

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
MARCH 12, 2015**

0:22 **PROCLAMATION – UT / TSU EXTENSION MONTH**

At this time Mayor Coppinger introduced Nancy Rucker, UT Extension Agent and County Director and asked Deputy Clerk Brooke Weaver to read the Proclamation into the record.

Mayor Coppinger presented a Proclamation that the month of March, 2015 be known as “UT/TSU Extension Month”. The University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University are Tennessee’s land-grant universities, and have a three-part mission of teaching, research, and Extension. Extension is a national educational program supported by USDA through the nation’s land-grant universities and administered with funding from state and local governments in Tennessee through offices in each of the state’s 95 counties.

Extension means ‘reaching out,’ and University of Tennessee Extension extends the university’s teaching and research missions to deliver research-based information and education to all the state’s citizens through youth and adult programs in Hamilton County. Extension’s programs can be seen in Tennessee as an excellent investment of public resources. The statewide educational programs in 4-H youth development, agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, and community economic development are estimated to impact the state’s economy by more than \$493

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million from July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014. This amounts to a return of investment of \$8.13 for every \$1 in public funds invested in Tennessee Extension.

Nancy Rucker spoke regarding Extension's mission and introduced fellow staff members that were present for the proclamation, Jean Puett, Family & Consumer Science Extension Agent, Faith Bolin, Secretary, Janice Hartman, Supplemental Nutrition Assistantship Program Extension Agent, Tom Stebbins, Agriculture Horticulture Master Gardener Extension Agent, Keith Bridges, 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent, Katie Bishop Horticulture Program Assistant.

Ms. Rucker and fellow staff members were personally congratulated and shook hands with members of the Commission.

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7:12 **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

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

- An Order of Designation to the Planning Commission would be submitted as a matter of record.
- A Report confirming the reappointment of Kenneth W. Rich as a Commissioner to the Hixson Utility District's Board of Commissioners would be submitted as a matter of record.
- Juvenile Court Clerk reports for November and December 2014 would be submitted for the record.
- Resolution No. 315-15 was the usual County Clerk item regarding notaries. This required no committee assignment.
- Resolution Nos. 315-16, 315-19, 315-20, 315-26 through 315-31, 315-33, 315-34, 315-38 through 315-41 were assigned to the Finance Committee, chaired by Commissioner Graham.
- Resolution Nos. 315-17, 315-18, 315-32, 315-35, 315-36, 315-37, 315-42, and 315-43 was heard by a Committee of the Whole.
- Resolution Nos. 315-21 through 315-23, 315-25A, 315-25B were assigned to the Zoning Committee, chaired by Commissioner Haynes.

Chairman Fields stated that Resolution No. 315-17 would now be heard by the Committee of the Whole.

7:25 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 315-17**

Sheriff Jim Hammond spoke regarding this item, which would accept a donation in the amount of \$12,500 from the AEGIS Foundation of Greater Chattanooga to purchase body worn cameras and related equipment upon selected patrol officers. It

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was noted that body worn cameras have been proven to protect both officers and the general public from possible false or misleading allegations which may arise while carrying out the duties of law enforcement.

8:28 In response to Commissioner Beck's question, Sheriff Hammond confirmed that this is a trial run to test how useful body worn cameras will be in law enforcement. Sheriff Hammond added that the cameras would be a proactive approach to attempting to prevent any misleading and false accusations against officers.

In response to several questions from the Commission, Sheriff Hammond reported 6 – 8 body cameras will be used in the trial run and docking equipment will need to be purchased to upload the media. Policy and procedures regarding when the officers turns on and uses the cameras is still in the works. In closing, the significance of body cameras was discussed, and if approved, no county funds are needed to conduct the beta test.

11:38 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 315-18**

Sheriff Hammond spoke regarding this item, which would accept the proposal of Securus Technologies to provide inmate video visitation for the Hamilton County Jail. This service would result in both a cost savings to the Sheriff's office by reducing

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corrections officers hours necessary to move inmates to the visitation area, as well as generate revenue from the County's share of the commission from the call charges to the visitor. It was noted that County funds will not be required to support this service.

12:47 Don Gorman, Director of Administration for the Sheriff's Department spoke regarding this item and clarified that the video visitation services are self-funded through call charges to the visitor. He also added that on January 15, 2014, the Commission approved Resolution No. 114-8, which accepted the proposal of Edge Access, Inc, a video visitation provider, who has since filed bankruptcy and is no longer in business. He indicated he was thankful Edge Access never installed the inmate video visitation systems because it would have no longer been useable.

