of the vote and the Republican Trzop got 22%. Judge Watts stated at the time that it was a fake poll with no evidence that the polling group ever existed. Hutchins never denied it was a fake poll.

Many people at the time questioned Hutchins' credibility after this poll was released. He remained off the political scene for the most part for eight years. Hutchins now wants the Republicans of Nelson County to vote for him. Many local Republicans are still upset over his treatment of the Republican in 2010 and 2014.

Pictured to the left is the fake poll that Hutchins put out and sent to media outlets in 2014. At the time, the Kentucky Standard wouldn't report on the results of the poll because they questioned the veracity. The Standard later released an article essentially debunking Hutchins poll.

Some prominent local Republicans are shocked Hutchins has the nerve to run as a Republican after all he did in 2010 and 2014.

Cattle Farmer Phillip Bischoff Is Looking for a Repeat Victory in the Republican Primary For District 3 Magistrate



Phillip Bischoff pictured in front of a "Let's Go Brandon Flag"

In 2018 Phillip Bischoff won the Republican primary in the Dist. 3 Magistrate race. Bischoff went on to do better than anyone has ever done against long-time magistrate Bernard Ice in the general election. Ice, who was on the Fiscal Court for over 30 years, is retiring and not seeking re-election. This election cycle has now seen four Republicans run for Dist. 3 magistrate. Many believe Bischoff has the firm upper-hand, given his outstanding results in 2018. Bischoff wants to keep taxes low and make sure rural Nelson County citizens—especially farmers—are well represented on the Nelson County Fiscal Court.

Bischoff is a Trump supporter through and through, partly crediting Trump for inspiring people like him to get involved. Like many Republicans, Bischoff feels this country is headed in the wrong direction. He believes that we can take back America one county at a time.

He calls Boston home, where he operates his cattle farm Backwater Farms. Bischoff has been heavily involved in the local Republican party over the last four years. As a member of the Executive Committee, Bischoff voted to censure Sen. Mitch McConnell for his betrayal of Trump.

Bischoff is a staunch supporter of the Second Amendment and is anti-abortion. He is facing M. T. Hamed, Toni Wiley, and Jeff Cassel in the May 17 primary.

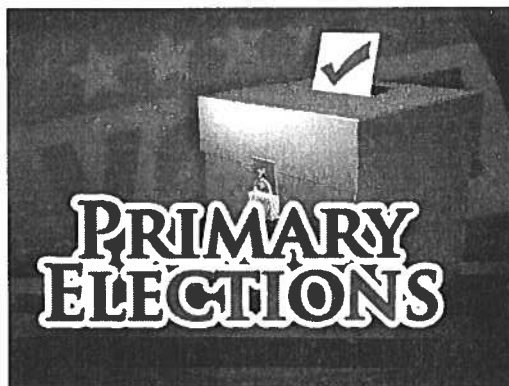
Bischoff is well-liked and affable. He is a proud Dad that wants to make sure his two boys, Reed and Brody, grow up in a county much like it was when he grew up. Bischoff's views are traditional-conservative with a strong sense of patriotism.



Phillip Bischoff with his sons Reed and Brody Bischoff



Phillip Bischoff pictured with some of his cattle



**NELSON
COUNTY
REPUBLICAN
PRIMARY IS
MAY 17th, 2022**

The Mayor of Bardstown's Cousin and Business Partner, Bill Conway, Was Given Nearly \$100,000 by the City—But Annette Beavers Did Something Similar and She Is Threatened with Jail



Dick Heaton and Bill Conway



Annette Beavers pictured in front of her renovated home

America is built on the promise of equal treatment of citizens, and that they should enjoy Liberty and Justice For All. However, a recent example shows how the City of Bardstown and its Historic Review process is seemingly unfair and capricious. Bill Conway is the first cousin and business partner of Mayor Dick Heaton. Earlier this year, Conway was given an approved settlement of \$89,000 because he removed old windows and allegedly illegally replaced them. Conway sued the City and the City settled with him for \$89,000.

Annette Beavers renovated her home, also in the Historic Review Board District, and has been fighting to stay in her home for over four years. Like Bill Conway, Annette removed old windows and replaced them, however, Annette couldn't afford an attorney against the legal battle the City was putting up against her. Beavers has been threatened with jail on two occasions and is under a court order to tear out her windows and her siding. Meanwhile the Conway-owned property doesn't have to be changed, and he was reimbursed for lost income and legal fees.

Mayor Heaton states there was nothing improper or unequal, but many people in Nelson County are shaking their heads in disbelief. Beavers' home has been converted into a beautiful place from the previous eyesore. Annette Beavers is a kind person that has been put through an emotional battle with a city that has been unflinching in its relentless war against her.

Lifelong Democrat Bill Gentry Switches Parties—Two Weeks Before Filing as a Republican Candidate for Judge Executive



Mayor Dick Heaton



Candidate Bill Gentry

Rumors of Democrat Mayor Dick Heaton trying to convince his longtime-friend Bill Gentry to run for Judge Executive were put to rest back in December, when Gentry filed as a Republican for judge executive. Less than two weeks before that filing, Gentry filed for a change of voter registration. The 64-year-old Gentry was a life-long Democrat until then. In an interview with the Kentucky Standard on December 13th, Gentry is quoted as saying "This race isn't about party, it's about people." This caused some local Republican leaders to wonder why he switched if the party didn't matter—especially two weeks before filing.

