



**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION  
OCTOBER 9, 2019**

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Chairman Fairbanks 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.
- Unaudited Financial reports for fiscal year ending June 30, 2019 for Circuit Court Clerk, Clerk and Master, County Clerk, and Register would be submitted as a matter of record.
- Resolution No. 1019-12 was the usual County Clerk item regarding notaries, etc. This required no committee assignment.
- Resolution Nos. 1019-21 through 1019-24 were assigned to the Finance Committee, chaired by Commissioner Smedley.
- Resolution Nos. 1019-25A, 1019-25B, and 1019-26 through 1019-29 were assigned to the Zoning Committee, chaired by Commissioner Bankston.
- Resolution Nos. 1019-13 through 1019-20 were heard by a Committee of the Whole.

0:44

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-13**

This Resolution reappoints Ryan King and appoints Wendy Dixon to the Hamilton County Board of Zoning Appeals for a five-year term beginning October 16, 2019 and ending October 16, 2024.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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1:09

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-14**

This Resolution appoints Joanie Sompayrac to the Hamilton County Industrial Development Board for a six-year term beginning October 16, 2019 and ending October 16, 2025.

In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Attorney Taylor stated certain term limits are set by state statute or previous act by the County Commission.

3:26

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-15**

Commissioner Sharpe, sponsor of this Resolution spoke regarding a \$60 Wheel Tax. He proposed a referendum for the voters to decide at the same time of the countywide primary for the Assessor of Property, and the Presidential Preference Primary Election on March 3, 2020. If approved by the voters the \$60 wheel tax would become effective July 1, 2020. He stated the revenue generated by the tax would be used to fund salary increases for employees of the Hamilton County Department of Education.

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Chairman Fairbanks encouraged Commissioners to consider the elderly residents of Hamilton County who continue to drive and might be overburdened by an additional tax.

6:42

Commissioner Martin asked that this item be sent to the Education Committee to be studied further. He voiced concern over the timing and amount of the wheel tax. He also questioned whether Commissioners could designate funds specifically for salary increases to the Department of Education.

Chairman Fairbanks recommended that because of the interest this matter might draw all discussion should take place as a Committee of the Whole.

Commissioner Sharpe distributed a handout to Commissioners detailing a summary of tax rates in every county in Tennessee for fiscal year 2019. A copy of the handout was filed in the Clerk's Office.

9:52

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Clerk Knowles stated he was not aware of any county contiguous to Hamilton with a wheel tax. He noted the highest Wheel Tax levied in Tennessee is Hardeman County's \$80 tax.

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Commissioner Boyd strongly disagreed with additional taxes and voiced concern over the Department of Education's management of funds. He disagreed with placing it on the March 3, 2020 ballot because of low voter turnout and suggested additional revenue should go the county general budget to address roads and other infrastructure repairs.

Commissioner Sharpe responded to Commissioner Boyd's comments and stated that he would prefer to let the public make the decision.

16:55

Commissioner Geter agreed with Commissioner Sharpe's comments and added quality education and teachers directly affects student achievement.

Commissioner Smedley agreed with placing the matter on referendum, but disagreed with placing it on the March 3, 2020 ballot. She encouraged Commissioners to look into more innovative ways of providing funding for the Department of Education.

Commissioner Mackey spoke about the cost of incarceration and the cost of deferred school building maintenance in excess of \$1 billion. He voiced concerns about the quality of workforce in Hamilton County and attributed it to a lack of investment in the public school system.

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24:29 Commissioner Sharpe stated he is open to debate regarding the amount of the wheel tax.

26:58 Commissioner Boyd referenced the wheel tax chart he received from Clerk Knowles and confirmed that there is no wheel tax in any of the immediate surrounding counties. He noted there is too much information to make a reasonable decision by next week. A copy of the handout was filed in the clerk's office.

Commissioner Martin emphasized following the best process and stated his intent to make an amendment that would move this to the November election ballot to allow for more voter turnout. He commended Commissioner Sharpe for introducing this item though he does not agree with an additional tax.

In response to Commissioner Martin's question, Attorney Taylor reported the Chairman does have the ability to move an item to committee. Chairman Fairbanks stated the matter would be taken up next week.

Clerk Knowles requested the final version of Resolution No. 1019-15 be provided to the Clerk's Office.

