

HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION JUNE 14, 2017

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Chairman Bankston 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 appointment of Y.L. Coker to the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission would be submitted for the record.
- Resolution No. 617-13 was the usual County Clerk item regarding notaries, etc. This required no committee assignment.
- Resolution No. 617-27 was assigned to the Zoning Committee, chaired by Commissioner Smedley.
- Resolutions No. 617-28 through 617-34 were assigned the Finance Committee, chaired by Commissioner Boyd.
- Resolutions No. 617-14 through 617-19, 617-21 through 617-26, and 617-35 were assigned to a Committee of the Whole.
- Resolution No. 617-20 was pulled.

Chairman Bankston reported Resolution Nos. 617-14 through 617-19, 617-21 through 617-26, and 617-35 would now be heard by a Committee of the Whole.

1:01

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-14

Commissioner Fields spoke regarding this item, which appoints Ralph Mann to the Hamilton County Health and Safety Hearing Board for a four-year term beginning June 21, 2017 and ending June 21, 2021. He noted Mr. Mann is a member of the Signal Mountain Lions Club and a veteran of the United States Army.

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There were no questions from Commissioners.

1:44 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-15**

This Resolution confirms the reappointment by the County Mayor of Chris Keene to the Hamilton County Beer Board for a term expiring June 20, 2020.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

2:04 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-16**

This Resolution confirms the appointment and/or reappointment of Alixandral Walker Finley, Rob Lyons, and Mary K. Roberts to the Hamilton County Community Corrections Advisory Board for two-year terms beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2019.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-17

2:25

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to sign a grant agreement with a term beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018 with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. He reported this agreement is for continuation support for the Hamilton County Recovery Court Program. It was noted Elaine Kelly, Coordinator of the Recovery Court Program, was present to answer any questions.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-18

3:05

Administrator of Finance Al Kiser spoke regarding this item, which amends the schools federal projects fund budget by adding \$120,420.00 to the FY 2016-2017 budget and amends the self-funded projects fund budget by appropriating fund balance of \$1,717.00, and additional revenue of \$316,615.00 to the FY 2016-2017 budget. This item also amends the school's general purpose fund budget by appropriating fund balance of \$5,324,000.00 and additional revenue of \$1,500,000.00 to the FY 2016-2017 budget.

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In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Mr. Kiser reported the \$5.3 million was the result of Commissioner Smedley's joint meeting with the School Board in which they agreed to allocate funds to repair leaking roofs on school buildings. Commissioner Graham thanked Commissioner Smedley for that meeting.

Mr. Kiser added this item includes all budget amendments for the Board of Education since they last presented a Resolution to the Commission in February (*Res. No. 217-4*).

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-19

4:57

This Resolution accepts a donation of a Polaris Ranger from the Aegis Foundation valued at \$15,500.00 for law enforcement purposes.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-20

Chairman Bankston announced Resolution No. 617-20 pertaining to the County Attorney's reappointment would be pulled until the contract was available. There was no objection.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-21

6:02

County Trustee Bill Hullander spoke regarding this item, which approves extending an interlocal agreement among the City of Chattanooga, the County Trustee, and Hamilton County relative to the collection of the City of Chattanooga Hotel-Motel Tax. He reported the 2002 agreement with the City of Chattanooga (*Res. No. 902-57*) stated the compensation for collection of the Hotel-Motel Tax would be \$30,000.00 per year. He noted given the number of hotels in the area at that time, that amount equated to approximately 3.5%. He stated his office currently collects the occupancy tax from 139 area hotels totaling about \$6 million, and the compensation for that service totals approximately .44%. He added this Resolution will increase that compensation to approximately \$68,000.00.

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Trustee Hullander stated the agreement changes the compensation for collection of the tax from a flat \$30,000.00 per year to 1% of the total taxes collected annually.

9:15

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Trustee Hullander reported the agreement also states the County is responsible for auditing each hotel motel operator within the City of Chattanooga. It was noted the cost of the audits comes from the County general fund.