Gentry has refused numerous efforts to answer questions on whom he voted for in recent past elections. Gentry didn't respond to invitations to the recent Nelson County America First Candidate Forum at Wickland. That event was attended by 23 Republican candidates, but Gentry was the only one to not respond at all. Later that evening, Gentry was a no-show at the Annual Republican Lincoln Dinner.

Gentry's candidate Facebook page lists a website www.gentryforjudge.com, however, it was not operational at the time of publication. Some have viewed Gentry's attempt to switch parties at the last minute as political opportunism. Gentry insists he is a conservative, although he told the Kentucky Standard he is a conservative, just not radical. When Gentry was sent a question if he felt Trump was a radical conservative, Gentry again never replied. His campaign lists no phone number, unlike the Hutchins and Thresher campaigns.

“
The Greatest Threat
To The Republican
Party Is Democrats
Masquerading As
Republicans.”



Donald J. Trump - CPAC 2022



Massaroni cont.

Massaroni is a tough-but-sweet mom that doesn't like the way our country and state are headed. She especially takes issue with Rep. McCoy for taking money from a Pfizer PAC, then holding up bills that would have given medical freedom over mandates. Massaroni wants to simply show important things she would do differently than McCoy such as:

- * McCoy voted against putting "In God We Trust" in schools; Massaroni would have supported that

- * McCoy co-sponsored a bill to raise the gas tax; Massaroni will not support any tax increases

- * McCoy voted to increase additional items taxed as sales tax, such as automotive repair and gym memberships, Massaroni would not

- * McCoy voted to move drivers licensing out of the county; Massaroni disagrees with that vote

- * McCoy called Jimmy Higdon's "Born Alive Act" SB 9 "A Bill Just To Rile People Up... A Do Nothing Bill." Massaroni Strongly Disagrees.

Massaroni is a Boston-area resident where she lives with her husband and daughter. She attends Mill Creek Baptist Church and has a deep-rooted faith in God. While she may not have the big money and political action committees like McCoy, what she does have is an army of volunteers and supporters. Her biggest support group is local "mom groups."

Her opponents are Chad McCoy and Trey Bradley, the current chair of the local GOP. This is the second time in five years that the chairman of the Republican Party of Nelson County has challenged McCoy. In 2020, then chairman Don Thrasher said he felt compelled to run against McCoy after McCoy had lied to the Republican Party Executive Committee about taxes. McCoy was elected in 2016, when he sent out a mailer to Republicans saying that he was opposed to raising the gas tax. Two days after the meeting with the local executive committee, McCoy co-sponsored a bill to raise the gas tax. Many local Republicans felt like they were lied to and betrayed by McCoy's actions, particularly by him hiding the fact he was co-sponsoring the bill.

Some people have speculated that Bradley may be in this race to help McCoy by splitting any anti-incumbent vote. However, Bradley denies this and says that he is in it to win. Some Republican political watchers see Bradley's move as an attempt at a strategic block. Bradley took over the helm of the local GOP after Thrasher announced he would not seek re-election in order to run for office this year. What some people find unusual is the fact that Bradley is not temporarily relinquishing his chairmanship. The tradition of the local party is for the sitting chair to recuse temporarily while running for office. This tradition was followed by both Robert Augustine, the chair from 2012–2018 when he ran for city council, and by Thrasher in 2020 to run against McCoy.



Candy Massaroni and Her Husband, Nolan



Massaroni Speaking at a Candidate Forum

Former Bardstown CFO Arrested for Theft and Wire Fraud Only Spent Hours in Jail Before Being Released—She's Still Living in Million-Dollar Home



Former City of Bardstown CFO was arrested for theft and wire fraud earlier this year. We have learned that she spent only a few hours in jail before being released. She currently is still residing in her nearly \$1-million-dollar home. She is also operating the Chaplin Mini Mart her and her husband purchased. Hudson is accused of stealing around \$750,000 of City funds. The criminal case is still pending in Federal Court.

Both Hudson's home and the Chaplin Mini-Mart are believed to have been partly paid for with stolen city funds. The City of Bardstown has placed a lien on the house. Hudson's husband was a Louisville Metro Police Detective. The current case was investigated by the Kentucky State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The arrest was made by the U.S. Marshall's office out of Louisville.



The Nelson County News Sentinel is published and paid for by the Nelson County America First PAC.
The newspaper is sent to over 4,000 houses in Nelson County free of charge.
The address for the Nelson County America First PAC is PO Box 21, Cox's Creek, KY 40013
The editorial staff can be reached at editor@americafirstky.org

Former Nelson County Sheriff's Detective Jon Snow Running For 5th District Magistrate



Former Nelson County Detective, Jon Snow, is running for 5th District Magistrate in the Republican Primary. The seat will be vacant due to current Magistrate Eric Shelburne being on the ballot as the Democratic Party candidate for judge executive.

