

HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION JULY 31, 2019

Chairman Smedley recognized School Board members Kathy Lennon and Jenny Hill as well as City of Chattanooga Police Chief David Roddy in attendance at today's meeting.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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

- The Trustee's Monthly and Excess Fee Reports for June 2019 would be submitted for the record.
- A Report of Investment Activity for the quarter ending June 30, 2019 was submitted for the record.
- Fee Office reports for the quarter ending June 30, 2019 would be submitted for the record.
- An Order of Designation to the Planning Commission would be submitted as a matter of record.
- Resolution No. 819-1 was the usual County Clerk item regarding notaries, etc. This required no committee assignment.
- Resolution Nos. 819-7 through 819-12 were assigned to the Finance Committee, chaired by Commissioner Fairbanks.
- Resolution Nos. 819-2 through 819-6 and 819-13 through 819-16 were heard by a Committee of the Whole.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

1:01

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-15

County Trustee Bill Hullander spoke regarding this item, which approves an agreement between the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County, Tennessee (on behalf of the Hamilton County Trustee) on behalf of the Board of the Chattanooga Downtown Central Business Improvement District. The agreement is relative to billing and collection of the levy of special assessments from applicable owners of property within the Chattanooga Downtown Central Business Improvement District pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated section 7-84-521, *et seq.*

Trustee Hullander emphasized the Trustee's Office would only be responsible for collecting the special assessments and does not establish boundaries. He stated his office would be paid a two percent commission for collecting the assessment, which totals approximately \$20,000. He also stated the Trustee's Office would be taking over delinquent tax collection for the City of Chattanooga, which will come before Commissioners once the details are finalized.

In response to Chairman Smedley's question, Attorney Taylor reported this agreement was adopted by the City Council at their meeting last night and requires no financial contribution from the county.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Trustee Hullander stated the county does place liens on property so long as property taxes are being paid.

Commissioner Boyd requested Attorney Taylor research and report to Commissioners what legal steps would be taken should owners of property within the Chattanooga Downtown Central Business Improvement District refuse to pay the special assessment.

7:01 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-2**

This Resolution confirms the joint reappointment by the County Mayor and the Mayor of the City of Chattanooga of Robert Lynch to the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Board, with a term ending August 7, 2023.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

7:20 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-3**

Commissioner Geter spoke regarding this item, which appropriates \$500.00 from general fund travel discretionary monies as allotted to District 5 to Reach One, Teach One UCA to assist with their Back to School Bash and Fundraiser.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

There were no questions from Commissioners.

8:20

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-4

Director of Emergency Management Chris Adams spoke regarding this item, which adopts the Hamilton County Multijurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan and authorizes the Office of Emergency Management to submit the plan to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He reported the plan opens up grant opportunities in the event of a natural disaster.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

9:27

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-5

Director of Existing Business Development with the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce Steve Hiatt spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to enter into and execute an “offer to purchase” relative to Tract 1 (located on Hickory Valley Road) of the Enterprise South Industrial Park. Additionally, it authorizes the County Mayor to execute a deed and other necessary closing documents conveying said property to the purchaser upon payment of the sale price. Mr. Hiatt reported Empire Distributors of Tennessee, Inc. desires to purchase 7 acres for \$80,000 per acre

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

to construct an 18,000 square foot facility. He noted 12 to 14 jobs would be created over the next five years.

12:19 In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Mr. Hiatt stated Parcel 1 at Enterprise South Industrial Park was not initially designated for any other uses. He added the sale price is considered at or above fair market value.

13:39 Mayor Coppinger reiterated the City of Chattanooga has agreed upon the sale. Mr. Hiatt added the sale would be considered by the City Council at their next meeting.

It was noted Glenn Herald, Vice President and General Manager for Empire Distributors of Tennessee Inc. was present for questioning.

14:31 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-6**

Administrator of Finance Al Kiser spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to sign an interlocal agreement with the City of Lookout Mountain to allow Lookout Mountain City Court to use and share information with Hamilton County's Criminal Justice Information and Management system (CJUS). Additionally, it authorizes the county to charge the City of Lookout Mountain for the costs incurred in providing the Lookout Mountain City Court with access to CJUS and to adjust the

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

general fund revenue and expenditure budgets by \$15,000 for this project. Mr. Kiser noted there would be no additional cost to the county.

In response to Commissioner Fairbanks' question, Mr. Kiser stated East Ridge also utilizes Hamilton County's CJUS system.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-13

16:03

Mayor Coppinger spoke regarding this item, which adopts a budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 and sets the tax levy for the year 2019 for Hamilton County, Tennessee. It was noted the FY 2019-2020 budget was originally considered on June 26, 2019 (*Resolution No. 619-14*) however, no action was taken after an amendment was approved removing the 34-cent property tax increase for the Department of Education.