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Commissioner Boyd stated a portion of the Hotel-Motel Tax should be allocated to compensate County auditors for their services rather than using monies from the general fund. He thanked Trustee Hullander for the efficiency of his office.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-22

13:18

Director of General Services Lee Norris spoke regarding this item, which accepts the bid of Wilder Contracting, LLC for the installation of waterless restrooms at Enterprise South Nature Park Horse Trails amounting to \$103,500.00 for the Parks and Recreation Department.

In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Mr. Norris stated the City and County would share a portion of the funding.

In response to Commissioner Fields' question, Mr. Norris clarified the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) would provide 50% funding for the project, and the City and County would each contribute 25%.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-23

14:52 Administrator of Finance Al Kiser spoke regarding this Resolution, which adopts a budget of \$691,498,923.00 for the Fiscal Year 2017-2018. He noted a copy of the budget was distributed at last week's meeting.

15:22 In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Mayor Coppinger stated school buildings and other capital projects are not listed in the capital outlay budget as those are done out of the issuance of bonds. He stated there is not currently bond money to build new schools.

In response to Commissioner Graham's question regarding the millage rate, Mayor Coppinger stated depending on where the Commission chooses to set the rate, the best use of any additional revenue generated would be to pay debt service on the new issuance of bonds, which could be used for building schools.

Commissioner Graham referred to his comments last week regarding the millage rate, and encouraged Commissioners to delay voting on the budget until more discussion regarding the rate could take place. He noted that leaving the millage rate where it is could provide more funding for school projects and public safety. He also

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encouraged more discussion regarding developing a thorough plan for the additional revenue.

20:00 In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Mayor Coppinger reported the County is always recruiting and looking at developing industrial sites. He estimated a couple hundred acres were currently development ready.

22:43 In response to Commissioner Smedley's question, Mayor Coppinger reported keeping the millage rate the same would result in approximately \$25 million in new income. He added the Commission would be charged with implementing a plan for how the new revenue would be spent. It was noted the County's budget must be adopted by September 1st.

Administrator of Finance Al Kiser explained if the vote is delayed a continuation budget would need to be adopted by the end of June. It was noted the Commission last adopted a continuing budget in 2011 (*Res. No. 611-58*).

25:14 Commissioner Smedley emphasized the important role the new school superintendent will play in the process. She encouraged Commissioners to develop a plan for how any increased revenues will be spent. She also stated in the event of an

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increase in property tax revenue, a serious discussion regarding a senior tax freeze will need to take place.

26:59 Commissioner Boyd reiterated Commissioner Graham's comments about delaying the vote on the budget until further discussion takes place and pending the selection of a new school superintendent. He stated the proposed budget does not contain plans for any new facilities and agreed with previous comments about the importance of developing a plan for any potential increased revenues.

30:24 In response to Commissioner Fields' question, Mr. Kiser confirmed the proposed budget covers all County general needs for the next fiscal year, as well as incorporates the budget the Department of Education presented to the Commission. He clarified the Commission must allocate enough funding to the Department of Education to maintain the same amount of revenue as past years, and it would be up to the Commission to decide how to allocate any increases in revenue.

31:50 Commissioner Graham noted he is not advocating a tax increase, but is in favor of leaving the millage rate at its current rate to generate additional revenue.

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In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Mayor Coppinger stated if the Commission chooses not to act on the budget Resolution next week, a continuing budget would need to be adopted before June 30th.

33:24

In response to Commissioner Fairbanks' question, Mayor Coppinger confirmed the increased revenue generated through leaving the millage rate at its current rate would come from property taxes for those whose property reassessments were higher. Commissioner Fairbanks emphasized he does not support any type of increase in property taxes.

Mayor Coppinger spoke about the serious nature of the budget process and commended the Finance staff for their hard work. He reported he had conversations with all nine Commissioners and gave them the options to raise property taxes, keep the millage rate the same, or hold off on any increases. He noted the overwhelming majority voiced support for no tax increase. This is why the budget was prepared and presented in its present form. He stated the staff would carry out any changes that would reflect the will of the majority of the Commission.

39:43

Commissioner Martin disputed comments that this budget does not allow for growth, pointing out the proposed budget adds additional jailers and School Resource Officers (SRO), and funds a Mental Health Court.

