

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
AGENDA PREPARATION SESSION
NOVEMBER 25, 2015**

STATE OF TENNESSEE) Agenda Preparation Session
COUNTY OF HAMILTON) November 25, 2015

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on this 25th day of November, 2015, 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. Deputy Clerk Brooke Weaver 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 Mackey, Commissioner Smedley, and Chairman Bankston. Total present - 9. Total absent – 0.

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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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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

- The Trustee's monthly and excess fee reports for October 2015 would be submitted for the record.
- Quarterly Fee Office reports ending August 31, 2015 would be submitted for the record.
- The Juvenile Court Clerk's reports for August and September 2015 would be submitted for the record.
- Resolution No. 1215-1 was the usual County Clerk item regarding notaries, etc. This required no committee assignment.
- Resolution Nos. 1215-15 through 1215-18 were assigned to the Finance Committee, chaired by Commissioner Boyd.
- Resolution Nos. 1215-2 through 1215-14 were heard by a Committee of the Whole.

Chairman Bankston stated that Resolution Nos. 1215-2 through 1215-14 would now be heard by the Committee of the Whole.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-2

Commissioner Bankston spoke regarding this item, which appropriates five thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district nine, to Harrison Recreational Booster Club to assist with utility bills.

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1:29

In response to Commissioner Mackey question, it was stated that the county doesn't normally pay utilities for county parks.

2:09

Commissioner Graham questioned if this was proper use of discretionary money. He stated that it was his understanding that discretionary funds were to be invested in projects that last at least fifteen years.

Don Allen, Administrator of General Services reported the River Park, Chester Frost Park, and Enterprise Nature Park are the only parks that Hamilton County pays utilities for. The County does not own or maintain Harrison Park.

Commissioner Beck noted that the Harrison facility is a great asset to the community and they serve fifteen hundred kids a year. To clear up any confusion about how the Booster Club allocates the funds, Commissioner Beck stated the money will be placed in the organization's general fund. How the organization expenses the funds is truly up to them.

Mayor Coppinger spoke about similar nonprofit 501c3 associations in Hamilton County. He reminded everyone that county funded nonprofit organizations are required to file a copy of their annual report of business affairs and transactions and the

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proposed use of the county funds. He made positive comments regarding the work of the Harrison Association.

Commissioner Boyd spoke in support of funding creditable nonprofit organizations that positively impact and reinvest in the community. He pointed out the discretionary spending policy no longer requires funds to be used on projects that have a fifteen year life expectancy. He informed the Commission that the Finance Committee will begin reviewing and making recommendations regarding discretionary spending after the Holidays.

Commissioner Mackey spoke highly of former commissioners and the policies they set in place. While he is not against reviewing policies, he reminded everyone that the issue has already been discussed several times. He recommended everyone move past discretionary spending policies.

11:03

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-3

Commissioner Fields spoke regarding this item, which appropriates five thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district two, to Signal Mountain Lions Charity to assist with the purchase of a PlusOptix Vision Screener. If approved, the new screener will take the place of out dated inefficient equipment. The

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charity focuses on screening preschool aged children. Vanderbilt University analyzes the data and suggests a treatment plan for the parents to follow. Commissioner Fields stated that he is a current member of the Signal Mountain Lions Club.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

12:22 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-4**

Commissioner Smedley spoke regarding this item, which appropriates one thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district seven, to Scenic Cities Beautiful Commission to assist with the beautification of Heritage Park.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

13:18 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-5**

Commissioner Fairbanks spoke regarding this item, which appropriates twelve thousand three hundred dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district one, to Mowbray Volunteer Fire Department to assist with the purchase of a Polaris Ranger all-terrain vehicle. The all-terrain vehicle will assist in off road rescues that can't be accessed by a standard sized vehicle.

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There were no questions from Commissioners.

14:18 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-6**

Commissioner Fairbanks spoke regarding this item, which appropriates six thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district one, to Soddy Daisy Food Bank to assist with operational expenses.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

15:23 **PRESENTATION: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-8**

Commissioner Boyd spoke regarding this item, which appropriates ten thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district eight, to Girls Incorporated of Chattanooga to assist with the Girls Camp program. He introduced Bea Lurie, President of Girls Inc. and asked her to approach the podium and give her presentation.

Mrs. Lurie gave a detailed presentation about Girls Inc. impact in Hamilton County. Topics of interest covered were how the organization inspires girls to be smart,

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strong, bold, healthy, educated and independent. The organization strives to help girls improve academically, make smarter choices, develop leadership skills, and to stay focused on higher education. One hundred percent of girls in the high school afterschool programs have gone on to college since the organization began tracking in 2007.

