

# **HOUSE BUDGET REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC PROTECTION, TOURISM, AND ENERGY**

## **Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the 2026 Regular Session**

**February 3, 2026**

### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

The second meeting of the House Budget Review Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Protection, Tourism, and Energy of the House Standing Committee on Appropriations and Revenue was held on February 3, 2026, at 11:00 AM in Room 171 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Chris Fugate, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

### **Present were:**

Members: Representatives Chris Fugate, Chair; Shawn McPherson, Vice Chair; Representatives Jim Gooch Jr., Kim King, Matthew Lehman, and Bill Wesley.

Guests: Max Fuller, Commissioner, Department of Housing, Buildings, and Construction (HBC), Public Protection Cabinet (PPC); David Moore, Deputy Commissioner, HBC, PPC; David E. Beck, President and CEO, State Fair Board/Kentucky Venues (SFB/KV), Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet (TAH); Dr. David Williams, Chair, SFB/KV, TAH; Matthew Johnson, Chief of Staff, SGB/KV, TAH; and, Anthony Schreck, CFO, SFB/KV, TAH.

LRC Staff: Wendy Bohn, Mariah Derringer-Lackey, Joseph Holt, and Spring Emerson.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Representative Gooch moved to approve the January 14, 2026 minutes. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair McPherson, and the minutes were approved without objection by voice vote.

### **Public Protection Cabinet**

Commissioner Fuller and Deputy Commissioner Moore provided information on the budgetary issues of the Department of Housing, Buildings, and Construction (HBC).

In response to Vice Chair McPherson, Commissioner Fuller said the HBC does not perform building inspections on single-family homes; those are done by the local governments. The HBC does plumbing, HVAC, and electrical inspections, and those inspectors are being stretched too thin in the more populous areas. They have a need for one additional plumbing inspector and one plumbing plan reviewer. Deputy Commissioner Moore said

the plan reviewer is needed in the Bowling Green/Warren County area. The work is currently being performed by a Field Operations Manager (FOM) who is planning to retire soon. The hope is to hire someone in time for the FOM to be able to train the new person before he retires.

In response to Chair Fugate, Commissioner Fuller said electrical inspectors are different. Local inspectors handle all non-state jurisdiction projects, not owned or leased by the state. In some cases, there are exceptional projects when the local government does not have the resources to perform the work and needs assistance. The Ford plant in Glendale is an example of that. There are only nine electrical inspectors covering the entire state. By statute, local governments have responsibility for smaller buildings, typically those with under 100 occupants. They normally utilize building code inspectors, but not all local governments have a local building inspector. In those cases, the HBC fills in for that absence. There is additional strain on the HBC in the case of a disaster, such as tornadic activity, flooding, and winter weather events.

### **Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet**

David E. Beck, President and CEO; Dr. David Williams, Chair; Matthew Johnson, Chief of Staff; and Tony Schreck, CFO, presented information on the budgetary issues of the State Fair Board/Kentucky Venues.

In response to Vice Chair McPherson and Chair Fugate, Mr. Beck said even though funds were appropriated in July, the work could not begin until late November and December. Mr. Schreck said the project was delayed due to the lengthy Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Mr. Beck added that inflation also became a factor during that time, and resulted in not having enough funds to finish the project as originally planned. There are over four thousand different tradespeople involved in the project, and those are primarily Kentucky-based. They are also working with the Department of Agriculture to be able to focus more on Kentucky products in the food and beverage areas.

### **Adjournment**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 11:00 AM in Room 171 of the Capitol Annex. There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:33 AM.