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Mayor Coppinger thanked Commissioner Martin for his comments and outlined several additional new projects and improvements in the budget. He added that 66% of the budget is going towards public education, which includes an additional \$8 million for the Board of Education, with \$5.7 million of that amount from new local money. He reminded the public the budget is available for viewing on the Hamilton County website.

In response to Commissioner Martin's question, Mayor Coppinger detailed multiple new school construction projects and additions within the last 5 years, with several projects going on at the same time. He reported 43,000 students attend public school in Hamilton County and around \$450 million has been spent on new schools in recent years. He credited Commissioners for their willingness to fund education.

Commissioner Martin stated that without any new information he did not wish to see a delay in voting on this year's budget.

52:48

Commissioner Smedley echoed Commission Martin's comments and commended the growth the County has seen in the last few years. She emphasized the importance of allowing input from the new school superintendent on future school finances. She added enrollment versus capacity will be the focus of the next joint meeting with the School Board. Commissioner Smedley thanked Mayor Coppinger and the Finance staff for their work on this year's budget.

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Commissioner Fairbanks maintained the Commission should not delay the vote on the budget.

Commissioner Graham pointed out all options should be thoroughly considered before the vote on the budget, and stated a plan for how to spend additional revenue should be developed and discussed.

1:00:35 Commissioner Beck called on Commissioners to bring a Resolution forward if they wished to delay the vote or make changes to the proposed budget.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-24

1:01:44 Administrator of Finance Al Kiser spoke regarding this item, which makes appropriations to nonprofit charitable and civic organizations of Hamilton County, Tennessee for the fiscal year 2017-2018. He noted this is a yearly companion Resolution to the budget, which approves funding for certain nonprofit organizations.

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Mr. Kiser confirmed the County supported agency funding amounts to \$4,439,116.00. It was noted this amount does not include Volunteer Fire Departments or funding for Erlanger.

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Commissioner Boyd spoke about priorities and questioned if the listed nonprofit organizations were of a high enough priority to keep funding them at their current amount. He noted a portion of these funds could be used for debt service and deferred maintenance on school projects.

1:05:24 Mayor Coppinger read the complete list of supported agencies, and detailed each agency's funding and responsibility to the County. He noted these agencies provide a service to the community that government cannot fulfill. Mayor Coppinger added there are many nonprofit organizations also providing a great community service that do not receive any funding from the County.

1:11:23 Commissioner Boyd responded to Mayor Coppinger's comments and listed several agencies whose funding he proposed reducing including the Humane Educational Society, Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise Center, and the African American Museum.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-25

1:14:34 Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to sign an agreement with the Urban League of Greater Chattanooga to provide certain contract compliance services, for a contract period beginning July 1,

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2017 and ending June 30, 2018. He noted Urban League President and CEO Warren Logan was present to answer any questions.

Commissioner Boyd reiterated his previous comments about priorities. He read from the Urban League's most recent contract compliance report, which claimed there were no sites on which to report. He questioned if this was an effective use of taxpayer's money.

1:22:13

Commissioner Beck, Commissioner Mackey, and Commission Graham spoke about the community service the Urban League provides, and encouraged the Commission to continue funding the organization.

Mayor Coppinger also noted the Urban League provides workforce development and recruitment services as part of their contract with the County. He invited Mr. Logan to speak to the Commission.

1:25:29

Mr. Logan provided details to the Commission about the Urban League's work, which includes employment assistance, monitoring job sites, as well as documenting women and minority hiring patterns. He responded to Commissioner Boyd's comments regarding the contract compliance report and explained additional pages of the report contained information about employment assistance, including referrals and 206 new

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jobs. Mr. Logan added the Urban League also helps develop coping and communication skills for the workplace, time management skills, tutoring services, and provides free tax services for around 5,000 low-income citizens per year outside of the county contract.

1:30:43 Commissioner Boyd thanked Mr. Logan for explaining the services the Urban League provides. He commended the work the organization does and noted several other nonprofit organizations that serve the County in a similar capacity that do not receive funding from the County including the First Things First program Dads Make a Difference and the Bookworm Program. He encouraged a thorough review of spending priorities.

