

The Shelby County Council met on Tuesday September 16, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., present were council members, Mohr, Langkabel, Haacker, O'Connor, Barlow, Ruble, County Attorney and County Auditor.

2026 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING:

Motion to open the 2026 Public Budget Hearing was made by O'Connor, seconded by Mohr, approved 6-0.

No public comment was made.

Motion to close the 2026 Public Budget Hearing was made by Mohr, seconded by Langkabel, approved 6-0.

PUBLIC MEETING LIT RATE:

Motion to open the public hearing on the new proposed LIT rates for 2026 was made by O'Connor, seconded by Barlow.

Floor was opened for public comments, no comments were made.

Motion to close the public hearing for the LIT Rate was made by Barlow, seconded by Mohr, approved 6-0.

Motion to approve Ordinance 2025-19 approving the PSAP rate increase of .05% and the Jail rate increase of .05% was made by O'Connor, seconded by Langkabel, approved 5-1 (Ruble).

MINUTES:

Motion to approve minutes from August 19, 2025 meeting was made by Barlow, seconded by O'Connor, approved 5-0-1 (Mohr).

TRANSFERS & ADDITIONALS:

TRANSFERS:

At this time, a motion to approve all transfers as presented was made by Langkabel, seconded by Barlow, approved 6-0.

Extension Office is requesting to transfer \$1,00.00 from 1000-15190-0011 (Interpret/Translator) to 1138-15180-0011 (Program Assistant).

LOIT Jail is requesting to transfer \$4,954.55 from 1170-11572-0380 (Correctional Officer) to 1170-11574-0380 (Correctional Officer).

General – Sheriff is requested to transfer \$3,010.91 from 1000-12570-0005 (Deputy) to 1000-12152-0005 (Civil Process Server), \$5,182.24 from 1000-12570-0005 (Deputy) to 1000-12410-0005 (Deputy), \$2,768.04 from 1000-12570-0005 (Deputy) to 1000-12587.0005 (Deputy).

General – Jail is requested to transfer \$5,400.00 from 1000-11380-0380 (Correctional Officer) to 1000-16180-0380 (Shift Differential), \$6,375.06 from 1000-11460-0380 (Correctional Officer) to 1000-11350-00380 (Sgt. Correctional Officer), \$2,589.63 from 1000-11560-00380 (Correctional Officer) to 1000-11500-00380 (Cpl Correctional Officer), \$1,930.16 from 1000-11520-00380 (Correctional Officer) to 1000-11570-00380 (Correctional Officer), \$16,000.00 from (Correctional Officer) to 1000-16170-00380 (Overtime).

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS:

E911:

Request for an additional appropriation in fund 4918-36103-0000 (Sheriff Communication Tower) in the amount of \$5,000.00, Motion to approve was made by Mohr, seconded by O'Connor approved 6-0.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

Request for an additional appropriation in fund 1206-35100-0000 (Cellular Service) in the amount of \$5,000.00 and fund 1206-32300-0000 (Postage) Motion to approve was made by O'Connor, seconded by Langkabel, approved 6-0.

MISCELLANEOUS:

BROADBAND:

Lisa Wojihoski-Schaler wanted to talk with the Council about the importance of getting broadband throughout the county. Lisa shared a personal story that just happened here, where her phone dropped a phone call 2 times while she was on the phone with 911 because of the poor Wi-Fi signal. Schaler advised that even though this is not legally required; there should be some kind of legal posting of all meetings besides on the buildings. It would be nice to see it on Social Media. I have had people from the group asking for this information. Our constituents look to you as a county council and also the county commissioners to be our champions, to represent us and do what you were elected to do, which in your case, is mostly budgetary and being astute and careful stewards of the funds of the county. At the last meeting there was no vote, no public discussion and therefore no opportunity as far as going forward with broadband, and so I was asked to also, on our Facebook page, give the county council member an invitation, an opportunity, in lieu of the vote, to post your individual positions, and we would like to thank you to those who did exercise that. The next question that came up was regarding broadband and were not saying that there is any wrongdoing. This really has nothing to do with accusations as much as it is asking for some accountability and transparency. We do not know if there was anything wrong or not, it might be perfectly great, and once we are given the full picture, we may applaud you, but we just do not know if there is anything right or wrong right now. So, there have been requests for accountability on any funding that was previously allocated. I understand some of the, but I am just presenting to you my litany of requests. The accountability regarding any funding that was previously allocated may or may not have gone to broadband, if it ended up not going to broadband, where did it go? Was the money lost because it was not used, or was it reallocated? And I know the answers to some of these questions. Trust me, as a lawyer, I usually do not ask questions I do not know the answers to. So, there were a couple questions as far as past grants and funds that, could they please be accounted for? Apparently, there was a lot of money that was spent on a consultant regarding the broadband issue, and then after that report was made, it appears that whatever the consultant did, it was disregarded. I have spoken to both the present and past council members, and because the broadband issue has been going on for years now, that we have been trying to figure that out, just like trying to figure out the sewers for Northwest Shelby County, it seems like it is never ending. Maybe we just need to use the towers or do this and that piecemeal. There might be other ways to get broadband. I have been told and I have to agree with this that the cheapest option is not always the best. Our constituents are asking that you look for value, not just what is going to be the cheapest. What is going to be the best value? What is going to be the most reliable service? You might need very good broadband, especially if you want to encourage development in Shelby County. Another question was to find out \$16,000.00 that was allocated to hire a special attorney to review the broadband proposal, and they wondered if they would be an opportunity to itemize that bill because they thought the \$16,000 just to review one document sounded like a lot of money. They would like to see an itemized bill. They would also like to see a list of what the ARPA money was spent on. Someone reported

