

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JUNE 8, 2016**

STATE OF TENNESSEE) Agenda Preparation Session
COUNTY OF HAMILTON) June 8, 2016

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on this 8th day of June, 2016, an Agenda Preparation Session 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:--

0:11

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 Beck, Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Fairbanks, Commissioner Fields, Commissioner Graham, Commissioner Haynes, Commissioner Smedley, and Chairman Bankston. Commissioner Mackey was absent. Total present - 8. Total absent – 1.

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

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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.
- Resolution No. 616-13 was the usual County Clerk item regarding notaries, etc. This required no committee assignment.
- Resolution No. 616-30 through 616-32 were assigned to the Zoning Committee, chaired by Commissioner Haynes.
- Resolution Nos. 616-34 through 616-43 were assigned to the Finance Committee, chaired by Commissioner Boyd.
- Resolution Nos. 616-14 through 616-29, and 616-33 were heard by a Committee of the Whole.

Chairman Bankston reported that he would be moving Resolution No. 616-33 to the front of the agenda and it would now be heard by a Committee of the Whole.

0:41

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-33

Chairman Bankston reminded members of the Commission and audience that the applicant would have seven minutes to make his presentation. He added that any opposition wishing to respond would have a total of nine minutes.

The applicant, Barry Kidwell, Executive Director of Mustard Tree Ministries/United Methodist Committee on Church Extension and Congregational

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Revitalization, Inc. residing at 605 Timber Ridge Drive Hixson, TN 37343 addressed the Commission regarding Resolution No. 616-33, which approves a special exceptions permit for a residential planned unit development of property located at 9125 Snow Hill Road. Mr. Kidwell noted that although the staff of the Regional Planning Commission approved the request, the Planning Commission ultimately recommended against it due to the large number of citizens in opposition.

Mr. Kidwell acknowledged the controversy surrounding the project and asked that the permit request be formally withdrawn. He noted that the ministry had not communicated the goal of the program sufficiently to nearby residents.

4:01

In response to Commissioner Beck's question, Mr. Kidwell explained that he is a minister for inner city and homeless residents in the Chattanooga area. He reported that he has seen a similar program in Wichita, Kansas that brought former gang members and others who were down and out to a farm program for two years, which positively impacted their lives. He explained that the ministry's intention was to build a total of 32 "tiny homes" that would cost \$250 to \$300 in rent per month and would house anyone from college students to former gang members and homeless residents looking for affordable housing. He added that the property is located in a primarily middle class neighborhood. Mr. Kidwell explained that the ministry is planning to regroup and determine whether to seek another permit at this site or to find another location.

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In response to Commissioner Hayne's question, Mr. Kidwell noted that the ministry held one community meeting regarding the project.

12:47

Dean Moorhouse, residing at 8114 Mahan Gap Road Ooltewah, TN 37363, spoke in opposition to Resolution No. 616-33. He explained that he had a petition with 1700 signatures from community citizens opposing the project. He called the project "spot zoning" and an inappropriate use of land, and expressed his concern that the proposed site is within $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile from Snow Hill Elementary School and Hamilton County High School. Mr. Moorhouse also noted that transportation and support services would not be easily accessible to program participants if the project was approved. He asked that the Commission deny the request.

In response to Commissioner Graham's question concerning the safety of potential residents without access to an automobile, Mr. Moorhouse explained that Snow Hill Road is a heavily trafficked road with no sidewalks or shoulders. He added that the closest convenience store is one mile from the site and the closest grocery store is three miles away.

19:15

Tammy Cotter, residing at 9124 Snow Hill Road Ooltewah, TN 37363, spoke in opposition to Resolution No. 616-33. It was noted that Ms. Cotter's property is located directly across the street from the proposed site. She explained that the project was not

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sustainable due to the lack of transportation and no easily accessible social services. She noted that selling the property and using the funds to purchase land in a more suitable location would be a better idea towards creating a more sustainable model.

