

HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION FEBRUARY 11, 2015

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

2:00

Chairman Fields indicated the upcoming agenda items would be considered as follows:

- Criminal Court Clerk Reports for October through December 2014 would be submitted as a matter of record.
- Juvenile Court Clerk Reports for September and October 2014 would be submitted as a matter of record.
- An Order of Designation to the Planning Commission would be submitted as a matter of record.
- Quarterly investment report would be submitted for the record.
- Quarterly fee office reports would be submitted for the record.
- A Report confirming the reappointment of Harold Austin as a Commissioner to the Eastside Utility District's Board of Commissioners would be submitted as a matter of record.
- Resolution No. 215-17 was the usual County Clerk item regarding notaries, etc. This required no committee assignment.
- Resolutions No. 215-20, 215-24 through 215-26, 215-28, and 215-29 through 215-36 were assigned to the Finance Committee, chaired by Commissioner Graham.
- Resolutions No. 215-21, 215-22A, and 215-22B were assigned to the Zoning Committee, chaired by Commissioner Haynes.
- Resolutions No. 215-18, 215-19, 215-23, 215-27, and 215-37 would be heard by the Committee of the Whole.

Chairman of the Finance Committee, Commissioner Graham, announced that the Finance Committee would meet in the Commission Room immediately following the agenda session.

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4:02 Commissioner Haynes, Chairman of the Zoning Committee, spoke regarding Resolution 215-22A and 215-22B, which would rezone properties located at 1636 & 7640 Middle Valley Road and 1704 & 1714 Thrasher Pike. Commissioner Haynes stated that these items would be postponed and heard at the February 25th Agenda Session. He further stated that delaying Resolutions No. 215-22A and 215-22B would allow for further discussion to take place between the developer and the community. It was noted that significant opposition was present in the audience.

In response to Commissioner Graham and Commissioner Beck's concerns, Commissioner Haynes reported that the community and the developer have both requested additional time to allow for further dialogue on the matter.

Chairman Fields stated that Resolution No. 215-18 would now be heard by the Committee of the Whole.

4:59 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 215-18**

Attorney Taylor spoke regarding this item, which would reappoint Bruce O'Neil, Constance Williams, and Mike Doubleday to the Hamilton County Health and Safety Hearing Board, for four year terms beginning January 19, 2015 and ending January 19, 2019. Attorney Taylor spoke highly of the job these individuals had done serving the

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board previously. Furthermore, he pointed out that the Commissioners that originally appointed each of these members expressed their desire to do so again.

5:54

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 215-19

Mayor Coppinger spoke regarding this item, which would approve the appointment of Ben C. Wilson as Director of the Highway Department of Hamilton County. Mayor Coppinger explained that Mr. Wilson would be replacing current Director, Harold Austin, upon his retirement on March 4, 2015. The Mayor expressed his thankfulness for the many decades of valuable and diligent service Mr. Austin has given Hamilton County. It was noted that Mr. Wilson currently has 25 years of service with Hamilton County and has worked very closely with Mr. Austin for the past twelve years. The Mayor also praised Mr. Wilson for the job he had done while working on clearing land necessary to help secure the Volkswagen project. Both men were publicly recognized in the audience.

8:22

Several members of the Commission thanked Mr. Austin for his service to Hamilton County, and welcomed Mr. Wilson to the position. At this time Commissioner Graham asked Mr. Austin to stand for a round of applause.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 215-23

11:39 Alecia Poe spoke regarding this item which would seek to clarify the health insurance benefits available to Hamilton County employees upon their retirement by Resolution number 1014-33, as amended. Ms. Poe noted that clarification needed to be made in regards to the wording in a section of the Employee Handbook, which included the word, spouse, and has since been removed.

12:13 Commissioner Graham clarified that this Resolution did not alter or amend the benefits available to Hamilton County Employees upon their retirement. He noted that this was a simple housekeeping issue.

Mayor Coppinger expressed his support for this item and publicly acknowledged Captain Bill Johnson from the Sheriff's office in the audience. He thanked Captain Johnson for working with staff to clarify this matter.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 215-27

14:39 Albert Kiser, Administrator of Finance, spoke regarding this Resolution which would authorize the County Mayor to release \$2,201,000 of funds held in escrow from the sale of the former Ooltewah Elementary School to the county's general fund. This

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item would also authorize the expenditure of funds up to \$2,201,000 from the County line of credit to purchase safety and security upgrades and additions for Hamilton County Schools. Mr. Kiser added that releasing the funds to the general fund would offset some of the expenditures for Volkswagen.

15:12 Commissioner Boyd expressed his concern about the funds from the sale of the school being used for Volkswagen expenditures. He added that it would be his desire to see the \$2,201,000 in proceeds evenly divided between all school districts to be used for much needed maintenance or various other improvements.

18:37 Mayor Coppinger spoke about this resolution stating that by using a portion of the funds from the school to offset Volkswagen expenditures, there would be a significant savings to the funds balance. Mayor Coppinger expressed his appreciation to the finance team, and added that Hamilton County is the only Tennessee County to receive three AAA bond ratings. In closing he added that the Volkswagen project and the possibility of future expansion is a very important ingredient for expanding job opportunities in Hamilton County.

