

April 26, 2024

Hey all,

Here's this week's report.

Blessings and keep the faith.

Bill

Williamson County School Board

There weren't any meetings this week and the next meeting is the **policy committee on May 6th**. There were three education bills that came up this week in the General Assembly:

[HB1605/SB1722](#) which was voted down on the floor of the senate. The bill passed through the house with overwhelming support, but the senate had other plans. I don't know exactly what went on behind closed doors, but the vote did seem orchestrated. The [Tennessee Conservative](#) did an admirable job of explaining how it went.

[HB1202/SB1325](#) which allows teachers and staff to conceal carry in schools, passed on Thursday and was signed into law on Friday. The gallery had to be cleared during the vote because of the unruly crowd that howled at the thought of teachers carrying firearms to protect themselves and their students. The way the bill is written, it leaves the decision to implement to the superintendents. Jason Golden has already made it clear that he will not implement it in WCS. **If you are concerned** about this and would like to contact Golden and the school board about this, go [here](#). There is some good information about the efficacy of concealed carry that is good to know.

[Here is his message](#) What is notable, is that Golden has drawn our sheriff into this when, according to the law, it is solely the at discretion of the superintendent and no one else. It looks like he sought cover and got it.

[HB1183](#) and [SB0503](#) if you want to read them, are vastly different and the two houses couldn't come to agreement so both bills are now dead.

All six republican candidates for school board met at the Williamson County Republican Party Headquarters this afternoon. They all shared ideas, and each received a check from the WCRP. They all agreed that the current school board is under the domination of Superintendent Golden, and it should be the other way around. There needs to be more accountability with regards to budget, curriculum, and policy procedure. They all need our support, which I will be addressing later in my recap.

Williamson County Election Commission

The commission met on Tuesday [agenda](#). Here were key outcomes:

- Commissioner Doug Grindstaff was absent once again.
 - Out of seven WCEC meetings since he was appointed to the WCEC and attended his first meeting on December 19, 2023, he has only attended two of them; an attendance record of 29%.
 - Grindstaff announced at the first meeting that he would be out all of January on vacation.
 - Jonathan Duda told attendees at the April 23rd meeting that Grindstaff had “professional duties” that take him out of town. No indication if this will continue in the future.
- Jonathan Duda introduced Rebecca Cundiff, the new Election System Specialist for the WCEC.
 - Here is her LinkedIn profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rcundiff>
 - We’ve requested a copy of the job description.
- According to Chad Gray, the county has signed up for a texting service –textmygov – and the WCEC expects to use that as part of their communications efforts after April 30th.
 - Commissioner Rod Williamson will spearhead this with Chad.
- The WCEC certified the list of federal/state candidates appearing on the August 1 federal/state primary and county general election (list attached).
- The WCEC also discussed the early voting satellite locations for the same election.
 - Despite poor turnout in the March election at the College Grove center, they will keep that center and add the Columbia State campus as another EV location.
 - So that could be 8 EV locations.
- The state Election Office will hold an all-day election training for election commissions on May 6th in Nashville.

On Wednesday, April 24, 2024, the Republican Women of Williamson County (GOP) had Jonathan Duda and Chad Gray speak at their monthly meeting. Here’s the gist of what they said:

- Duda and Gray used the stock Secretary of State slide presentation profiling how they have proclaimed Tennessee the all-around best state (#1) in the nation for election integrity based on a Heritage Foundation report.
 - Actually, Hargett, Goins and Duda have hijacked the Heritage study that says ONLY that we have the BEST LAWS for election integrity and implied it says everything the state and Williamson County do regarding election integrity makes Tennessee number 1 in the nation.
 - Here’s an op-ed that puts this all into perspective and affirms Tennessee is NOT the all-around best that Hargett, Goins and Duda want to proclaim:
 - [Op-Ed — Heritage Foundation’s election integrity scorecard misses mark in Tennessee \(Tennessee Conservative News\)](#)
 - Yes, the state has done a number of good things supportive of election integrity, but our research continues to demonstrate that our elections remain at risk with a number of vulnerabilities and we’re trying to have officials make changes that will mitigate that risk.

- Duda reported that Chad started at the WCEC in 2000 as a deputy, becoming the Administrator in 2015. Jonathan joined the WCEC in 2019 and was appointed chairman in approximately 2022.
- Jonathan gave his standard talking point that the machines aren't connected to the internet, but he didn't address the myriad of ways our research shows that these machines CAN connect to the internet: [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), for instance. More can be found [here](#). Nor did he address the presence of iDRAC chips, Qualcomm chips and Telit chips, which can drive wirelessness in the machines and the supporting Dell registration computers.
- Both said vote centers were secure and that every vote in Williamson County since 2019 has been on a paper ballot.
 - Neither mentioned the fact that our vote on each ballot is encased in a bar code... that no one can read to be sure their vote is correctly captured in the ballot. So we really don't have a voter-verifiable paper audit trail.
 - Neither mentioned the weaknesses of the VPN supposedly protecting the internet that is piped into each and every vote center: [Despite what you've been told, VPNs can't really protect vote centers](#).
- Duda cited a January 2022 survey from the Center for Excellence in Polling that said that 85% of Tennessee voters are mostly confident of their vote being counted.