Chairman Bankston reported that Mr. Kidwell had two minutes to respond to the opposition.

24:15

Mr. Kidwell stated that these types of programs were successful in other areas, but the ministry had not done its due diligence in satisfying concerns from residents in the community. He asked that the ministry be allowed to withdraw the application at this time. Chairman Bankston reported that the Commission would vote on the item next week.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

27:40

Mayor Coppinger presented the County Budget for 2016-2017. He asked members of the Finance Department to distribute copies of the budget book to the Commission. A copy of the book was filed with the Clerk's office.

He began by thanking members of the staff and administrators for their hard work and assistance in putting together a budget for fiscal year 2016-2017. He expressed his

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appreciation to the Commission for their input during this process, and thanked everyone who attended the four budget workshops at the McDaniel Building. It was noted that the proposed budget was available for viewing on the Hamilton County website.

He presented the budget in detail stating that it was a balanced \$679.6 million budget, and his sixth consecutive budget with no property tax increase. The proposed budget is \$14.2 million larger than the 2015-2016 fiscal year budget, which represents a 2.1 percent increase. He noted that the majority of County spending is going to the Department of Education. School spending is set to rise from \$405.68 million to \$417.7 million. The county school budget has been amended to around \$411 million during the current fiscal year.

The county general fund is rising \$3.9 from \$213.48 million to \$218.8 million. Contributing factors are property taxes and intergovernmental revenues, which are revenues that come in from local offices as well as state and federal governments. He noted that his staff would be unable to balance the budget without the help of the Constitutional Offices. He commended County Clerk Bill Knowles, Circuit Court Clerk Larry Henry, and Sheriff Jim Hammond who were in attendance for his presentation.

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Across the board employee raises of 2.5 percent are included in the budget. Employees earning \$50,000 or less will receive a minimum raise of \$1,250. Cost of raises, including associated employee benefits is \$2.65 million.

Additional topics discussed were increases in revenues, increases in expenditures, increases in health insurance costs, decreases in debt services appropriations, the general fund capital outlay items budgeted for and the unexpected major capital items that are not included in the annual capital outlay budget. Total capital outlay for the Sheriff's Department is \$1.3 million.

The Sheriff's Department budget is up \$31.59 million to \$33.47 million. The increase is mainly due to employee pay raises totaling \$606,000 and health insurance costs totaling \$838,000. The budget does include funds for the Bridge Retirement Plan (BRP) and the Sheriff's Office grant for four School Resource Officers. It was noted that funding for the grant came from the state for the first three years.

Mayor Coppinger said there will only be one new full-time employee, a veterans services officer who will be paid approximately \$55,000. It was noted that Hamilton County had been one of only two counties in the state without such an officer. He said local veterans may be missing out on approximately \$12 million in benefits. The position

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will fall under Human Resources and interested applicants must be a veteran and honorably discharged.

Mayor Coppinger concluded his statements stating that the budget is a conservative, fiscally responsible budget. He added that voting by the Commission is scheduled for June 29th.

Chairman Bankston stated that Resolution Nos. 616-14 through 616-29 would now be heard by the Committee of the Whole.

44:16

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-14

This Resolution appropriates \$7,630.00 from general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to District Four, to Alton Park Development Corporation to assist with community development.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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44:39

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-15

Chairman Bankston spoke regarding his Resolution, which appropriates \$17,370.00 from general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to District Nine, to Alton Park Development Corporation to assist with community development. It was noted that \$17,370.00 in discretionary bond monies as allotted to district four was swapped for a like amount in general fund discretionary funds as allotted to district nine. Chairman Bankston noted that Commissioner Mackey would be present for next week's meeting to explain.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

45:12

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-16

Commissioner Beck spoke regarding this item, which approves the expenditure of up to \$2,500.00 from discretionary bond funds, as allotted to district five, to Dalewood Middle School for the purchase of a security system.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-17

Commissioner Beck spoke regarding this item, which approves the expenditure of up to \$7,436.00 from discretionary bond funds, as allotted to district five, to assist with the purchase of library books for Hillcrest Elementary School.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