In response to several of the Commissioner's concerns, Sheriff Hammond and Mr. Gorman provided details regarding confidentiality, monitoring, and accessibility of the inmate video visitation service. Mr. Gorman reported that six video visitation stations will be installed and scheduled home based visits will be charge \$15.00 for 30 minutes of visitation.

Bill Jainini, a SECURUS Technologies representative, discussed the details of the contract and reported that software upgrades and maintenance will be provided at no cost to the County. He also reported SECURUS' strong financial backing and history.

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20:20

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 315-32

Albert Kiser, Administrator of Finance, spoke regarding this item which would add hazardous materials/waste remediation services to the list of professional, technical, and consultant services that may be obtained subject to section 4.2.4K of the purchasing rules for Hamilton County.

In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Chairman Fields announced that Mr. Jainini, the SECURUS Technologies representative wouldn't be required to attend next week's Commission meeting.

21:36

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 315-35 through 315-37

Albert Kiser, Administrator of Finance, spoke regarding Resolution No. 315-35 and noted that Resolution Nos. 315- 36 and 315-37 should be considered together.

At this time Chairman Fields asked that Resolutions 315-36 and 315-37 be read into the record.

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Mayor Coppinger spoke regarding these three items, which would adopt the State Employees and Teachers Hybrid Plan for new employees beginning October 1, 2015, allow the County to contribute to a tax deferred retirement plan 401(k), and select the state tax deferred retirement plan 401(k). He clarified that the Hybrid Pension Plan will affect new employees only. Current employees will now have the added benefit of being able to contribute to a 401(k) plan.

In closing Mayor Coppinger noted that this was a time sensitive item and if approved would result in cost savings due to the difference in county contributions to employee retirement.

25:43

Lee Brouner, Assistant Administrator of Finance, gave an explanation of the Hybrid Pension Plan handout the Commission received. A copy of this handout was given to the Clerk's office. He highlighted that the current county contribution rate is 14.33%, the State Hybrid Plan combined contribution rate is nine percent, with the employee contributing an additional five percent to the defined benefit (TCRS) plan. The Hybrid Pension Plan contribution rate will be locked in at nine percent for ten years. The current plan is non-contributory by employees; the Hybrid plan requires employee contributions. In closing he reiterated that current employees will not be affected and they will remain on the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS).

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In response to Commissioner Fairbanks and Commissioner Graham's comments, Mr. Brouner pointed out an added benefit of the defined contribution plan is contributions are refundable, plus five percent, to all employees leaving with less than five years of service. He also confirmed the Hybrid plan requires employee contribution of five percent to the defined benefit (TCRS) component.

34:09 Drew Freeman, East Tennessee Regional Outreach Specialist with the Tennessee Department of Treasury, spoke regarding the State Hybrid Plan. He noted new employees at state level, new employees at Chattanooga State College, and new teachers are all on the State Hybrid plan.

36:23 Kaci Lantz, Director of the Defined Contribution Plans with the State of Tennessee clarified that employees may contribute a yearly maximum of \$18,000 to the current Nationwide 457(b) plan and \$18,000 to the new 401(k) plan. There is also a catch up provision for both plans.

37:17 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 315-42**

Attorney Taylor spoke regarding this item, which would appropriate twenty thousand dollars to the Mountain Education Foundation (MEF) from the discretionary funds of Commission district two. MEF provides financial assistance for items such as

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books, computer equipment, art instruction, teachers, and other education resources to the students attending Hamilton County public schools located on Signal Mountain. Commissioner Fields has expressed a desire to assist MEF. He noted the caption on the agenda for this Resolution was incorrect and it was being corrected to reflect the funds coming from discretionary monies.

37:49 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 315-43**

Mayor Coppinger spoke regarding this item, which would make certain findings relating to the Choo Choo Partners, LP project, to delegate certain authority to the Health, Educational, and Housing Facility Board of the City of Chattanooga, Tennessee, and to authorize the County Mayor to enter into and execute an agreement for payments in lieu of ad valorem taxes (PILOT). Choo Choo Partners, LP is contemplating the conversion of an existing hotel structure (Building 2) located on the Chattanooga Choo Choo property at 1400 Market Street into residential multi-family rental property consisting of ninety-seven units.

Mayor Coppinger spoke in general about PILOT agreements and emphasized the success Hamilton County has experienced. He reminded the public that in addition to growth and additional jobs created, properties have been added to the tax rolls, and the school system receives one-hundred percent of their education portion.