Mayor Coppinger explained the proposed budget presented today is a balanced budget in all areas with no tax increase and reflects no changes to the county general budget since it was presented on June 26, 2019. He stated the revisions to the Department of Education's budget bring the total budget to \$794,187,740.00 and he noted replacement pages for the budget books handed out on June 5, 2019 were being distributed. A copy of the replacement pages were filed in the Clerk's Office. Mayor Coppinger stated Chief Business Officer for Hamilton County Schools Brent Goldberg

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

was present to answer any questions regarding the Department of Education's proposed budget.

In response to Chairman Smedley's question, Mayor Coppinger confirmed this Resolution sets 2019 tax levy at the same 2018 rate of 2.7652.

18:16

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Mr. Goldberg stated the Department of Education's proposed budget contains a \$1500 bonus for every full time employee as of September 30th of this year. He explained the budget also allows for 188.5 new positions, which brings total employment to 4,572.5. He noted of those 4572.5 approximately 3,200 are classroom teachers. Mr. Goldberg stated the bonuses will be issued on November 22nd and will leave the Department of Education's general fund balance at approximately \$47 million.

24:26

In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Mr. Goldberg reported historically the Department of Education has allocated \$3 million each year to capital maintenance with additional funds set aside for building repairs. He emphasized this is not enough funding to maintain school buildings.

Commissioner Mackey referred to the 10-year Facilities Master Plan by MGT Consulting Group, released on July 23, 2019, which stated the county schools have

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

\$1.36 billion in facilities upgrade and repair needs. Mr. Goldberg stated years of underfunding building maintenance contributed to that figure.

In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Mr. Goldberg stated the immediate surrounding counties have a higher starting teacher salary than Hamilton County.

30:04 Commissioner Fairbanks questioned how the Department of Education made the decision to go from proposing a 5% raise for teachers to a one-time \$1500 bonus. Mr. Goldberg stated the decision was made during collaborative conferencing meetings with the local teacher's union (Hamilton County Education Association (HCEA)) and district staff. The consensus was adding additional support staff was more important than the raise in order to improve working conditions.

37:27 In response to Chairman Smedley's question, Mr. Goldberg stated it was not possible to fund the 5% raise for teachers solely out of growth money. He provided additional details regarding the state's BEP funding formula and its impact on teacher compensation. He noted HCEA is in constant communication with teachers through building representatives in schools and social media and other means.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

At Chairman Smedley's request, Attorney Taylor clarified while the Commission is a funding body for the school system they do not have line item veto power over the Department of Education's budget.

44:33

Commissioner Sharpe reminded Commissioners of a poll that was released citing 61% of participants supported increasing property taxes to support education. He applauded that through collaborative conferencing teachers chose to forego raises in favor of supporting students in the classroom and emphasized his regret that choice had to be made.

In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Mr. Goldberg stated the state mandates the Department of Education to retain 3% of their operating budget in the fund balance.

49:56

In response to Commissioner Baker's question, HCEA President Jeanette Omarkhail stated the decision was very difficult and ultimately teachers chose to prioritize other budget matters in lieu of raises. She stated the group plans to push for a substantial teacher raise next year. Commissioner Baker stated his disappointment the proposed budget did not contain a pay raise for teachers.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

56:51

Commissioner Boyd spoke about building trust between the school system and the County Commission and voiced concern over disturbing occurrences during school hours brought to his attention by teachers and parents in the community.

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Mr. Goldberg stated almost all of the new proposed positions would be covered under the BEP funding formula.

1:02:15

Commissioner Martin questioned how the Department of Education prioritizes their budget and referred to the Chattanooga School for the Liberal Arts (CSLA) and Tyner Middle and High Schools project (*Resolution No. 218-31*). He questioned why no progress was made on the project after the Commission approved it and requested an update on the project. He asked that any changes to the plan be brought back before Commissioners for approval.

1:11:17

Clerk Knowles requested the 10-year Facilities Master Plan by MGT Consulting Group be made a matter of record. MGT Consulting Group presented the report to the Commission on July 23rd, 2019 at the Paul McDaniel Building. A copy of the report was filed in the Clerk's Office.

In response to Commissioner Geter's question, Ms. Omarkhail spoke about the amount of their own income teachers spend on school and classroom supplies. She

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

stated a group of teachers is working on collecting that data in the upcoming school year. She added teachers also spend unpaid time preparing their classrooms for the school year. Commissioner Geter emphasized the importance of teachers having both classroom support and additional compensation.

1:21:24 In response to Commissioner Sharpe's question, Mr. Goldberg stated the average student to teacher ratio is 19:1 and depends heavily on building size and classroom suitability.

 In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Ms. Omarkhail provided information on how teachers are evaluated.

1:25:46 In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Dr. Nakia Edwards, Chief of Staff for Hamilton County Schools, spoke at length about the results of the school facilities report, building maintenance, and collaborative conferencing. She stated the CSLA/Tyner project was put on hold after those facilities received some of the lowest ratings in the county. She noted any changes to that plan would be brought back before Commissioners for approval.