23:14 In response to Commissioner Fairbanks question, Mr. Kiser clarified that Resolution No. 215-27 seeks to borrow \$2,201,000 from the line of credit for the

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security system upgrades in schools, and the funds from the sale of the school property will be placed in the general fund to help off set Volkswagen expenses.

25:56 Commissioner Graham explained that the funds from the sale of Ooltewah Elementary will not only be used for security camera upgrades, but additional proceeds from former Commissioner Skillern's discretionary funds would supplement the construction of a public road in District 1, which is estimated to cost \$250,000. Commissioner Graham also spoke about the need for improvements in schools across all districts. He asked that Resolution 215-27 be amended and he spoke in great detail about the proposed changes. He recommended that the proceeds from the sale of East Brainerd Elementary be divided among the nine districts. Each Commissioner would then consult with their respective school board member and recommend how the funds would be spent for school improvements in their district. The cash proceeds from the sale would be given to the Mayor to reduce the outstanding expense balance for the Volkswagen expansion project. Commissioner Haynes and Commissioner Beck voiced their support of this proposal.

37:06 Dr. Lee McDade, Assistant Superintendent, for the Hamilton County Department of Education, addressed the Commission about the security upgrades in schools. He noted that all schools in Hamilton County would receive Vigilon Security cameras with full coverage of their campuses. In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Dr.

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McDade stated that he would supply the Commission with a list of how the funds would be dispersed among the schools in all nine districts.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 215-37

41:03 River City Company President and CEO Kim White addressed the Commission. She noted the Resolution would make certain findings, and delegate certain authority, as well as authorize the County Mayor to enter into and execute an agreement for payments in lieu of ad valorem taxes. She stated that the development will be located at the corner of Lindsay and Fifth streets. She clarified that Walk2Campus is seeking tax breaks in exchange for renting 16 of the 64 units at an affordable rate. During lengthy conversation it was noted that the school portion of the tax base would be paid in full.

44:01 Commissioner Graham expressed his support for this project. He explained that Hamilton County would continue to get the full tax revenue it is currently receiving from this property, and that the schools would benefit immediately. He emphasized the importance of having a vibrant downtown. He noted that the PILOT program was a necessary tool in meeting the demand for affordable housing in downtown Chattanooga.

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47:19 Commissioner Boyd publicly recognized Walk2Campus representatives in the audience. He questioned the possibility of the property owner selling the development at an inflated price before the ten year tax freeze expired. In response to Commissioner Boyd's concerns Ms. White confirmed that the ten year tax freeze was transferrable with approval from the Health, Educational, and Housing Facility Board. In closing it was noted that the 16 affordable units would be rented to residents who have annual income at or below 20 percent of Hamilton County's median income of \$31,000. Commissioner Boyd added that it would be difficult to determine who would qualify for affordable housing.

Attorney Taylor confirmed that if the the PILOT agreement is granted, Hamilton County will receive the same tax base revenue that they are currently receiving.

1:04:55 Roe Elam, Developer for Walk2Campus properties, responded to several Commissioner's questions about the tax revenue the county would be receiving with the PILOT program in place. There was lengthy discussion regarding his tax revenue calculations versus those discussed by Commissioner Boyd. Several Commissioners requested to see those calculations before making a decision.

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1:06:44 Commissioner Smedley asked the County Clerk's office to supply her with any residential housing PILOT agreements that have been approved by the Commission in the past.

1:08:07 Commissioner Graham reminded the Commission that Ms. White was an agent for the County who negotiates the details and presents the proposed PILOT agreements to the Commission. He reiterated that the current amount of tax revenue Hamilton County is receiving will stay the same for the next ten years. Once construction is complete the property will be reassessed. After reassessment the city and county portion of the tax base will stay the same for ten years, and the school portion will immediately increase and those taxes will be paid in full to the school system.

1:15:03 In response to Chairman Fields question, Attorney Taylor explained that the PILOT program met all the requirements for the county.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1:15:32 Chairman Fields asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

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Mayor Coppinger spoke about the Erlanger presentation intended for today's meeting. He noted that at this time there was not a rescheduled date for the presentation.

Commissioner Boyd, Chairman of the Education Committee, announced the second joint meeting between the Education Committee and the Hamilton County Board of Education's Facilities Committee. The meeting would be held at Chattanooga School for the Liberal Arts (CSLA) on Wednesday, February 18th from 8 - 9 a.m.

1:16:13 Commissioner Boyd also publicly recognized those in the audience opposed to the zoning resolutions in Middle Valley.

Commissioner Boyd applauded Girl's Leadership Academy for being one of the top five percent of schools for their improvement in TCAP scores. He praised executive director Elaine Swafford for the marvelous job she is doing at the school.

1:17:50 Commissioner Graham, Chairman of the Finance Committee, praised Commissioners for the open discussion that took place during the meeting. He announced that the Finance Committee would be meeting in the Commission Room immediately following the agenda session.

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1:18:23 Commissioner Haynes, Chairman of the Zoning Committee, announced a brief meeting regarding Resolution No. 215-21 in the conference room immediately following the agenda session.

DELEGATIONS

1:18:51 Chairman Fields asked for delegations on matters other than zoning. There were none.

Being no further business, Chairman Fields declared the meeting adjourned until Wednesday, February, 18th at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

03-04-15
Date

W.F.K.
Clerk's Initials