

**RECESSED MEETING
HAMILTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 24, 2016**

STATE OF TENNESSEE) Recessed Meeting
COUNTY OF HAMILTON) February 24, 2016

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on this 24th day of February, 2016, a Recessed Meeting of the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners was begun and held at the Courthouse, in the City of Chattanooga, in the County Commission Room, when the following proceedings were held, to wit:--

0:16

Present and presiding was the Honorable Chester Bankston, Chairman. County Clerk Bill Knowles called the roll of the County Commission and the following, constituting a quorum, answered to their names: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Fairbanks, Commissioner Fields, Commissioner Graham, Commissioner Haynes, Commissioner Mackey, Commissioner Smedley, and Chairman Bankston. Commissioner Beck was absent. Total present – 8. Total absent -1.

Chairman Bankston noted that Commissioner Beck would be absent for today's Recessed Meeting and Agenda Session. Clerk Knowles welcomed Chairman Bankston back after a brief illness.

Also in attendance were County Mayor Jim Coppinger, members of his administrative staff, County Attorney Rheubin Taylor, and County Auditor Bill McGriff.

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0:44 Commissioner Graham introduced Director Fred Bennett, Titus International, who gave the invocation. Commissioner Graham led in the pledge to the flag.

4:01 **RESOLUTION NO. 216-42 A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE REQUIREMENT PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED, SECTION 8-36-205, TO AUTHORIZE THE PAYMENT OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL BRIDGE BENEFIT PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED, SECTION 8-36-211, AND TO AUTHORIZE GROUP 1 MEMBERS WHO HAVE CREDITABLE SERVICE IN A GROUP 1 POSITION COVERED BY SUCH MANDATORY AGE RETIREMENT TO RETIRE ON SERVICE RETIREMENT BENEFITS UPON ATTAINMENT OF AGE FIFTY-FIVE (55) WITH TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS OF CREDITABLE SERVICE PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED, SECTION 8-36-201(A)(2).**

ON MOTION of Commissioner Fairbanks, seconded by Commissioner Smedley to adopt Resolution No. 216-42.

It was noted that the Retirement Bridge Plan (Res. 216-21) was first presented to the Commission last week during the February 17th, 2016 Regular meeting. Hamilton County Sheriff Jim Hammond pulled the item because Chairman Bankston and

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Commissioner Mackey were absent. Resolution No. 216-21 was discussed as a Committee of the Whole during the February 10th Agenda Session.

Hamilton County Sheriff Jim Hammond spoke regarding this item and noted the details of the resolution were thoroughly discussed during the February 10th Agenda Session. He stated that the Bridge Retirement Plan (BRP) is a trend across the nation and has been adopted by the State of Tennessee covering the Highway Patrol. He explained that the resolution allows men and women in law enforcement, who are certified, to retire with dignity. A large number of uniformed sheriff deputies were present in support of the Bridge Plan.

8:58

Commissioner Boyd thanked the large number of officers present at today's meeting. He indicated he could not support a 100% unfunded mandate prior to budget preparation that he considered a perk for employees. He spoke about the long term fiscal impact of the Bridge Retirement Plan. He stated unfunded mandates are not fair to citizens and he would not be supporting the Bridge Retirement Plan.

17:31

Commissioner Mackey spoke about government and its responsibility to protect the people. He noted that men and women officers put their lives on the line every day to keep the community safe. He thanked law enforcement for their sacrifices and stated he would be supporting the Bridge Retirement Plan.

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Once again Commissioner Mackey noted the excess classroom space that is not being used in his district.

19:45

Commissioner Fields stated he supported the Bridge Retirement Plan but was concerned about how the plan would be funded. He questioned if the Sheriff's budget request for the upcoming year would include an increase.

At this time Sheriff Hammond spoke in detail about the prioritizing process of allocating budget monies to each department. He noted that he has already submitted next year's budget request.

Commissioner Fields recommended that the resolution be postponed until a mechanism could be put in place to fund the Bridge Retirement Plan. He stated if a funding plan for the Bridge Plan is not put in place, a tax levy increase is going to have to take place within a few years. He pointed out that while no one is in favor of a property tax increase, it's the way government is funded.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Fields, seconded by Commissioner Graham, to postpone Resolution No. 216-42 until a mechanism is put place to fund the Bridge Retirement Plan.

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25:20

Commissioner Mackey noted that the Bridge Retirement Plan discussion has been ongoing for many years, it has been explored and questions have been answered. He encouraged the commission to move forward and make a decision today.

25:55

Commissioner Haynes noted that the Bridge Retirement Plan is a tough decision. He reported he would be supporting it and stated that public safety is a top concern for his constituents. The ability to recruit people into law enforcement is challenging in this day and time. He stated that protecting and educating the citizens of Hamilton County are essential services of government. The Bridge Retirement Plan will enhance the Sheriff's ability to recruit officers and keep citizens safe.

29:13

Commissioner Fairbanks stated that the Bridge Retirement Plan is not a perk; it's a plan that is desperately needed. He stated his support and encouraged the commission to move forward and make a decision today.

Chairman Bankston directed that the vote be taken on the Motion to postpone.

The motion failed on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Boyd, "Aye", Commissioner Fairbanks, "Nay", Commissioner Fields, "Aye", Commissioner Graham, "Aye", Commissioner Haynes, "Nay", Commissioner Mackey, "Nay", Commissioner

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Smedley, "Nay", and Chairman Bankston, "Nay". Total present – 8. Total absent – 1.

Commissioner Beck was absent. Total "Aye" votes – 3. Total "Nay" votes – 5.

30:57

A Roll Call vote was ordered regarding the motion to adopt Resolution No. 216-42. The following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Boyd, "Nay", Commissioner Fairbanks, "Aye", Commissioner Fields, "Nay", Commissioner Graham, "Nay", Commissioner Haynes, "Aye", Commissioner Mackey, "Aye", Commissioner Smedley, "Aye", and Chairman Bankston, "Aye". Total present – 8. Total absent – 1. Commissioner Beck was absent. Total "Aye" votes – 5. Total "Nay" votes – 3.

Commissioner Fields and Commissioner Graham clarified that they were not against the Bridge Plan; they were against not having a funding mechanism in place for the plan.

Commissioner Smedley clarified that a funding mechanism will be put in place for the plan.

Sheriff Hammond thanked the commission for their support.

At this time the large crowd of officers in the audience stood and gave a round of applause.

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Chairman Bankston asked if anyone was present to address the Commission on any subject other than zoning. Being no further business Chairman Bankston declared the recessed meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

03-16-16
Date

W.F.K.
Clerk's Initials