

## REXROAT,

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Accolades continues to pour in for Rexroat, who just days ago took his team on a historic run to the state championship.

Last week, the Jamestown City Council declared June 11 as “David Rexroat Day” in the city.

Monday, the Russell County School Board recognized the state runners-up, and Rexroat spoke briefly - praising his team, the board, and the community for recent

accomplishments.

“Before you go,” First District Board Member Brenda Higginbotham said, “I’d like to make a motion we name the baseball field we’re building after Coach Rexroat.”

With a rousing round of applause, the measure passed, and Rexroat was visibly humbled.

“I bet you weren’t expecting that!” Russell County School Superintendent Michael A. Ford told

Rexroat.

Last year, Rexroat became the winningest baseball coach in Russell County High School history by securing his 440th win, and was also named as the 4th Region Baseball Coach of the Year.

The school board recently approved moving forward with an over \$7 million project to upgrade athletic facilities to benefit several sports programs (include baseball) and students.

## LAKEFEST,

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kicks off Saturday at 7 a.m. with “Breakfast in the Park” sponsored by the local Lions Club, and “Opening Ceremonies.”

The nationally-known, Jamestown Lakefest Mike Hill 10K/5K Run sprints from the Square at 7:30 a.m.

Around 10 a.m., Children’s Games and an Antique Car & Tractor Show get underway with a Children’s Patriotic Parade following at 11 a.m., and Chalk Drawing Contest at

11:30 a.m.

Fresh off their 40th Recital, The Dance Shoppe brings their talents to Lakefest with a performance at 2 p.m.

They’ll be lining up for a Talent Show at 3 p.m., then local favorite Jordy Veach brings his smooth stylings to the stage at 4 p.m.

Buffalo Station stamperes into the city at 5 p.m, followed by area supergroup Company Crow.

“America’s Got Talent” Semifinalist Marty Brown will

perform at 7 p.m. - just before a solemn Wreath Ceremony at the Doughboy Monument at 8 p.m.

Event headliner Craig Morgan will bring his hits “That’s What I Love About Sunday,” “Redneck Yacht Club,” “International Harvester,” and more to the main stage at 8:30 p.m.

Fireworks will bring Lakefest to a close at 10 p.m.

The celebration will include various vendors, food, and other amenities.

## JAIL,

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Earlier this year the court agreed to have new jail employees hired in at \$12 an hour in attempt to hopefully fill vacancies at the facility.

Dunbar said under the provision “some we’ve hired...went automatically up to \$12 an hour.”

“I’ve got people down there working that’s been with me a year...that’s making just a little over \$11 an hour,” he said. “These staff members are training new staff members that are coming in, and they’re making less than them.”

“I would like to ask you all, if you would, to up that pay...to please consider these staff members,” the jailer said.

Dunbar said he is facing a situation where “those new hires we’ve hired in the last month or so are going to be making more money than the ones that are a little over the \$11 (an hour) rate right now.”

Fourth District Magistrate Steve Richardson inquired about the pay discrepancy.

“How did this get messed up?” he asked. “Somewhere, this got messed up.”

Russell County Treasurer Kim Fenske said in April, the court considered the new employee issue to “address that need of trying to be competitive in the workforce.”

“We didn’t take into consideration the staff that was already there...and how that might make them feel,” she said. “We didn’t ‘upgrade’ them...we didn’t change them.”

Judge Executive Gary D. Robertson explained salaries are usually set at the first, fiscal court meeting of each year.

A nearly hour-long discussion ensued about what other entities in the county are paying employees, the current economic situation, and what impact the requested pay increase could have on other county employees.

Dunbar cited a possible “crisis” over the unequal pay.

“I really need this help,” the jailer said. “I’m to the point of pleading with you.”

“People just don’t understand what we deal with in the jail,” he said.

Jail employees often face “assaults...irate inmates...cleaning feces off the wall,” and other challenges, Dunbar said.

“I’m still a couple of staff members short right now,” he said, “and I could see some walk out.”

The jailer said vacation time is also a current issue.

“I’m working some of them who prefer to be off,” Dunbar said. “It’s a tough situation we’re in.”

Second District Magistrate Mickey Garner said the raises would cost an estimated \$60,000, and anticipated other county employees in different departments may seek raises, too, if Dunbar’s request was granted.

“I personally think we’re fixing to open a can of

worms,” Richardson said. “I think it’s something that doesn’t end there.”

“I’ve got to try to preserve my staff,” Dunbar contended. “I feel like what I’m asking is not too much.”

“I know you’re in a tight spot,” Garner told the jailer.

“I’m gonna be in a tighter spot,” Dunbar countered.

“We, as fiscal court members, will be in a worst sport than you are,” Garner said. “If we do this, we’ve got guys here...what’s some of the road guys that’s been there 15 years gonna say?”

Continued conversation led to the possibility there may have been an “oversight” regarding pay equality among jail staff.

First District Magistrate Terry Waddell made a motion to grant Dunbar’s request.

“I’ve got that much faith in him (Jailer Dunbar),” Waddell said.

After a brief period of silence, Waddell acknowledged the lack of a second on his motion.

“I always stand alone,” he said.

Among options talked about by the magistrates was for some, current, jail employees to possibly leave, be rehired at a higher rate of pay - but accumulated vacation time would be lost.

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