Mrs. Lurie reported several statistical findings that have been measured since the early 1980's. She explained in detail the organization's ten thousand dollar funding request for camp programs. The majority of girls impacted are from low-income and minority communities. More than half of the achievement gap between lower and higher income youth is explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. Girls Inc. camps incorporate research and outcome-based curricula. Registration fees are required for the camps, but some families are not able to pay the full cost. Spring and fall break camps are one hundred dollars and summer camp is three hundred and fifty dollars. In closing she thanked the commission for their time and consideration of Commissioner Boyd's request.

A copy of the presentation was distributed to the commission and Clerk's office.

Commissioner Mackey thanked Ms. Lurie for reporting statistical research figures and not just anecdotes.

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Mayor Coppinger thanked Ms. Lurie for her presentation and spoke of his support for the organization. He thanked Girls Inc. for all the hard work they do to impact the lives of many girls in Hamilton County. Mayor Coppinger disclosed that he and his wife recently wrote a personal check to Girls Inc.

22:32

PRESENTATION: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-7

Commissioner Boyd spoke regarding this item, which appropriates ten thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district eight, to First Things First to assist with the Dads Make a Difference Program. He introduced Julie Baumgardner, CEO of First Things First and Todd Agne, Senior Fathering Coordinator for First Things First and asked them to approach the podium and give their presentation.

Mrs. Baumgardner, CEO and Mr. Agne spoke about “Dads Making a Difference”, a 13-week class offered by First Things First in order to assist men recently released from prison with education on the positive involvement of fathers. Ms. Baumgardner explained that the class was created as a way to prevent men that are behind on child support from going back into the penal system after their release. The course is

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designed to assist with job placement, healthy relationship skills, and appropriate participation in legal matters involving children.

Mr. Agne spoke about the structure of the course. He explained that of the thirteen classes, seven are taught by subject matter experts in order to give the men specific insight that an educator might not be able to do. He added that many of the classes are small group based, and they incorporate visual learning and activity based learning. Mr. Agne reported statistics from Dads Making a Difference. It was noted that since 2011, 397 men have enrolled in the course, 168 men have graduated, 15 men have had court ordered visitations with their children increased, and there has been 135 job placements. 5 of those men have been incarcerated post-graduation for child support issues. He added that because of the program the County has saved \$4,429,200.00 in incarceration fees.

A copy of the presentation was given to members of the Commission and the Clerk's office. Mr. Agne read from a reference letter from Juvenile Court Magistrate Kathy J. Clark. She described the class as the right blend of services and classes to make a lasting impact on fathers in our community.

Ms. Baumgardner added that the cost per participant in the program is \$700 per person on average. It was noted that Mr. Agne continues to follow up with the men once

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they have graduated from the program. She thanked members of the Commission for the opportunity to give their presentation.

Commissioner Beck expressed his desire to see more participants in the program. He thanked Mr. Agne and Ms. Baumgardner for the work they do.

In response to Commissioner Beck's question, Mr. Agne reported that the organization works with employers that inform them of available job opportunities. He added that it is important to teach the men networking and interview skills so they are prepared in the future.

Mayor Coppinger thanked Ms. Baumgardner and Mr. Agne for the work they do to keep men out of the prison system. It was noted that First Things First does not receive funding from the City of Chattanooga.

In response to Commissioner Mackey's question, Mr. Agne clarified that men that are incarcerated for child support do not necessarily have their driving and voting privileges suspended. He also explained that the majority of the men in the program are non-violent offenders.

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Several Commissioners voiced their support for the organization and the work that Mr. Agne and Ms. Baumgardner do to keep men out of jail.

Mr. Agne clarified an earlier comment concerning violence among the men. He added that occasionally the men will approach him with issues regarding violence, and those issues are addressed as needed.

38:25

PRESENTATION: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-9

Commissioner Boyd spoke regarding this item, which appropriates two thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district eight, to The Next Door, Inc., Inc. to assist with their program. . He introduced Cindy Dawson, Chattanooga Development and Volunteer Partnerships for The Next Door, Inc., Inc. and asked her to approach the podium and give her presentation.

Mrs. Dawson gave an overview of the organization and how they provide transitional services for incarcerated women. The Next Door, Inc. Chattanooga is the only correction release center for women and their facility is located on the Moccasin Bend territory. The Next Door, Inc. offers a unique program in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC). Women served by The Next Door, Inc. in the Chattanooga area are currently incarcerated and receive short-term transitional

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services that are rooted in evidence-based practices to address the needs of the women.

Within months of release from incarceration, women are transported from prison to The Next Door, Inc. Chattanooga's Correctional Release Center. While at the Correctional Release Center, women work toward gaining job and life skills that will assist in a productive re-entry into society. This Correctional Release Center is the first of its kind for the State of Tennessee and Department of Corrections, and is designed to equip these women for independent living, free from drug and alcohol abuse.