Snow is conservative and promises to bring "Honesty, Integrity, and Transparency" to Nelson County Government. Jon served in the military and served 23 years in law enforcement, where he obtained the rank of Captain.

He and his wife Laura run a successful business on their farm in Chaplin. They are still raising two of their five sons. The Snows are strong Christians that are active in their local church in Chaplin.

Snow says he is a "True Conservative." After his speech at the Nelson County America First Candidate Forum, many in attendance agreed with that assessment. Snow seems to be a humble man that has the right intentions.

Snow's motto on his candidate Facebook page says: "Do The Right Thing Even When Nobody is Watching. It's Called Integrity"

Snow is facing Ann Marie Williams in the Republican Primary. The winner will face democratic candidate Kenny Downs.

Conservative Congressman Thomas Massie Now Represents Half of Nelson County



Nelson County has a new congressman! Thomas Massie, of the 4th Congressional district, now represents the northern half of Nelson County. Massie is a staunch conservative and one of the biggest fighters for liberty in Washington, D.C.

The 2020 census gave the KY General Assembly the population basis that they based their 2022 redistricting law on. Nelson County will remain as the only county for the 50th State Representative seat, and Jimmy Higdon will remain our state Senator.

Massie draws a stark contrast to 2nd Congressional District's Brett Guthrie, who is considered a moderate Republican. Some within the party would use the word "RINO" (or "Republican in Name Only") to describe Guthrie. The term RINO has seemingly become the label for any moderate Republican that leans more left than right.



Massie recently sued House Speaker Nancy Pelosi over her mask mandate for members of congress. Massie is a strict constitutionalist that does not sacrifice constitutional principles for the sake of keeping party leaders happy.

He is currently facing two primary opponents, Claire Wirth and George Washington. Wirth is a firey Trump supporter that feels she can represent the 4th congressional district better than Massie. Washington, who changed his name, is an almost comical figure that has an interesting presentation, but certainly not serious.

Neither Wirth nor Washington are remotely close to Massie in the polls, and Massie is expected to win quite handily on May 17th.

THERE ARE LEADERS AND THERE ARE FOLLOWERS IN THIS WORLD



BE A LEADER!

SUPPORT CANDIDATES THAT SUPPORT THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND THE SECOND AMENDMENT

FACEBOOK POLL IN NELSON COUNTY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP ON BIGGEST ISSUES IN NELSON COUNTY

 Don Thrasher created a poll.
Jan 13 · 🌐

Property Taxes Are Too High

 205 votes

Lack Of Recreational Facilities

 170 votes

Too Much Regulations (Planning/Zoning)

 109 votes

Corruption

 91 votes

Crime

 52 votes

Internet Accessibility

 44 votes

Roads

 41 votes

Judge Executive candidate Don Thrasher conducted a Facebook poll in the Nelson County Neighborhood Watch Group. Thrasher asked what are the biggest Issues for Nelson County Government.

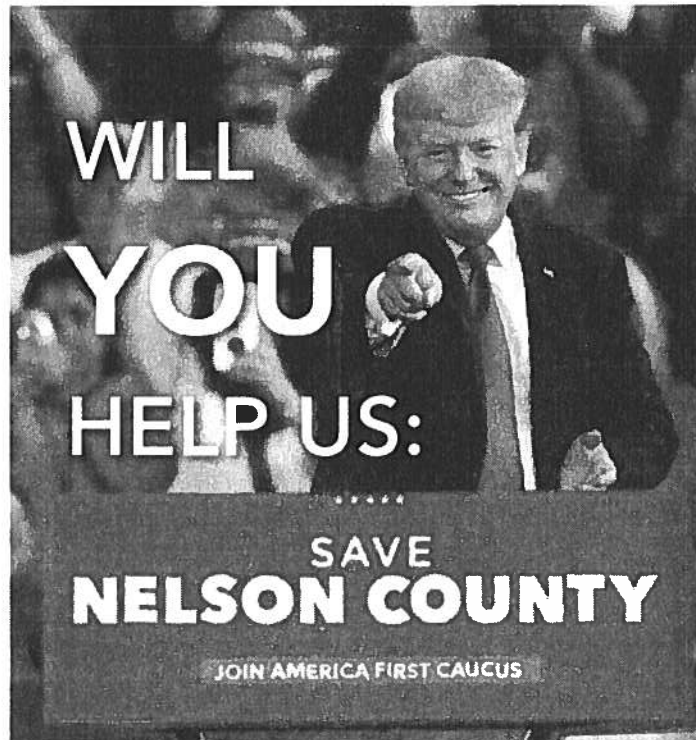
The poll's results have high property taxes as the number one concern, followed by lack of recreational facilities. Too much regulations, such as planning and zoning, was third.

Pictured left is a screenshot of the poll.

DO YOU AGREE WITH THE POLL?

If you have other concerns about county government, Don Thrasher would like to hear from you. Call or text Don at 502-510-4953.