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He emphasized the fact that Hamilton County must consider PILOT agreements to remain competitive with other counties as well as other states to attract new developments, and encourage expansions of existing businesses. Mayor Coppinger specifically noted that the Enterprise South property prior to becoming a successful industrial and business development was a non-tax producing site owned by the U.S. government.

45:10 Attorney Taylor noted the proposed PILOT agreement attached to Resolution No. 315-43 had been modified to include changes that haven't been present in previous residential PILOT agreements. These changes were in response to discussions between the public, city, and county officials.

46:31 Commissioner Beck, Chairman of the Building and Economic Development Committee, reminded everyone that his committee would be meeting after today's meeting to discuss the future of residential pilot programs in Hamilton County. He asked everyone to keep their comments about pilot policy until the committee meeting and speak only about this particular pilot at this time.

46:45 Kim White, River City Company President and CEO, spoke about the demand for downtown workforce housing and gave details regarding the Choo Choo Partners, LP

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project. The aim of the project is to attract young professionals to live downtown. It was noted that the Choo Choo Partners, LP project would provide substantial public welfare benefits to the City and County.

48:30 In response to Commissioner Haynes question, Attorney Taylor stated that the PILOT agreement changes will (1) prevent the PILOT from automatically transferring to a new owner if the property is sold; (2) require Choo Choo partners to submit an annual report to city and county officials disclosing the amount invested at the site and provide a certified roll of rents in the building, and (3) strengthen claw-back provisions that allow county and city officials more discretion with limiting or ending the agreement if investment and rent commitments aren't met.

Commissioner Graham said he would be attending the Building and Economic Development Committee to further discuss PILOT agreements. For full disclosure purposes, he publicly acknowledged the Choo Choo Partners PILOT was located in his district and that he was a current member of the River City Board.

52:38 Commissioner Graham, Chairman of the Finance Committee announced that the Finance Committee would meet in the Commission Room immediately after today's commission meeting.

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52:51 Commissioner Haynes, Chairman of the Zoning Committee announced that the Zoning Committee would meet in the conference room immediately after today's commission meeting.

53:14 To accommodate members of the audience, Commissioner Beck, Chairman of the Building and Economic Development Committee, announced that the committee would meet in the Commission Room after the Finance Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Fields asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

53:28 Commissioner Mackey spoke about a recent news article published by the Chattanooga Times Free Press regarding Commission meeting rules and public speaking. He stated he wants the voice of the people to be heard and asked the Commission to consider publishing the agenda in advance. Advance notice would allow the public to attend the agenda session and the following committee meetings where their voice should be heard.

56:53 Commissioner Graham publicly gave out his cell phone number, 423-255-6601, and encouraged the public to call him with any concerns they may have.

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Commissioner Graham invited everyone to attend the second annual St. Chatty's Day parade, March 14, which starts at noon on Riverfront Parkway at Power Alley.

Commissioner Graham announced that Lookout Valley's Elementary spring annual carnival begins March 14 at 10:00 am to March 15 at 2:00 pm. He encouraged everyone to get involved with their local recreation center.

59:34

Commissioner Fairbanks spoke regarding a recent news article published by the Chattanooga Times Free Press regarding County Engineer, Todd E. Leamon, who was named the 2015 Jo Conn Guild "Outstanding Engineer of the Year". This is the highest award given to an individual by The Chattanooga Area E-Week Committee. It is presented to an engineer who has made outstanding professional contributions to his/her profession, public welfare and/or humankind. A round of applause was given to Mr. Leamon, who was present at today's meeting.

1:01:58

Commissioner Beck personally thanked the Commission staff, Patricia Moore and Melinda Volker, for the hard work they do on a daily basis.

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1:03:35 In response to Commissioner Smedley's inquiry, Mayor Coppinger stated The 2015 Tri-State Home Show will take place March 13th, 14th, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. and March 15th 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. at the Convention and Trade Center. The Tri-State Home Show is one of the most respected in the construction trade, retail home products and service industry. He congratulated Mr. Leamon and thanked every department in county government for their dedication and hard work.

DELEGATIONS

Chairman Fields asked for delegations on matters other than zoning.

1:06:09 Bill McGriff, County Auditor, addressed the Commission and recommended an Audit Committee meeting take place March 25th after the agenda session.

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In response to Mr. McGriff's request, Chairman Fields agreed to have an Audit Committee meeting on March 25th after the Agenda Session; Attorney Taylor confirmed the announcement qualified as a public notice.

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

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

04-01-15
Date

W.F.K.
Clerk's Initials