\$133,000.00 being spent on Broadband and another \$3.1 million spent on something else and all together someone said the county received 5 or 8 million was any of that money earmarked for broadband. Lisa asked, "As Comcast is there any contract that have already been proposed. Is there any timelines as far as when they might be processing any of this, what would be the cost to the general public? Once they do that, what will that affect as far as installation, and then the monthly fees to the customers? What kind of network? She asked this because her company is an audio-video electronics corporation, so there are different kinds of delivery services. We would like to know because this makes a difference in reliability in the long term, and it might be better to invest some money up front so that you do not have to reinvest again in 5 or 10 years from now when technology changes. So, if we are going forward with Comcast or any other company, are they going to be putting in fiber optic, are they going to be burying it? Are they going to be putting it in a PVC so that when they go digging later on, you do not have issues with the fiber optic lines getting broken and if that happens then who bears the cost of doing the repairs? Next question. If there are these sorts of things and any kind of tax abatements or any other incentives what this Council grants them, then what do we do if there is noncompliance? Five below and their abatement continuing with noncompliance. They have not kept their work as far as what they were supposed to do and the amount of jobs that they were supposed to bring and they still got to keep their abatement. So, if we are going to give fiber optic company, Comcast or any other broadband company in general, are we going to actually have some teeth in any of the requirements that we have? Lisa thanked the Council for letting her speak. At this time Mohr asked if we could talk a little about this before having the gentleman from Comcast to come up and speak. Haacker advised yes, this would be the best way to answer some of their questions and clear some things up. Haacker advised there is no contract with Comcast or Ninestar. The county has been working towards an agreement for 2 years now, but that is all that has happened. As far as hiring another attorney to review the contract yes that was done, because our attorney had a conflict of interest. Haacker advised as of now we have invested \$280,000.00 into broadband and that included the request for information that was sent out in May of 2024 inviting broadband companies to express their interest we received 5 substantive responses and then we did a request for proposals and that went out and those were due in October of 2024. That is where the Ninestar agreement came in and was sent to the attorneys. There were 2 meetings where we were ready to vote on it, but there was either an advertising issue or a submission issue and so by a technicality council was not able to address that. As for as the ARPA money that was federal money the county received for COVID. Shelby County received \$8.7 million. We received two payments of \$4.3 million with the first payment being in 2021 and the other one was in 2022. The majority of the money around \$5 million was spent on infrastructure in the Northern part of the county, Pleasant View Area. The rest of the money, which was \$3million the council was holding back for broadband. But for the county to be able to keep that money, the county had to have a contract in place, we did not have the contract for broadband so the council had to change directions so that we did not lose the money. So, the council opted to pay the Sheriff's Department out of that money which left the \$3 million in the General Fund to put towards the broadband if wanted. And as of today, the \$3 million is still in the General Fund. Haacker advised that Ninestar was only going to do a loop and possibly impact 1,750 households the council invited Ninestar in to talk about this what the impact would be. It was very speculative. We did not know if these were people who wanted broadband, we did not know how they would connect, all we did know is this was going to be a loop like 465. Comcast for example was already installed; they got some grant money from the federal government through the state. They were ready to put fiber in throughout the county, I think they will be doing the whole southern end of the county by the end of this year. We were trying to get updates from Ninestar about that to see what was happening. O'Connor explained the maps that were being shared on the screen. Mohr asked if O'Connor could explain the BEAD money. O'Connor explained that every provider had the chance to apply for BEAD money. Barlow advised the one thing that he remembered from one of the meetings is that we were never going to get broadband to every driveway. That was even with Ninestar with the loop. The only county he knows that did that was Brown County 10 years ago. Very different scenario and situation. Barlow advised that Brown County is very different geography than we are. That was never an option to get it to every driveway. If we utilized the ARPA dollars, what that would have amounted to was about 1,800ish per connection which is what is based on the little over 1,750 homes represented

on the loop here. Mohr advised one of the things that was a selling point for Ninestar was that by doing the loop, anyone would be allowed to tie into it and that was sold as a vantage point. In talking with other providers, she has not found one yet that would tie into another provider's line. It is my understanding that competition does not want to use their lines, not they are not allowing them to. I do not think it is very common practice. Jarrett Moore with Comcast over Government Affairs over Shelby County wanted to explain what Comcast is actually doing in the county and further expansion that they are getting ready to do. Comcast has received Next Level Connection monies and funds in the amount of \$10 million, this will cover 4 projects. Most of the work will be in the southeast region of the county. Roughly about 1,000 potential addresses within that region. They will also be doing a little in the southwest part of the county. So, all together, about 3,700 addresses that we are going to either upgrade the network or add new fiber. This is all done at the expense of Comcast, we have not asked the county for any money. Ruble asked if he knew roughly what percentage of these addresses are existing versus potential new. Moore advised not off the top of his head but he will get with his team and get that answer. Moore advised he can come back with more information. This is a 2-year project and the second set is to be completed by the end of November 2026. No action was needed. This was information only.

HUMAN RESOURCES/ HIRING CHILL/POSITION REPLACE REQUEST:

Donna presented the Council with a request to replace an employee that has resigned.

1. Youth Assistance- This is a full-time position will work 35 hours a week and starting pay will be PAT I which is \$50,214.00. Motion to approve was made by Mohr, seconded by Langkabel, approved 6-0.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Mohr, seconded by Ruble approved 6-0.

NAY

AYE

ATTEST:

AMY L. GLACKMAN

SHELBY COUNTY AUDITOR