Source of Screenshot: FACEBOOK GROUP NELSON COUNTY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH



The Nelson County America First Political Action Committee

Follow Us On Facebook: Nelson County America First Caucus

Email Us: INFO@AMERICAFIRSTKY.ORG

CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS FIGHTING FOR AMERICA FIRST



Paid For By Nelson County America First PAC

20 Republican Candidates & Office Holders Attended the 1st Annual Nelson County America First Candidate Forum At Wickland

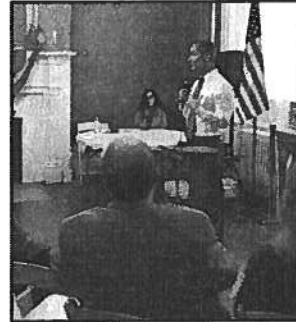
Don Thrasher emceed and was the lead organizer of the 1st Annual Nelson County America First Candidate Forum at Wickland on February 25th. Over 120 people attended, with standing room only at times. The event started with Esther McCune singing the National Anthem and most of the attendees joined in the singing. The halls of Wickland rang with patriotic Republicans singing the Star-Spangled Banner.

Attendees included State Auditor Mike Harmon, who is running for Governor in 2023. Rand Paul was represented by Robert Augustine who spoke on Paul's continuing efforts for liberty and freedom in Washington.

Jon Snow and Ann Marie Williams both spoke about their upcoming primary for Fifth District magistrate.

The 3rd District Magistrate race had Philip Bischoff, M.T. Hamed and Toni Wiley attending. Jeff Cassell was unable to attend with a prior commitment.

2nd District Magistrate candidate Adam Wheatley spoke about his recent retirement from Farm Bureau Insurance. Wheatley is facing incumbent Democrat Gary Coulter in the fall.



Don Thrasher Opening The Event



There were two confirmed speakers for the 50th District State Representative race. Current state rep Chad McCoy didn't respond to the invitation. Trey Bradley confirmed, but had to cancel at the last minute. Candy Messaromi did speak and captivated the audience. Her rousing speech had several moments of applause and cheers on the various topics she spoke on.

Republican Jailor candidate Todd Stratton was in attendance; his opponent Justin Hall was confirmed to speak but had to cancel due to an illness in his family.

Republican Coroner candidate Danielle Chadek also was in attendance and PVA candidate Jason Williams spoke. Matt Schrader led the event in saying the pledge of allegiance and Jacob Hamm gave the invocation.

The event was sponsored by the Nelson County America First PAC.

The organizers would like to give a special thanks to local journalist and editor of the Nelson County Gazette, Jim Brooks. Brooks video-recorded the event and provided coverage for the Gazette.

Jim Brooks' efforts in Nelson County to provide transparency and openness of local government was appreciated by the attendees.

Nelson County America First PAC is planning an additional event before the May 17th Primary to give voters a chance to meet the candidates. We will update you when the dates are announced.



**Video of the event is available courtesy of the Nelson County Gazette on its YouTube Page with an article link on its website at
WWW.NELSONCOUNTYGAZETTE.COM**



How Much Are the Salaries for Elected Officials In Nelson County?

**Table 1.1
Salary Schedule For County Judges/Executive, County Clerks, Sheriffs,
Jailers Operating Full-Service Jails, And Property Valuation Administrators
Adjusted By Change In Consumer Price Index, 2014**

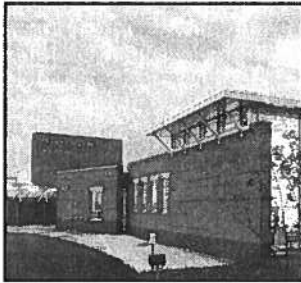
Group	Population	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
I	0-4,999	\$64,531.18	\$66,486.67	\$68,442.16	\$70,397.65
II	5,000-9,999	70,397.65	72,353.14	74,308.63	76,264.12
III	10,000-19,999	76,264.12	78,219.61	80,175.10	82,130.59
IV	20,000-29,999	79,197.35	82,130.59	85,063.82	87,997.06
V	30,000-44,999	85,063.82	87,997.06	90,930.29	93,863.53
VI	45,000-59,999	87,997.06	91,908.04	95,819.02	99,730.00
VII	60,000-89,999	93,863.53	97,774.51	101,685.49	105,596.47
VIII	90,000-499,999	96,796.76	101,685.49	106,574.22	111,462.94
IX	500,000 and more	102,663.24	107,551.96	112,440.69	117,329.41

Sources: For property valuation administrators, KRS 132.590, Department for Local Government, and Department of Revenue; for all others, KRS 64.5275 and Department for Local Government.

Please Note the above figures have been revised for the current Consumer Price Index. The above chart is the most current chart available but is not inclusive of any subsequent changes. This is presented for general amounts. The Steps are years so the first year an elected official will make Step 1 amount, Year 2 = Step 2 etc.

Nelson County School District School Merger Plan Construction to Cost Taxpayers \$38 Million

The Nelson County School District built Thomas Nelson High School based on inaccurate projections of student enrollment. Thomas Nelson cost the taxpayers of Nelson County a lot of money. Now construction of a "Community Campus" at both current high schools is going to cost taxpayers another \$38 Million. That is, if it stays in projected budget. Known locally by many as the school merger plan, middle schools will be moved to a community campus. The current Local Planning Commission's plan of the district is currently under litigation. A group of concerned citizens, called Nelson County Citizens Advocating For Responsible Education, filed suit to stop the merger by legally questioning the LPC process.