46:04

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-18

Administrator of Finance Al Kiser spoke regarding this item, which amends the federal school projects fund budget by adding \$70,842.00 to the FY 2015-2016 revenue and expenditure budget, amends the self-funded projects fund budget by adding \$490,451.00 to the FY 2015-2016 revenue and expenditure budget, and amends the general purpose fund budget by adding \$1,956,793.00 to the FY 2015-2016 revenue and expenditure budget. It was noted that the Board of Education must seek approval from the County legislative body for any budget amendments.

In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Mr. Kiser stated that he would report the total of the Department of Education's budget back to Commissioners. He

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added that the budget has been amended because of stadium repairs, and this item is designed to true up their budget.

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Mr. Kiser noted that the \$70,842 was federal and state funding that the school system was not aware they would receive.

It was noted that Christie Jordan, Accounting and Budgeting Director for the Hamilton County Department of Education, would be present next week to answer any questions.

50:04

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-19

Director of Purchasing Gail Roppo spoke regarding this item, which accepts the bid of Windrock Enterprises, Inc. for the purchase of small kitchen items and equipment for the Middle Valley Elementary School for the Board of Education.

In response to Commissioner Graham's question, Ms. Roppo confirmed that these are funds that have already been approved.

In response to Commissioner Fields' question, Ms. Roppo stated that she would report back to the Commission with the total cost of the purchase.

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51:15 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-20**

Alecia Poe, Human Resources Director, spoke regarding this item, which accepts the proposal of Sun Life Financial for reinsurance for the County's group medical plan. She explained that Sun Life offers a refund based on a percentage of the premium if not exceeded. She noted that the County has received on average \$33,000 per year in refunds. Sun Life also pays the \$44,400 premium for DataSmart; software used by Russ Blakely & Associates to analyze patient data to improve the county's health insurance claims.

53:13 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-21**

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to sign an agreement in the amount of \$50,000 with the Urban League of Greater Chattanooga to provide certain contract compliance services. He noted that this item is contingent on the passing of the FY17 budget. He added that Warren Logan, President and CEO for the Chattanooga Area Urban League, was present to answer any questions.

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Commissioner Graham reported that Mr. Logan would be speaking at an upcoming Diversity and Equity Committee meeting. He noted that he would announce the date at a later time.

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Chairman Bankston reported that the vote for this item will take place next week, but the funding is subject to the adoption of the budget.

Mayor Coppinger publicly thanked Mr. Logan for his hard work and dedication to Hamilton County government. He noted that Mr. Logan is providing a service to Hamilton County that saves the taxpayers quite a bit of money.

57:46

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-22

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to sign a grant agreement with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and amends the Recovery Court Fund by adding \$425,000 to the revenue and expenditure budget. He noted that this is the main state funding contract for the Recovery Court Program, and there is no County match.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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58:35

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-23

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to execute a contract with Ms. Elaine Kelly to serve as coordinator of the Hamilton County Recovery Court Program with a term of July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Commissioner Graham clarified that Resolution No. 616-22 funds Hamilton County's Recovery Court Program's Coordinator contract (616-23) and two Case Manager contracts (616-24 & 616-25).

In response to Commissioner Beck's question, Mayor Coppinger reported that Ms. Kelly is supervised by Criminal Court Judge Tom Greenholtz. It was noted that the contract was for \$92,442.00.

1:00:11

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-24

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to execute a contract with Mr. John Cooper to serve as case manager of the Hamilton County Recovery Court Program with a term of July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

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There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-25

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to execute a contract with Mr. Jeff Hill to serve as case manager of the Hamilton County Recovery Court Program with a term of July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-26

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to accept a \$1.25 million Fast Track Economic Development Fund Grant from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development on behalf of Yanfeng USA Automotive Trim Systems, Inc. to provide various building improvements and equipment at the company's new Hamilton County location. No county match is required.

