

HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR

WESTON WAMP

For Immediate Release

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Funding Approved to Honor Hometown Hero and Medal of Honor Recipient Captain Larry L. Taylor, U.S. Army (Ret.), with Exhibit at Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center

Captain Taylor was awarded the Medal of Honor on September 5th for his valor in the Vietnam War

The Hamilton County Commission today unanimously approved Mayor Weston Wamp's proposal to fund an exhibit at the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center, recognizing Hamilton County's own and America's latest Medal of Honor recipient, Captain Larry L. Taylor, U.S. Army (Ret.), who received the nation's highest military award for his valor and gallantry from President Joe Biden at the White House on September 5, 2023.

"It's my hope that for decades to come, young boys and girls will see this exhibit honoring Captain Larry Taylor and realize they too can grow up in Hamilton County, attend a public high school, and serve their country with the kind of courage we typically only see in a movie," said Mayor Wamp. "We have a responsibility to educate the next generation about our heritage as Americans, and I can't think of a better way to do that than through the heroic story of one of our county's most distinguished citizens."

Hamilton County will provide \$400,000 to the MOHHC split between the current fiscal year and fiscal year 2025 through the county's hotel-motel tax revenue fund. The MOHHC will seek additional funding from the City of Chattanooga, State of Tennessee, and private donors.

The funding will go towards two historical exhibits—one honoring the heroic actions of Captain Taylor in Vietnam on June 18, 1968, and the other commemorating courageous acts by American soldiers during the Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia on October 3, 1993.

"I want to thank Mayor Wamp, the Hamilton County Commission, and the good people of Hamilton County for supporting the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center and the effort to build a new exhibit that will share my Medal of Honor story to thousands of children and visitors each year," said Captain Taylor. "Through this exhibit, I hope America's next generation fully understands the importance of service to our country and the importance of courage, sacrifice, and commitment to make a difference—whether it be on the battlefield or everyday life. It's my hope when visitors see this incredible exhibit at the Heritage Center, they will take these and other distinct character traits with them and find ways to emulate them throughout the rest of their lives."

The vision set forth features Captain Taylor at the control of a Cobra helicopter swooping into the battlefield in the midst of gunfire as four U.S. soldiers clung to the skids of his aircraft. The exhibit will also include a number of displays alongside this setup and interactive machinery to accurately portray what happened that day in Vietnam 55 years ago.

The next project plans for a new, fully immersive exhibit on the Battle of Mogadishu and Black Hawk Down honoring Army Master Sgt. Gary Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Randall Shughart, who were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for their heroic actions in saving the life of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Durant, the helicopter pilot from Super 64, on October 3, 1993. Working in partnership with Durant and James Yacone, the pilot of the second Black Hawk helicopter (Super 62) that dropped Gordon and Shughart into the battle, visitors will sit in a Black Hawk seat as they are taken through the complete battle that day from the perspective of these two pilots.

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