 In reference to deferred building maintenance, Dr. Edwards reported the annual recurring cost to maintain the county's 7.5 million square feet of school facilities would

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

total \$22 million when evaluated at \$3 per square foot. It was noted \$3 million to \$5 million is the average annual allocation for building maintenance. In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Dr. Edwards stated \$3 per square foot is a national benchmark.

At this time, a lengthy discussion took place between Commissioners, Dr. Edwards, Mr. Goldberg, and Ms. Omarkhail regarding the collaborative conferencing process, teacher compensation and student support, and student progress and achievement. Dr. Edwards emphasized the progress county schools are making and invited Commissioners to attend the August 15th School Board Meeting at 5:30 PM when the 2018-2019 test results will be unveiled. She commended the leadership of teachers and the central office realignment. Several Commissioners thanked Dr. Edwards, Mr. Goldberg, and Ms. Omarkhail for today's discussions.

1:38:51 Commissioner Martin requested a copy of the poll Commissioner Sharpe referenced in his earlier comments. Chairman Smedley suggested putting the matter of school funding on referendum in order to let the taxpayers decide how to go forward.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

1:50:57 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-14**

Mayor Coppinger spoke regarding this item, which makes appropriations to nonprofit charitable and civic organizations of Hamilton County, Tennessee, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

1:51:39 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 819-16**

Attorney Taylor spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to execute a continuing grant agreement with the United States Department of Justice for funds to be received and divided between the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office and the City of Chattanooga Police Department through the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). He noted there was no county match.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

Commissioner Fairbanks, Chairman of the Finance Committee, stated the Finance Committee would meet in the Commission Room immediately following today's Agenda Session.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Smedley asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

1:53:10 Commissioner Martin invited everyone to meet tomorrow evening at Hixson Elementary School at 6:30 PM to help refurbish their outdoor classrooms.

1:53:45 Commissioner Sharpe announced the Security and Corrections Committee would be meeting next Wednesday at 8:30 AM in the Commission Room. He stated Chief Judicial Commissioner Lorrie Miller would be speaking at the meeting.

1:54:27 Commissioner Boyd requested an update on the Humane Educational Society (HES) building project. Chairman Smedley asked that Commissioner Sharpe, who serves on the HES building committee, coordinate with an HES representative to provide an update.

Commissioner Geter announced on Sunday Brainerd High School would be unveiling the results from the Brainerd Together project where nearly 200 volunteers helped renovate the school before the new school year begins.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

1:56:35 Commissioner Geter read a statement into the record regarding the July 10th dash cam footage of a traffic stop performed by two Hamilton County Sheriff's deputies. She stated she was deeply troubled by the incident and demanded answers from local law enforcement. A copy of Commissioner Geter's comments was filed in the Clerk's Office.

2:00:47 Chairman Smedley thanked everyone involved in the budget process.

2:01:27 Commissioner Mackey thanked Mayor Coppinger for his courage throughout the budget process.

2:02:10 Mayor Coppinger expressed his excitement for the 2018-2019 test results at the August 15th School Board meeting. He asked that everyone come together to focus on the pressing issues in the public education system.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

2:04:07

DELEGATIONS

Chairman Smedley asked for delegations on matters other than zoning.

Christopher Dahl, residing at 2020 East 12th Street Chattanooga, TN 37404, addressed Commissioners regarding police brutality and jail conditions. At the request of Mr. Dahl, a copy of his comments was filed in the Clerk's Office.

Jerald Peterson, residing at 1019 Central Drive Hixson, TN 37343, addressed Commissioners regarding the proposed budget and asked they vote no on the Department of Education's budget.

Lorrie Cleveland, residing at 2166 Trion Highway Lafayette, GA 30728, addressed Commissioners as a teacher and member of the Professional Education Collaborative Conferencing Act (PECCA) Team and emphasized her commitment to advocating for additional teacher compensation and student support.

2:11:43

Commissioner Boyd stated the Commission does not establish teacher compensation.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

Kevin Aslinger, residing at 205 Brookwood Drive Chattanooga, TN 37411, addressed Commissioners as a teacher and member of the Professional Education Collaborative Conferencing Act (PECCA) Team and emphasized his commitment to advocating for additional teacher compensation and student support. He distributed a handout detailing the history of salary increases for teachers in Hamilton County. A copy of the handout was filed in the Clerk's Office.

Larry Lewis, residing at 13336 McGill Road Soddy Daisy, TN 37379, addressed Commissioners as a teacher and member of the Professional Education Collaborative Conferencing Act (PECCA) Team and emphasized his commitment to advocating for additional teacher compensation and student support. He distributed a handout detailing the history of salary increases for teachers in Hamilton County. A copy of the handout was filed in the Clerk's Office.

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
JULY 31, 2019**

Being no further business, Chairman Smedley declared the meeting adjourned until Wednesday, August 7th, 2019 at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

08-21-19
Date

W.F.K
Clerk's Initials