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35:50 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-16**

Development Director Dan Saieed spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to accept a FastTrack Economic Development Fund grant contract from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development on behalf of Gestamp Chattanooga, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$750,000 to provide building expansion, machinery, and equipment at Gestamp’s Hickory Valley site located at 3063 Hickory Valley Road. Mr. Saieed reported Gestamp Chattanooga, LLC would be investing \$40,840,071 and adding 110 new jobs within five years to expand its production facility. He noted Director of Existing Business Development for the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce Steve Hiatt was present to answer any questions.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

37:48 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-17**

Administrator of General Services Lee Norris spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to accept a grant contract from the Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) and the Criminal Justice Institute (CJI) to serve as a grantee pilot site for pretrial system technical assistance, funded by a Justice

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Assistance Grant (JAG) with a total project cost of up to \$360,000 over a three-year period and requiring no local match.

In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Administrator Norris stated this program is separate from the FUSE program.

In response to Commissioner Geter's question, Director of Corrections Chris Jackson reported Davidson County, Knox County, and Shelby County have implemented the program.

40:27

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-18**

Administrator of Public Works and County Engineer Todd Leamon spoke regarding this item, which accepts the proposal by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) for the SR-8 (Signal Mountain Road) emergency slide repair retaining wall design in Hamilton County. He stated this was a standard agreement that has to be approved by the local legislative body.

In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Administrator Leamon stated the project is a new repair project. He added he is unsure of the impact it will have on traffic.



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47:10 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-19**

Administrator of Public Works and County Engineer Todd Leamon spoke regarding this item, which authorizes the County Mayor to enter into and execute a real estate purchase agreement relative to Lot 29 of the Centre South Riverport/Industrial Park. Additionally, this item authorizes the County Mayor to execute a deed and other necessary closing documents conveying said property less the costs of closing to the purchaser, Silvey Sheet Metal Company, upon payment of the sale price by the purchaser. He reported Silvey Sheet Metal Company owner Darrel Sivley and Director of Existing Business Development for the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce Steve Hiatt were present to answer any questions.

In response to Commissioner Smedley's question, Mr. Hiatt reported the property is being sold at \$55,000 per acre.

In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Real Property Manager Paul Parker stated the revision date listed on the proposal form is in reference to the last revision of the form itself and not related to the company.

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In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Mr. Sivley provided background information regarding Sivley Sheet Metal Company and stated the new location will offer additional space to allow them to expand their business.

Commissioner Boyd thanked Mr. Hiatt for his dedication to economic development in Hamilton County.

51:11 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1019-20**

Chief of Staff for the Sheriff's Office Geno Bennett spoke regarding this item, which accepts the 2019 Justice Assistance Grant with a term ending September 30, 2022 and amends the Sheriff's Office capital outlay budget by \$41,592.00. He noted no local match is required.

In response to Commissioner Baker's question, Chief Bennett provided details regarding the equipment the grant would assist in providing.

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

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Fairbanks asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

55:04

Commissioner Mackey spoke about his voting record throughout his tenure on the Commission. He encouraged Commissioners to allow the public to make important decisions.

57:03

Commissioner Martin spoke about an event that took place over the weekend at Poe's Tavern, a reconstruction of the original tavern that served as Hamilton County's First Courthouse and County Seat. He stated the Soddy, Daisy, & Montlake Historical Association presented a plaque that commemorates the origin of Hamilton County in honor of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. He asked that the Mayor and Clerk Knowles find a place in the Courthouse to display the plaque.

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Commissioner Martin announced several events taking place to celebrate Hamilton County's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary including a wreath laying ceremony on Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at Dallas Island in Hixson, an event at the Harrison Ruritan Club on October 18<sup>th</sup>, and the celebration at the Courthouse on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

59:16

Commissioner Baker stated he would be out of town for next week's meeting and reiterated earlier comments regarding concerns about the Resolution No. 1019-15 pertaining to a wheel tax introduced by Commissioner Sharpe. He encouraged further study and discussion before a vote takes place on the matter.

1:01:26

Commissioner Boyd after reviewing the chart provided by Commissioner Sharpe stated 18 out of 95 counties in Tennessee have a wheel tax of \$60.00 or more. He added 5 of those 18 counties have a millage rate (lower or higher) than that of Hamilton County.

1:02:14

Attorney Taylor called for a brief legal meeting to discuss pending litigation immediately following today's Agenda Session. Chairman Fairbanks stated committee meetings would take place following the legal meeting.

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**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, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



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William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

11-06-19



Date

Clerk's Initials