Commissioner Graham pointed out the Commission has allotted discretionary funds to First Things First in the past.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-26

1:33:21 Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to enter into and accept a three-year State of Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs Edward Byrnes Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for a term of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020. It also establishes a Community Crime Prevention Project and amends the general fund revenue and expenditure budget by adding up to

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\$100,000.00 for fiscal year 2018, for a total amount over three years of up to \$300,000.00. It was noted the grant allows for an in school-mentoring program and no county match is required.

1:34:36 Commissioner Fields applauded Mr. Saieed and his office for seeking out these types of grants.

In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Mr. Saieed reported his office has effectively brought in millions of dollars to Hamilton County in grant funds.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 617-35

1:35:58 Commissioner Boyd spoke regarding this item, which establishes policies and procedures to be adopted and adhered to by nonprofit organizations receiving funding from Hamilton County appropriations in excess of 25% of said organizations' annual operating budget. He outlined the proposed policies, which include that a member of the Commission should be designated a seat on the governing board of each nonprofit organization recipient. It also requires that each nonprofit recipient organization should make all respective purchases in conformance with the procurement policies and travel procedures adopted by Hamilton County, as well as provide copies of all financial documents and records to the Commission annually.

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There were no questions from Commissioners.

Commissioner Smedley, Chairman of the Zoning Committee, stated the Zoning Committee will meet in the Commission Conference Room immediately following the Agenda Session.

Commissioner Boyd, Chairman of the Finance Committee, stated the Finance Committee, will meet in the Commission Room immediately following the Agenda Session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Bankston asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

1:42:00

Commissioner Fields announced the Legal and Legislative Committee will meet in the Commission Conference Room following the Zoning Committee meeting.

Commissioner Fields spoke about a trip to Annapolis, MD he and his wife took over the weekend for the interment of ashes of his wife's uncle, who was a retired U.S. Navy Captain and served on submarines during World War II. He stated his flight was

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carrying the remains of Navy Pharmacist's Mate 3rd Class Howard P. Brisbane, who was killed in action during the 1943 battle of Tarawa and his remains buried on the island for over 70 years. A nongovernmental agency found a burial site on the island in 2015 and later confirmed the identity of Pharmacist's Mate Brisbane through DNA testing. Commissioner Fields stated great respect was given to the remains of Pharmacist's Mate Brisbane upon landing in Washington D.C., where he would be buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. He encouraged everyone never to forget those who have served our country.

Commissioner Fields announced the death of Tom Edd Wilson, former president of the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and longtime civic leader. He stated Mr. Wilson was a good friend and active community leader, and encouraged everyone to pay tribute not just to those who served our country, but those who served our community as well.

1:46:08 Commissioner Mackey also spoke about Mr. Wilson, and stated he will be greatly missed.

1:46:32 Commissioner Graham announced just last week Mr. Wilson was among the group breaking ground for the new children's hospital at Erlanger after leading a

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fundraiser that raised \$20 million for the project. He sent his condolences to the family of Mr. Wilson.

Commissioner Graham recognized his family in the audience at today's meeting.

1:48:49 Commissioner Boyd thanked Commissioner Fields for his comments. He noted Mr. Wilson was a lifelong servant of the community.

1:49:16 Commissioner Beck also thanked Commissioner Fields for his comments. He spoke highly of Mr. Wilson and his service to the community.

1:50:30 Commissioner Smedley sent her prayers and condolences to the family of Mr. Wilson. She also thanked Commissioner Fields for his comments.

1:51:02 Mayor Coppinger also echoed Commissioner Fields' comments. He spoke about his opportunity to work with Mr. Wilson while he was with the Chamber of Commerce, and his later appointment to the Erlanger Board of Trustees in 2013. He stated Mr. Wilson's service to the community was invaluable.

1:53:34 Chairman Bankston thanked Commissioner Fields for his comments. He sent his prayers and condolences to the family of Mr. Wilson.

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DELEGATIONS

Chairman Bankston asked for delegations on matters other than zoning. There were none.

Being no further business, Chairman Bankston declared the meeting adjourned until Wednesday, June 21st at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

07-05-17
Date

W.F.K.
Clerk's Initials