The facility houses up to 42 women and the total women served to this date is 340. An average of 218 women are released from state custody each month and without transitional services, many will re-enter society, become overcome by day-to-day stressors related to family and work, fall back into old habits, commit new crimes similar to ones that originally took them to prison.

A copy of the presentation was distributed to the Clerk's office.

Mayor Coppinger thanked Ms. Dawson for the presentation and spoke of his support for the organization. He thanked The Next Door, Inc., Inc. for all the hard work they do to impact the lives of many women in Hamilton County. Mayor Coppinger

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disclosed that he and his wife recently wrote a personal check to The Next Door, Inc..
He noted that he was looking forward to revisiting the facility in the near future.

47:38

In response to Commissioner Smedley's question, Mrs. Dawson explained that TDOC selects potential inmates and screens them to see if they are a good match for The Next Door, Inc. TDOC then brings female inmates from Nashville's TN Prison for Women to The Next Door, Inc., Inc. usually 4-6 months before their release date.

50:33

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-10

Commissioner Mackey spoke regarding this item, which appropriates one thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district four, to Partnership for Families, Children and Adults, Inc. to assist with the I AM Ready Center.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

51:02

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-11

Commissioner Mackey spoke regarding this item, which appropriates two thousand five hundred thirty three dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as

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allotted to district four, to City of Chattanooga on behalf of Murray Hills Park to assist with needed improvements.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

51:49

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-12

Commissioner Mackey spoke regarding this item, which appropriates two thousand dollars in general fund discretionary monies, as allotted to district four, to One Hundred Black Men of Chattanooga, Inc. to assist with their scholarship fund.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

52:29

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-13

Alecia Poe, Human Resources Director spoke regarding this item, which accepts the proposal of Dillard Elite Training by Design to provide onsite fitness class instruction support to the Hamilton County Wellness Center.

In response to Commissioner Boyd's question, Mrs. Poe clarified that the county pays \$8.33 per participant up to twelve participants. Additional participants are \$5.83

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per person. Based on last year's figures, it is anticipated that an average of 50 persons will participate.

54:53 **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – RESOLUTION NO. 1215-14**

Todd Leamon, Administrator of Hamilton County Public Work and County Engineer spoke regarding this item, which accepts the bid of Helton Construction Company, Inc. for construction of new additions to the existing Nolan Elementary School amounting to \$4,500,000.00.

The addition will included five classrooms, a CDC room, stem lab renovation, multipurpose room, daycare area, cafeteria expansion and two sets of restrooms, for a total of 16,419 square feet.

It was noted that Justin Witt, Director of Maintenance and Operations for Hamilton County Department of Education was present in the audience for questions.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Bankston asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

Members of the Commission, Attorney Taylor, and Mayor Coppinger wished everyone a safe and happy Thanksgiving.

57:59

Commissioner Graham thanked Pastor McClure for the invocation he gave at today's meeting. He also thanked the representatives from Girls, Inc., First Things First, and The Next Door, Inc. for their presentations.

Commissioner Graham spoke regarding a letter drafted by County Attorney Rheubin Taylor pertaining to a cigarette tax suggested to the Commission by the ArtsBuild Association. He stated the Attorney drafted the letter for Commissioners to review and sign if in agreement with the proposal being submitted to the Hamilton County Legislative Delegation. Commissioner Graham stated that he had not signed the

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letter but had requested a copy of the letter. He added that he was concerned the document was in violation of the Sunshine Law. The County Attorney confirmed to Commissioner Graham that the Chairman had shredded the letter.

Chairman explained that six signatures were needed on the letter to bring the cigarette tax before the Commission for a vote. He added that the document was removed and shredded when there were not enough signatures in support of the tax.

1:02:08 Commissioner Boyd explained that such letters have been a common practice among the Commission for many years. He noted that Commissioner Graham signed a similar letter dated November 29, 2012 seeking the amendment of a 2009 law to grant the manufacturing of alcohol in Hamilton County. Commissioner Boyd also announced the death of one of his mentors, B.H. Yerbey, Jr., whom he described as a great friend, Christian, businessman, and philanthropist. He sent his well wishes to Mr. Yerbey's family.

1:03:52 Commissioner Smedley introduced her mother, Brenda, and her two nieces, Emily and Audrey. She thanked them for attending today's meeting. Commissioner Smedley also spoke about transparency in politics. She explained that she publicly polled her district and did radio interviews about the potential cigarette tax in order to obtain feedback and remain transparent.

Time Code
Position

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1:05:27 Commissioner Beck announced the birth of his Great Grandson. Members of the Commission and Mayor Coppinger congratulated Commissioner Beck and gave him a round of applause.

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, December 2nd at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

12-16-15
Date

W.F.K
Clerk's Initials