

**Tonight, 8/13/25 is a little different.**

### **Opening**

We live in a place where people wave to each other, where neighbors lend a hand, and where we still believe in looking out for the other person. Washington Court House isn't just a dot on the map—it's home.

### **Cyber**

We continue working with cybersecurity experts to fully restore all systems and prevent future incidents.

Talk about water/wastewater billing.

Talk about pay by phone and the remaining hurdle of online water/wastewater billing.

Currently, professional cyber security people are reviewing data to ensure that the city performs any notice requirement or other appropriate action to any individual that may be needed. **To the best of our knowledge, our relational databases—containing sensitive information such as banking data—remain secure.** The relational databases are databases like water/wastewater billing or personal information collected by income tax.

While all relevant data will be reviewed, information that is not contained in a relational database needs to be carefully considered. This information is information like an I9 form (information completed by a vendor of the city, usually an EIN number and not a social security number) or internal documents that typically don't contain personal information related to a private citizen.

With that said, all relevant data will be carefully reviewed by a specialized third-party. These files are comprised of PDFs, office files and other scanned documents that were stored in systems as part of day-to-day operations. To the extent that we discover any of these files contain personal information, we will be notifying individuals; relevant updates will be shared as we move forward.

### **Community Growth and Development**

Tonight's agenda includes legislation related to the **Merritt Way residential development**, a project that reflects our city's commitment to thoughtful growth. Residential development is not just about building homes—it's about building a future.

We are also considering the **expansion of a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)** and the **creation of a New Community Authority (NCA)**. These tools help us support responsible development, attract investment, and ensure that growth benefits everyone.

**Development does not mean displacement.** We are committed to maintaining a community where people feel comfortable, where neighbors know each other, and where our shared values remain strong. Growth should enhance—not threaten—the character of Washington Court House.

Reasoned growth is interrelated to progress downtown; the industrial park and investment is private amenities. I know we have been challenging comfort zones with new ideas and exploring new concepts. No change to our small-town character is desired, the goal is reinforcement of opportunity. Ideals that are not new, more than a generation ago they were eloquently expressed: freedom from want, the American values of free speech and freedom to worship God in your own way and most importantly freedom from fear.

With time the names of the neighbors change, new generations of kids are born, we say goodbye to people we love, but the experience is frequently similar. People build a life.

## **Industrial Park**

We're seeing exciting momentum across our city, recently we have talked with:

**Plastilene Group**, a global leader in sustainable food packaging, Washington Court House is Plastilene's **first U.S. facility**. Their commitment to innovation and people is great.

**Fiber-Tech**, continues to offer strong employment opportunities with **starting wages around \$20 per hour, excellent insurance, and real paths for advancement**. All that's needed is to show up consistently and stay engaged... values that never go out of style.

**ValuTex**, a related company of Fiber-Tech is a story of investment, weaving fiberglass to support Fiber-Tech and a growing list of other customers.

**Wingate Packaging**, has built a reputation for quality and service. Wingate's continued investment is a testament to our industrial strength. Wingate is a place where with work you can advance.

**Sugarcreek**, a long-standing partner, remains committed to our community through job creation and expansion.

## **On the Horizon**

**Scotty's 22 Brew**, a new brewery opening soon, is transforming a historic downtown building into a vibrant destination. It's more than a business—it's a symbol of entrepreneurship. Scotty's been his own general contractor, so the work has been a little slower than expected, but soon you will have the opportunity to meet Scotty in person at Scotty's 22 Brew.

The **Court House Station** development near Home Depot and beyond Court House station new subdivisions are creating space for families, businesses, and opportunities.

**Vinyl Coffee**, like Scotty, Branson with family and friends is making a difference on the corner of Court and Main. It is a little slower than originally hoped, but the quality of the work is a welcome beacon.

## **Healthcare**

We recently celebrated the groundbreaking of the **Adena Fayette Medical Center**, a major healthcare expansion that will improve access and create jobs. This is an incredible positive development for our city.

## **Taxes**

I would like to thank everyone that voted in the recent election. You decided an issue and I appreciate that you voted.

## **Community Spirit**

From the **Farmers Market** to **Art on the Square**, these aren't just events, they're reminders of community.

We've faced challenges—economic shifts, storms, cyberattacks, pandemics—but we've never lost our faith in each other. Sometimes the world is complicated, sometimes you get misquoted, sometimes you mange the message, sometimes you just get frustrated.

Many of you who hear or read this, I know or have made an acquaintance. I see a community and people I love. (Examples)

Occasionally or preferably frequently please remember your family, your friends, your neighbors. A few people have misguided intentions, I am not naive about the world, but most people, most of the time are good and kind. Sometimes you just have to look a bit harder and see even in the darkness the light we have all had the joy of experiencing if we so choose.

Occasionally, thoughts like I have just expressed get relegated to the background. Folks at this moment, these are the most important words I can express.

## **Closing**

Washington Court House is growing, and we're growing with purpose. Growing with strong partnerships, and a commitment to our values, we are building a future that honors our past and embraces opportunity.

Thank you.