

Pulaski County Judge Executive Column
Somerset, Ky. (November 27, 2024)

I haven't written you for a while, so I wanted to provide a couple of updates here in a November column and also one in December. As colder air settles in and the aroma of turkey and dressing fills homes across Pulaski County, we gather once again to celebrate Thanksgiving. It's a day steeped in tradition, connection, and gratitude. In our fast-paced lives, it's easy to let moments of reflection slip through the cracks. Thanksgiving serves as a gentle reminder to pause, take stock, and appreciate what we have. And what we have isn't solely measured by the feasts on our tables or the comforts we enjoy but also by our families, the challenges that shape us, and the small joys that keep us going.

This year, gratitude for me means giving thanks for the team that I have here in Pulaski County Government. Earlier this year, I had the chance to speak with the Somerset Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce about the state of the county. We've had a lot of challenges these past two years, but I feel that we are headed in the right direction. A big reason for that is my team. All of our departments do a great job of moving Pulaski County forward. Our Finance Department, in the past almost two years, has reduced county debt by over four million dollars. We have cut in half the number of findings on our audits and are currently eliminating more for the next audit. We have done all this while giving employees raises with each budget cycle. We've done this by cutting excessive spending and increasing accountability. I think we are accountable to our taxpayers and that's how I look at local government spending.

Part of that accountability comes from having members of my own staff and the majority of the county workforce clocking in and showing that they are here and on time doing the work that our taxpayers expect us to do. Our H.R. Director has done an incredible job streamlining the payroll process and has instituted a new safety policy. She has also helped us become a Certified Drug Free workplace. We want them drug free because of the nature of the work that our departments do. Look at the Pulaski County Road Department. As the third largest county in Kentucky, we have almost 1200 miles of road. It is a must that we have one of the best road crews in the state. Almost all county road work is done in-house. We only hire outside contractors for paving. This saves Pulaski County hundreds of thousands of dollars, including our latest project at Campground Road. With a half million-dollar state funding grant, we now have two-and-a-half miles of new pavement, twenty-two feet wide, rights-of-way cleared, and improved ditch lines. And we are in the process of studying other possible roads to work on next.

These are just a few of the aspects of my team I'm thankful for in my job as Pulaski County Judge Executive. My December column will focus on more of that as we close out our full second year in office and focus on what our goals are in the upcoming year. As you sit down to enjoy a meal with your family and friends this holiday season, take a moment to go around the table and share what you are thankful for too. These reflections have a way of deepening our connections and reminding us of what truly matters. Thanksgiving may be one day, but the practice of gratitude can carry us through every season. So, as we savor the pumpkin pie and gather together, let's commit to a gratitude that lingers long after the holiday is over. As always, feel free to reach out to me or my staff if you have any concerns in the county. Our office stays open Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm. And you can call us at (606)678-4853. God Bless you all and God Bless Pulaski County.