The group Nelson County Citizens Advocating for Responsible Education and the Save Our Schools Facebook group are vocal opponents of Nelson County School District Superintendent Wes Bradley's Merger Plan. Community leaders like Judge Jack Seay, Attorney Amanda Deaton, Daniel Greenwell, and Debra Bohachvesky are leading the effort.

The Facebook group Save our Schools provides updated information on the effort to stop the merger. Members have brought up wide-ranging issues that they feel Bradley has dropped the ball on. Several have cited the large teacher turnover as an indicator of Bradley's poor leadership.

Members of the Bloomfield community have been especially vocal against the merger. Bloomfield Middle School would be closed under the merger plan. The district argues that the majority of the Bloomfield Middle School students are not even from Bloomfield, with a large portion of students bused in from the Cox's Creek area.

A series of public meetings began last summer debating the merger. Some of the meetings became very heated and contentious. It is clear that there is a divide in how the district should proceed. No formal poll or public survey has been conducted on the matter.

Why Are Nelson County School Property Taxes in the Top Five of County School Taxes in the State?

10 counties with highest amounts

County	Cents per \$100 of property value
1. Pike	88.7
2. Greenup	84.7
3. Martin	80.9
4. Oldham	77.7
5. Harrison	76.4
6. Fayette	75
7. Henry	74.3
8. Shelby	73.1
9. Bell	71.4
10. Trimble	70.6

If you are a Nelson County property taxpayer and think that we have high property taxes, we do—especially the Nelson County School District Tax. We are generally in the top five of highest county school districts in the state.

There are several factors that affect this, including the fact that the construction of Thomas Nelson High School was built on inaccurate enrollment projections. Other factors include excessive district spending. While excessive spending is relative to someone's outlook, when you look at some of the administration's salaries, it might give you a glimpse into the issue.

As a public service, we are providing the publicly-available salaries of the highest paid administrators at the Nelson County School District.



Nelson County School District Central Office Administrator Top 10 Salary List

- Superintendent - \$138,656**
- Director of Community Centered Programs - \$113,347**
- Director of Human Resources - \$113,342**
- Director of Workforce Development - \$103,921**
- Director of Student Performance - \$100,149**
- Chief Financial Officer- \$100,200**
- Chief Information Officer - \$98,354**
- Director of Leadership & Learning - \$93,535**
- Director of Innovation - \$87,000**
- Director of Diverse Learning - \$86,922**

These are just some of the salaries of the central office administrators. Please note that several also get a vehicle allowance and expense accounts.



There is an election for two Nelson County School Board seats in November of this year. District 1 and 4 will be up for election. In 2024, Districts 2, 3 and 5 will be up for election. These are non-partisan elections, so they will not be on the May 17th Primary Ballot.

If you are unhappy with property taxes or any other issues, we encourage you to get involved. Ask questions of the school board and administration. The voters of Nelson County employ the School Board. Your voice counts!

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION: Bardstown City Council Member Joe Buckman's Development Gets a Waiver from His Fellow City Council Members



Rowan Creek Condominium Development

Rowan Creek Condominiums is a development started by Bardstown City Council Member Joe Buckman. Originally a private road off Woodlawn Road, a recent decision by the City Council has raised some questions. In a recent council meeting, City Engineer Jessica Filiatreau told council members that the road didn't meet the standards to be accepted into the city's road maintenance system. This was after an application was made to have the city take over cost of maintenance. The development was originally supposed to be a larger condominium development, but only three condos were completed. The developer now wants to build 13 single-family homes at the site.

In order to build single-family homes, they would be required to have road frontage. The developer now wants the city to provide maintenance and to become a city-maintained road. However, as Filiatreau explained, the road is not wide enough and doesn't meet the city standards.

The council then voted to waive the normal standards and allowed the private road to become part of the city's road system.

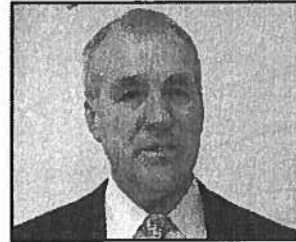
Councilman Buckman did recuse himself from the discussion and the vote on the road issue. A previous meeting in February voted to extend the city sewer line to the development, with Buckman again recusing himself.

Questions have been raised in the past about Buckman's extensive development interests and construction potentially being a conflict of interest, particularly, some of the Historic Review District projects that have some suggesting Buckman may be receiving special treatment.

No formal complaints of conflict have been filed that we could locate.

Buckman is listed as the Managing Member of JTD Holdings, LLC, which owns numerous properties throughout the county. He is also listed as the registered agent for the Rowan Creek Condominium Association, Inc.

It is unclear if Buckman will be the developer of the 13 single-family homes.



