



Upshur County Commissioners Court Meeting 08/15/2025

Comment: *All Contractors provide a contingency of “time” to address unknowns which may occur during the demolition and construction process of the Project. Much of unknowns will most likely be absorbed into this “time” contingency, however there are instances where the unknowns become larger in scope than what was planned for. Below are instances of these larger unknowns which had to be addressed as they were discovered in order to properly service the Courthouse restoration agenda and the citizens of Upshur County.*

From Change Order #1

The (LBP) Lead Based Paint/Abatement report conducted during the early design phase did not indicate any issues on the interior doors, however, during the work phase of removing the doors and prepping them for the historic paint color application, it was found that, under the heavy layers of latex paint applied over the years, there were undercoats of LBP. This was found to be the case with each interior door. Work needed to be halted and each door needed to undertake an abatement process where the doors were isolated so as to properly and legally remove the lead based paint in a safe manner. This was completely unforeseen since the report initially did not indicate a lead problem and was not planned for in the scheduling. This process set the schedule back with a **several weeks delay**.

From Change Order #2

When running new sewer line piping throughout the building, it was discovered that when it was time to connect to the existing lines as indicated on the documents, the existing lines (which are underground or under slab, were corroded and rusted to the degree they could not safely be connected to. This was brought before the County, and it was determined that all the corroded piping would be removed and replaced with new lines. The process involved extensive additional demolition for new trenching in order to make all the needed connections stable. Plumbing and routes had to be postponed until the new sewer lines were installed and connections could be made. **Several weeks delay**.

From Change Order #4

Unforeseen cracking and detachments of the exterior fluted masonry panels had been discovered when the panels were being cleaned and prepped for re-caulking. It was noted that the detachment of most panels was due to “rust-jacking” behind the panels thus pushing the panels away from the building face. This was due to water infiltration behind the panels over many years. A concentrated field assessment was made of each panel to determine the extent of each panel damage. A schedule was developed and a plan to re-secure the panels to the substrate was determined. Anchoring each effected panel was conducted in order to ensure no further detaching would happen in the future. Also noted were that the panels were too tightly fitted into the space and did not allow for building movement thus causing the panels to experience compression and ultimately begin to crack. To stop this action, the panel sides were “shaved” to increase the space between the panels and the adjacent brick surfaces and afterwards, an elastomeric caulk was introduced to allow for proper movement.



This process was quite extensive and needed to be addressed else the County would continue to have cracking in those panels and quite possibly have a panel detach and fall to the ground. As it is, the repairs and re-stabilization exercise now ensures the panels are secure to the building. **Couple of months for preparation and re-stabilization procedures.**

Change Order #5

Construction of the elevator shaft needed to be delayed as it was found that the location of the shaft was directly over a main sanitation line under the lower level slab. The construction of the shaft had to be delayed until the pipe could be fully exposed and re-routed. **Approx. one week delay**

A concrete topping that was placed over the historic fifth floor slab in the 1974 remodeling project was discovered during the demolition phase. It was determined the topping must be removed because it would have caused elevation problems in establishing the new stair landings and elevator stops. This was time consuming as the demolition sub had to be re-called due to the worksite. After the topping slab was removed, it was found that a "bond-breaker" material would need to now be removed. A study to ensure it had no asbestos materials in it took time, and then removal of the bond breaker material took even more time due to its adherence to the original slab. A grinding process was conducted which delayed the work of laying out the new walls of that floor. **Total delay was several weeks.**

Change Order #6 (Jan. 29, 2026 estimated completion date)

East wall behind the Judge's bench in the Courtroom had long experienced water damages with no solution found. During scheduled repairs to the exterior brick wall at the roof level, it was then discovered the wall was improperly constructed in the 1936 construction process but did not show the eventual water damages until many years later. It was determined we needed to stop the current repair work and properly fix the problem to eliminate the water damage. In order to do this, the entire exterior brick wall would need to be removed, then a proper CMU support wall be installed and waterproofed, and the exterior brick façade replaced. The brick wall needed to be removed with each brick cleaned in order to re-stack properly since we needed to retain the historic materials and re-use them. This procedure was a major undertaking and added a **delay of several weeks.**

The west wall also produced major water infiltration to the entire exterior wall of the building, concentrating in the County Clerk's offices. The 1974 coating of the roof parapet was found to be the problem as the cementation "parging" allowed water to run down the walls over a period of years and into the interior space because the parapet materials would not allow the water vapors to dissipate into the air. This parging material would therefore be removed and a proper water barrier will be applied allowing the water vapors to escape into the air instead of accumulating in the walls. But the plaster walls were more damaged than anticipated. Plaster walls were found to have "cavities" or pockets of space behind them delaminating the plaster from the substrate. This was unforeseen and a more extensive plaster restoration scope will need to occur, but the plaster contractor has had to be delayed until the water infiltration can be dealt with. Plasterer's delay of starting work and his enlarged scope of work has **delayed the project by a month or possibly more.**



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Much of the concrete beam coring for conduit runs were delayed due to the scanning company's inability to be on site when needed, thus pushing other trades to wait. Running conduits throughout the building is one of the main directives in the restoration process and having to stop the process sets back the trade's scheduling by several days.

Our main issues, however, in all the delays experienced to date have been to all the water mitigation processes taken to ensure that no further damage is done to the interiors of the building. Though this has been a problem for the County and the Courthouse in general for possibly over 50 years, it has now been dealt with in a proper manner to eliminate any future damage to historic materials.

Several of these delays in time have been absorbed by the Contractor's "time contingencies" but due to the many extra items listed above, additional time had to be required.

New Completion date now set for February 27, 2026

Report provided by:

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Cc: Judge Leward LaFleur - Owner Representative
Judge Todd Tefteller - County Judge
Connie Williams – County Auditor
Curt Stoddard – Construction Representative