

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 8, 2020**

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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

- A Three Star Program Compliance report would be submitted and made a matter of record.
- Resolution Nos. 720-13 through 720-15, 720-19 through 720-25, 720-26A, 720-26B, and 720-28 were heard by a Committee of the Whole.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-13

This Resolution confirms the appointment of Assistant Administrator of Finance Lee Brouner, and the reappointments of County Auditor Jenneth Randall, County Attorney Rheubin Taylor, County Commissioner Randy Fairbanks, and County Clerk William “Bill” Knowles to the Hamilton County Ethics Committee for a term of two years beginning July 8, 2020 and ending July 8, 2022.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-14

This Resolution authorizes the Sheriff to add three full time employees to assist with the FUSE initiative and to amend the Sheriff Mental Health Department

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expenditures budget by adding \$60,000 and to reduce the general fund budget for the Development Department by \$60,000.

In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Mayor Coppinger stated to his knowledge these funds were grant funds.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-15

Hamilton County Public Defender Steve Smith spoke regarding this item, which approves, by a 2/3 majority, the adoption of Tennessee Code Annotated 40-14-210 thereby permitting an increase of \$12.50 to the cost assessed in criminal proceedings (with the exception of non-moving traffic violations) before the various courts within Hamilton County, Tennessee. Additionally, the Resolution would appropriate said funds as collected for the Public Defender's Office representation of indigent defendants in criminal proceedings.

Commissioner Sharpe expressed concern about causing more of a financial burden on those utilizing a public defender in the court system. He encouraged other methods of providing funding to the Public Defender's Office.

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Commissioner Martin stated his understanding is that this fee would be assessed to anyone going through the court system.

Commissioner Mackey echoed Commissioner Sharpe's comments.

Commissioner Sharpe emphasized that if government cannot afford public defenders then a closer look should be taken at what is criminalized and how that is addressed in the court system.

Chairman Fairbanks stated county government does not control what is criminalized.

In response to Commissioner Martin's question, Mr. Smith reported the fee would be assessed to everyone convicted with the exception of non-moving traffic violations. He stated court costs are often waived for indigent defendants utilizing the public defender's office.

In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Mr. Smith stated his office lost significant state funding and this was one funding mechanism he found to keep experienced personnel on the payroll.

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In response to Commissioner Sharpe's question, Mayor Coppinger explained county government is required by state law to give 75% of any budget increases given to the District Attorney's Office to the Public Defender's Office.

Mr. Smith noted that specific statute was enacted because of the disparity in funding between the District Attorney's Offices and Public Defender's Offices. He stated 53 other Tennessee counties have adopted TCA 40-14-210.

In response to Commissioner Geter's question, Mr. Smith stated other offices across the state use the revenue from this fee to fund new lawyer positions. He added initially the funds would assist with office expenses.

In response to Commissioner Martin's question, Attorney Taylor stated the fee would be considered a court cost. He asked that Mr. Smith provide information regarding how his office has grown over the years.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-19

This Resolution authorizes the County Mayor to participate in the Electronic Monitoring Indigency Fund "EMIF" with the State of Tennessee and commits a

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budgeted amount of \$80,000 which will be matched by the state for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-20

This Resolution authorizes the County Mayor to enter into and execute an amendment to the Deed Covenants relative to Lot-15A Centre South/Riverport Industrial Park.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-21

This Resolution authorizes the County Mayor to enter into Agreement No. 200104 with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) for miscellaneous safety improvements on Snow Hill Road, from Forest Creek Lane to north of White Cypress Drive, and to pay \$26,210.00 from previously budgeted funds for construction of the project.

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There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-22

This Resolution authorizes the County Mayor to submit a grant application in an amount of \$75,000, requiring a 1:1 county match of \$75,000, to the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD). These funds would be for the purpose of developing expanded waterfront parking facilities at Chester Frost Park to further tourism opportunities, as recommended in a 2017 grant funded Chester Frost Enhancement Plan.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-23

This Resolution authorizes the County Mayor on behalf of Hamilton County, Tennessee, the Health Services Division, operating as the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department to sign a continuation contract with the Tennessee Department of Health in the amount of \$749,740.00 to provide a school based dental sealant program in Hamilton County for the time period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.

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There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-24

Executive Director of the Regional Planning Agency John Bridger spoke regarding this item, which grants a special permit for a short-term vacation rental for property located at 7336 Harris Haven Drive. It was noted no opposition was present.

In response to Commissioner Martin's question, Mr. Bridger stated there was community opposition submitted with the request, however, there was none at the Planning Commission meeting and both staff and RPA recommended approval.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-25

Executive Director of the Regional Planning Agency John Bridger spoke regarding this item, which rezones from A-1 Agricultural District to R-3 Apartment-Townhouse District property located at 7519 Middle Valley Road. It was noted no opposition was present.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-26A and 720-26B

Executive Director of the Regional Planning Agency John Bridger spoke regarding this item, which lifts and amends conditions from Resolution No. 1102-27B of previous case number 2002-195 for property located at 7521 Middle Valley Road. It was noted no action would be taken on Resolution No. 720-26A. No opposition was present at today's meeting.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 720-28

Commissioner Mackey spoke regarding this item, which amends the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget by appropriating \$900,000 for discretionary spending as may be disbursed by members of the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners (at \$100,000 each) for non-profit civic entities that serve the Hamilton County community. He stated any funds not used at the end of the year would be returned to the general fund and encouraged Commissioners to support this item.

Commissioner Martin stated he would not be supporting this Resolution given the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy.

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At this time, Chairman Fairbanks stated the phone line for members of the public wishing to address the Commission on matters other than zoning would be open at this time. He stated those wishing to speak should call 423-209-8998 to be added to the queue.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Fairbanks asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

Commissioner Baker questioned the status of the CoreCivic contract.

Mayor Coppinger read a portion of a letter from CoreCivic dated July 3, 2020 into the record in which they announced they would be executing their 180-day termination right (*Resolution No. 917-13*) and cease management of the Silverdale Detention Center effective December 30, 2020. A copy of the letter in its entirety was filed in the Clerk's Office.

At this time, a lengthy discussion took place among Commissioners, Mayor Coppinger, and Attorney Taylor regarding CoreCivic's announcement and the transitioning of management of Silverdale to the Sheriff's Office. It was noted cost

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analysis studies would need to be completed before any sort of budget determinations could be made.

Commissioner Geter announced a COVID-19 testing event at Olivet Baptist Church on Saturday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM and Sunday from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM. She encouraged everyone to be tested as well as to follow the new county mandate to wear face coverings.

Commissioner Martin announced he was impressed with the ease of COVID-19 testing in Hamilton County. He also stated his appreciated to be able to celebrate Independence Day this past week.

Commissioner Baker encouraged all the staff working the COVID-19 testing sites to stay cool and hydrated in the heat.

Commissioner Sharpe encouraged everyone to follow Hamilton County Health Officer Dr. Paul Hendricks' July 10, 2020 county-wide mandate to wear face coverings.

Mayor Coppinger thanked those involved in the COVID-19 testing events and stated over 40,000 have been tested in Hamilton County. He spoke about the mask mandate and emphasized that it is one of the most effective ways to minimize the

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spread of the virus in our community, along with social distancing. He added the issue is not a political issue and it is solely an effort to control the spread of COVID-19 and give schools a chance to open in the fall.

DELEGATIONS

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

Being no further business, Chairman Fairbanks declared the meeting adjourned until Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

08-05-20



Date

Clerk's Initials