Bardstown City Council Member Joe Buckman

Organization Number	0498028	Owner *	Property Address #	Legal Description #
Name	JTD HOLDINGS, LLC	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	WEST BROADWAY 213	213 W BROADWAY
Profit or Non-Profit	P - Profit	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	NORTH THIRD STREET 106	106-110 NORTH THIRD STREET
Company Type	KLC - Kentucky Limited Liability	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	NORTH THIRD STREET 102	102-106 NORTH THIRD STREET
Status	A - Active	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	EAST BROADWAY 114-116	114-116 EAST BROADWAY
Standing	G - Good	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	EAST BROADWAY 210	210 EAST BROADWAY
State	KY	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	EAST BROADWAY 206	206 EAST BROADWAY UNITS 3 & 4 & LAND
File Date	7/19/2000	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	EAST BROADWAY 206	STRAWBERRY ROW CONDO UNIT 2 PC12-179
Organization Date	7/19/2000	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	CREEKWOOD DRIVE 0	HERITAGE HILLS LT 209 PC1-372
Last Annual Report	2/12/2021	♣ JTD HOLDINGS LLC	WOODLAWN ROAD 895	MINOR SUB TR 2 PC6-54 ROWAN CREEK CONDOS
Principal Office	213 WEST BROADWAY BARDSTOWN, KY 40004			
Managed By	Manager			
Registered Agent	JOSEPH B. BUCKMAN 213 WEST BROADWAY BARDSTOWN, KY 40004			

Organization Number	0603215	Organization Number	0601752
Name	ROWAN CREEK CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, INC.	Name	ROWAN CREEK DESIGN GROUP, LLC
Profit or Non-Profit	N - Non-profit	Profit or Non-Profit	F - Profit
Company Type	KCO - Kentucky Corporation	Company Type	KLC - Kentucky Limited Liability Company
Status	A - Active	Status	A - Active
Standing	G - Good	Standing	G - Good
State	KY	State	KY
File Date	1/11/2005	File Date	12/21/2004
Organization Date	1/11/2005	Organization Date	12/21/2004
Last Annual Report	2/12/2021	Last Annual Report	2/12/2021
Principal Office	213 WEST BROADWAY BARDSTOWN, KY 40004	Principal Office	213 WEST BROADWAY BARDSTOWN, KY 40004
Registered Agent	JOSEPH B. BUCKMAN 213 WEST BROADWAY	Managed By	Members
		Registered Agent	JENNIFER L. BUCKMAN 213 W. BROADWAY BARDSTOWN, KY 40004

Officers
Member Joe Buckman

Two Republicans File to Run for Bardstown City Council in the November Election



Barb Blackstone

Members of the Bardstown City Council will be up for election in the General Election this November. The current city council and mayor are all registered Democrats. The positions are non-partisan, which means that their political-party affiliation is not listed on the ballot. The City of Bardstown does not have city council districts like some cities. All members are elected at-large, which means that they could theoretically all live on the same street. Some opponents of this are wanting to see this changed.

Currently there are two Republicans that have filed to run for Bardstown City Council, Barbara Blackstone and Matthew Cooper.



Matthew Cooper

(K)

Nelson County News-Sentinel Editorial Page

EDITORIAL

Biden and Kamala Are a Continuation of the Obama-Era Failed Democrat Ideas and Policies

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are a continuation of the Obama Administration. This time around, instead of hearing from an articulate Obama, we are seeing a man with clearly diminished capacity. Biden's choice for VP is even more leftist than old Joe is. From Obama to Biden to Andy Beshear, the failure of the Democrats at all levels is apparent. Gone are the JFK Democrats of yesteryear—now we have militant "woke" social-justice warriors that despise the National Anthem, the pledge of allegiance, and the flag. Even on a local level we saw this new-era type of Democrat, Eric Shelburne, fight aggressively against saying the Pledge of Allegiance before Fiscal Court meetings, like our surrounding counties do.

Shelburne fought against the Second Amendment advocate group Nelson County United's attempt to get Nelson County to become a 2nd Amendment Sanctuary County, like 90 other counties in Kentucky. Shelburne at the time said "Ok I'm down with that, but while we're at it, let's make it an illegal-immigrant sanctuary, too."

Make no mistake, Biden, Beshear, and Shelburne march to the same beat. Ask Mr. Shelburne if he voted for Biden and Beshear. Ask Mr. Shelburne if he is pro-abortion. This country is in a precarious position right now, it is time conservatives locally take a stand and vote for conservatives that will fight for America, not the left's broken agenda. —Nelson County News Sentinel Editorial Board



POLICY:

The Nelson County News Sentinel Letter To The Editor Policy is to print submissions that are consistent with conservative values. Our newspaper does not pretend to be neutral like some left-leaning mainstream media news sources.

To submit a letter, please keep the letter under 75 words and refrain from profanity or any defamatory statements.

Submissions are by electronic mail only and may be sent to editor@americafirstky.org

Views are of the letter writers themselves and do not necessarily reflect those of the publishers.



Tim Hutchins Is No Republican

Dear Editor,

I ran twice for Judge Executive in Nelson County, as the first Republican to do so. Both of my campaigns I also ran against a Democrat-turned-Independent named Tim Hutchins. I served in the combat arms in the United States Army as an enlisted soldier, and retired as a military officer in the United States Air Force. I am a disabled American veteran, during both of my campaigns, my service and my disability were repeatedly attacked by Tim Hutchins. Hutchins claims to support veterans, but only ones that he isn't running against for political office. Hutchins attacked my work as a Federal Agent, and even attacked the reputation of my wife.