There were no questions for Commissioners.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-27

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to accept a \$5.5 million Fast Track Economic Development Fund Grant from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development on behalf of Gestamp Chattanooga, LLC to assist with equipment and building improvements to support the expansion of the company's Hamilton County operations. No county match is required.

In response to Commissioner Haynes question, Mr. Saieed reported that the funding is for building and equipment purchases, with claw back provisions.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-28

This Resolution adopts a budget for the fiscal year 2016-2017 and sets the tax levy for the year 2016 for Hamilton County, Tennessee.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 616-29

This Resolution makes appropriations to nonprofit charitable and civic organizations of Hamilton County, Tennessee, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2017.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

Chairman Bankston reported that Resolution Nos. 616-28 and 616-29 will be voted on at the June 29, 2016 Recessed meeting.

1:06:16 Commissioner Haynes, Chairman of the Zoning Committee, announced that the Zoning Committee would be meeting in the adjacent Conference Room immediately following today's Agenda Session.

Commissioner Boyd, Chairman of the Finance Committee, announced that the Finance Committee would be meeting in the Commission Room immediately following today's Agenda Session.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Bankston asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

Each member of the Commission thanked Mayor Coppinger and his staff for today's budget presentation and the four workshops that took place at the McDaniel Building. They complimented the staff for their knowledge and willingness to answer any questions.

1:06:57

Commissioner Haynes recognized District 3 School Board member Dr. Greg Martin in the audience. He reported that Dr. Martin recently began a career in real estate and was recently awarded Agent of the Month by Berkshire Hathaway. Commissioner Haynes also complemented members of the Greater Chattanooga Association of Realtors (GCAR) for hosting a meeting last week with the respective school board candidates.

Commissioner Haynes thanked Mayor Coppinger and Commissioners for approving expenditures for Dallas Bay Volunteer Fire Department. He reported they are extremely grateful for the improvements.

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1:08:30 Commissioner Graham expressed his gratitude for local Volunteer Fire Departments and the invaluable service they provide to the citizens of Hamilton County. He also recognized his wife and two of his children in the audience at today's meeting. He wished his youngest son, Luke, a happy 11th birthday.

1:11:17 Commissioner Fields echoed Commissioner Graham's comments about the invaluable service provided by local Volunteer Fire Departments. He also recognized his wife who was present in the audience at today's meeting.

1:12:03 Commissioner Smedley announced that a community meeting will take place Monday, June 13th at 6:00 pm at Shelter Church in East Brainerd. The meeting will be co-hosted by Councilman Larry Grohn and will cover topics such as the city and county budgets and road projects. She reported that County Trustee Bill Hullander will be present to discuss the Senior Tax Relief program available in Hamilton County.

Mayor Coppinger thanked Commissioners for their participation in the budget workshops this year.

1:13:04 Mayor Coppinger spoke about a Times Free Press article regarding the Hamilton County Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority (WWTA). He reported that there are issues concerning the WWTA, and that a tremendous amount of work is occurring

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behind the scenes to solve them. He added that growth and economic development has not been slowed as the article suggested. He reinforced that the WWTA is an authority established by the State of Tennessee and the County is very limited in oversight of its operations.

1:17:30 Commissioner Boyd responded to Mayor Coppinger's comments. He reported that economic development has been an issue that may or not be related to issues with the WWTA, which is set to sunset 2021. He announced that he will release a report later this summer detailing his findings from his study of the WWTA. He reported that economic development cannot occur without adequate water, power, and water treatment.

1:21:30 Mayor Coppinger reported that East Ridge has not been left out of any economic development, and he referenced \$1 million the Commission allotted to development in that area. He noted that some information regarding a plan of action is confidential. He welcomed Commissioner Boyd to discuss the issues further with him and his staff.

1:24:53 Chairman Bankston wished Commissioner Graham's son, Luke, a happy 11th birthday.

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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 15th at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

07-06-16
Date

W.F.K.
Clerk's Initials