Hutchins changed parties and is now running for judge executive again, but this time as a Republican. I don't bring up these issues to be negative, but to bring attention to issues that need to be brought to light. I will be supporting Don Thrasher for judge executive. —Peter Trzop, Bardstown

Electric Bills Through The Roof

Dear Editor,

Our electric bill has gone through the roof. Salt River is saying it is due to the fuel adjustment and EPA charges. If this is true, then the democrat in the White House is who I blame. How much more are we expected to pay because of these people? —Angie Miller, Cox's Creek

Candy Massaroni Will Fight For Liberty

Dear Editor,

Elected officials must put principles before special interests and the individual before the establishment. Candy Massaroni is accessible to her constituents. She will push back against any illegal, unconstitutional mandates while promoting small businesses, the backbone of our community. She supports election reform, is pro-life, and pro-second amendment.

When government becomes oppressive of the rights of it's citizens, it is the duty of our elected officials to oppose lawless mandates that destroy small business and violate individual liberties and privacy. When local elected officials refuse to protect these rights, we must replace them with those that will. Candy Massaroni is a Christian, veteran, America-First candidate. I am voting for Candy on May 17th in the Republican primary. —Steve Carter, Bardstown

Supporting Philip Bischoff for Magistrate

Dear Editor,







I would like to voice my support for Philip Bischoff for magistrate of my district. Philip is the kind of person we need to represent us at the court in Bardstown. As a Boston resident, I can say he is the only one that has been trying to help the people of the 3rd district for the last 4 or 5 years. When he ran in 2018 I voted for him, and will vote for him again. I don't know where these other folks that are running against him were for the last four years, but they haven't been speaking up for us like Philip has. —Mary Roberts, Boston





CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE SCORECARD FOR THE MAY 17th NELSON COUNTY REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

*Note. These are the candidates endorsed by the Nelson County America First PAC that are on the May 17th, 2022 Republican Primary Ballot. There is one more race for Jailer that will appear on Nelson County Republican ballots. The office of Jailer is not a direct legislative-related office, and the PAC only endorses in legislative policy-related offices.

NELSON COUNTY AMERICA FIRST ENDORSEMENT	NELSON COUNTY AMERICA FIRST CONSERVATIVE SCORE	CANDIDATE NAME & OFFICE
	A+	 CONGRESSMAN THOMAS MASSIE DISTRICT 4 (Northern Nelson County)
	A	 DON THRASHER JUDGE EXECUTIVE
	A	 PHILIP BISCHOFF DISTRICT 3 MAGISTRATE
	A	 CANDY MASSARONI STATE REP DIST. 50
	A	 JON SNOW DISTRICT 5 MAGISTRATE
	A	 LEE WATTS 2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT (Southern Nelson County)

NELSON COUNTY REPUBLICAN PRIMARY ELECTION IS MAY 17th, 2022

PAID FOR BY THE NELSON COUNTY AMERICA FIRST PAC

APPENDIX B

Ky Registration of Election Finance
Attn: Lyle Saunders
146. Walnut St

KY REGISTRY OF
ELECTION FINANCE

APR 05 2022

Frank Porte Ms Saunders,

I was recently made aware of a publication that was mailed via U.S. mail. It appears to be an endorsement for a particular candidate for Nelson County Judge Executive. The publication *Wksquis* as a "newspaper" is clearly an endorsement for Donald Thrasher who is one of the Republican candidates. I feel that the intention of this letter as a newspaper is ^{MIS}leading and may violate campaign laws.

Nelson County American PAC who is responsible for this publication is chaired by Mr Thrasher. This is a clear conflict of interest as Mr Thrasher is a candidate.

In fairness to all the candidates I feel this should be investigated to ensure the integrity of the election process.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter

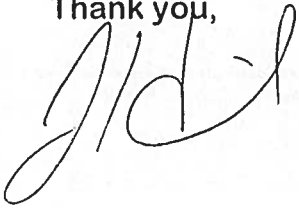
Shara L. Brashear

04/05/2022

Leslie Saunders, Kentucky Registry of Election Finance

I received a publication in the mail that was clearly meant to endorse specific personnel in the Nelson County Primary election. It was an extremely unfavorable towards all other candidates running in this election. This publication was designed to look like a newspaper, but was very biased towards this specific group of candidates. After some research on election finance, I question the lawfulness of this "newspaper". With advertisements on the election from past years, I ask that this publication, the pact influence on the publication, and the individual responsible for this pact and publication be called into question for review.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Saunders', written in a cursive style.

04/04/2022

Ms. Saunders

This past week, I acquired an advertisement in the mail that was intended to look like a newspaper. This advertisement was clearly biased to specific candidates in the Nelson County Primary election. The content towards all other candidates running in this election was potentially prejudiced. After some due diligence on election finance, I would consider the legality of this publication. I ask that this publication, the pact influence on the publication, and the individual responsible for this pact and publication be investigated.

Sincerely,

Mate Lanham

Reference: 2022-002

To: Leslie Saunders @Ky Registry of Election Finance

Ms. Saunders,

I am writing to express my concern regarding a political mailer "disguised" as a legitimate newspaper recently sent to my home. This mailer referenced a number of different races and candidates currently seeking office in the upcoming Nelson, Co. KY. Primary.

Is this type of mailing legal? There is an obvious bias towards a particular slate of candidates and outright slanderous and potentially liable accusations made towards others.

Clearly, this country needs to deescalate this type of condescending and malignant badgering among candidates – especially within their own party!

Regards,

Veteran and Concerned Voter.

April 4th, 2022

Kentucky Registry of Election Finance
Attention: Leslie Saunders
140 Walnut St.
Frankfort, KY 40601
Re: 2022-002

Ms. Saunders:

Earlier this week I received a publication in the US Mail that was clearly an endorsement for certain individuals running in the Nelson County Primary Election. It was also potentially prejudiced and inflammatory in nature to other candidates. This publication was designed to resemble a newspaper, but the information that it contained was obviously biased.

In the world of election propaganda that we have seen in the last few years, I would request that this publication, the pact mentioned in the publication and the individual responsible for the pact and publication be investigated. However, at the very least, I would request that Mr. Thrasher and Nelson County America First PAC be prevented from communicating during the remainder of the 2022 election cycle.

Thank you for your time,
A Concerned Citizen of Nelson County

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda Hutchins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kentucky Registry of Election Finance

Attention: Leslie Saunders

140 Walnut St.

Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Ms. Saunders,

I am contacting you today to voice my opinion on the request for advisory opinion, 2022-002, requested by Donald Thrasher.

Many questions brought forth to the advisory council in this request concern me. I encourage the council to consider what is being presented to the public, constituents, and even opposing candidates. I feel the practices used by Donald Thrasher and the PAC Committee, in which he chairs, sets a terrible precedent for future campaigns in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

To start, each request is in relation to what Mr. Thrasher refers to as a "newspaper". I would argue this is not a correct categorization. Mr. Thrasher did a great job creating a written piece that is nothing more than an advertisement for himself. It includes hit pieces on his opposition and is thinly veiled to replicate a "newspaper". A "newspaper" would imply individuals purchased this piece.

My concern is that if allowed to continue we are setting a precedent that a candidate can, for a lack of better word, forge an endorsement from a PAC. Mr. Thrasher never once presents or reveals, to the 4000 addressed homes that received the newspaper/mail piece, that he is the chairperson of the Nelson County America First PAC. A position in which he prides himself on being endorsed. To say it simply, he is endorsing himself, and falsely presenting it to the public as editorial content.

Furthermore, Mr. Thrasher is then conducting this mail piece as a for profit newspaper – soliciting funds and requesting payment for endorsing other candidates, by way of advertising fees – all to feed his false advertising claims. (POLITICAL ADVERTISING RATE KRS 121.065(1) Entities that sell advertising space or time to the public, such as newspaper and magazine publishers, owners or lessors of billboards, and radio and television stations, may not charge fees for political advertising that are not comparable to those charged other advertisers.) How do you determine the acceptable fees when there are no other advertisers in the written mail piece? In addition, I would expect that Mr. Thrasher would charge his own campaign. The paper does expressly advocate for Mr. Thrasher and his judge executive race, so I would urge you to consider that as a contribution if the newspaper is upheld as financially acceptable within the PAC and campaign election laws.

The very nature of the questions Mr. Thrasher is requesting advisory on, showcase how the ethics and finance boundaries have been crossed. How is one to determine the financial reporting of the PAC when the chairman of the PAC, is also a candidate and is receiving in-kind and other contributions from the PAC he chairs?

The boundaries of reporting on both the finances of the PAC and candidate campaign finances are clearly blurred and desperately need a clear and concise judgement. If not - the opportunity to take advantage of a PAC and/or campaign monies and circumvent reporting, is great. In adding an endorsements page, the candidate and chair of the PAC is trying to route the maximum \$2000 contribution limit to his campaign. Mr. Thrasher is further disguising the mail piece from being a hit piece and 8-page advertisement for the candidate. I am also concerned how the advisory board will monetize the in-kind contribution to the candidate's campaign. The PAC chairperson wrote this piece and sent for free to homes by payment from the PAC. The entire paper clearly benefits, the PAC chairman's own campaign. I would argue the entire expense therefore is an in-kind donation to his campaign. There is no other clear line that can be drawn in order to report his finances with clear ethics and integrity.

I urge the Kentucky Registry of Election Finance to uphold the integrity of financial reporting in our state. I urge you take in consideration the lack of ethics that Mr. Thrasher has displayed, which clearly contaminates his financial reporting. If Mr. Thrasher and the Nelson County America First PAC, which he chairs, were clear, upfront, and forthright in their mail pieces, I feel the financial questions in which he has requested to be advised on would in return have clear, upfront, and forthright answers. He is requesting advisement on how to skirt the rules and laws set forth by your council. Please ensure that advisement sends a clear message.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristi Hutchins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristi Hutchins