Frank Limpus, founder, Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity, has sent the following letter to Representative Gino Bulso and I concur:

Representative Bulso:

As you were supportive to citizens when we were advocating for a knowledgeable, election-savvy replacement to Bob Brown on the Williamson County Election Commission (WCEC) last fall, I wanted to make you aware of what is happening with the individual who ultimately replaced Mr. Brown.

Doug Grindstaff, whom Donna Barrett, the member of the Tennessee State Election Commission who ultimately made the selection of him for the appointment, has been pretty much AWOL since his first meeting with the Commission, December 19, 2023. He has only made 29% of the meetings, which is exceptionally poor public service on Mr. Grindstaff's part. And from what we learned Tuesday from WCEC Chairman Jonathan Duda, this situation is probably not going to improve.

Mr. Grindstaff missed Tuesday's meeting, April 23, 2024, and Mr. Duda announced that Mr. Grindstaff had "professional duties" out of state, which may take him away from WCEC meetings. According to the minutes of the past seven WCEC meetings, here's what we know:

Meeting date	Present or Absent	Notes
December 19, 2023	Present	Announced he would be absent all January – for vacation in Florida.
January 11, 2024	Absent	Vacation

January 25, 2024	Absent	Vacation
February 1, 2024	Absent	No reason for absence given to citizens.
February 8, 2024	Absent	No reason for absence given to citizens.
March 14, 2024	Present	
April 23, 2024	Absent	Duda says "professional duties"
	Attendance: 29%	

Back in December, I had an email exchange with Ms. Barrett as to why Mr. Grindstaff was selected over an alternative candidate – Mr. Patrick Benitez – who had strong experience in election integrity, IT and general technology areas, none of which was held by Mr. Grindstaff. She replied: “His professional background and community involvement are very admirable. His knowledge, problem solving skills, decorum and professionalism are a welcome addition to corporate boards he continues to serve on and will be an asset to the local election commission.”

Disappointingly, Ms. Barrett said nothing about any experience he might have in elections, election machines, voting processes, ballots, voter rolls, and, especially, technology that is responsible for much of the vulnerabilities that we’ve seen. And despite my question of her for a list of her criteria for the position, she gave me nothing. Makes me wonder if there even was a criteria.

I’m aware that you and two other members of the Williamson County delegation were supportive of Mr. Benitez. Thank you.

In my judgement, with past – and potentially future absences from Mr. Grindstaff -- his CEO experience and societal activities have done little for the citizens of Williamson County who are anxious about our election system and wish there to be all hands-on deck to attack them.

Possibly more importantly, though, his absence from so many meetings also creates a representation issue as the Republican majority is not fully represented when he is not there. Should there be a critical issue on which the commissioners need to vote, we could be left with a 2(R)-to-2(D) tie. This is detrimental to all citizens of Williamson County and, especially, to the Republican-majority General Assembly that citizens elected.

Given all this, I am disappointed in the choice of Mr. Grindstaff and in the rationale that led Ms. Barrett to make the decision appointing him to the position. I share this information with you in the hopes that something can be done about better protecting our party regarding these critical election integrity issues in these crucial times.

Thank you for considering it.

Williamson County Commission

The Education Committee meeting scheduled for the 22nd was cancelled. Next week, as you can see from this chart, both the budget and educational committees are meeting on Monday the 29th. As has been mentioned several times, the school budget keeps growing and growing and it is our tax dollars the fund most of it. I recommend to anyone who is interested that they attend. If you want to go to the Williamson County site to snoop around for yourself, [go here](#)

The screenshot shows a web-based calendar interface for the Williamson County Main County Calendar. The interface includes navigation tabs for 'List', 'Week', and 'Month'. A search bar is present with fields for 'Start Date', 'End Date', and 'Search', along with a 'Show Past Events' checkbox and a 'Select a Calendar' dropdown. The calendar view is set to April 2024. Two meetings are listed:

- Budget Committee Meeting**: April 29, 2024, 4:30 PM @ Williamson County Administrative Complex, 1320 West Main Street, Franklin, TN 37064, New Executive Conference Room. [More Details](#)
- Education Committee Meeting**: April 29, 2024, 5:30 PM @ 1320 West Main Street, Franklin, TN 37064, Williamson County Admin Complex, Executive Conference Room. [More Details](#)

At the bottom, there is a 'Jump To:' section with a link to 'Main County Calendar (2)'.

Franklin Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA)

There were several meetings this week besides the BOMA work session [agenda video](#) and board [agenda video](#) meeting. One item that I thought was interesting was the request for a permit to build a church on Lewis Parkway. Two women who live in the area spoke about noise and traffic issues that this would create and after they were finished, there was no significant debate by the board and the motion to approve passed unanimously. You can watch for yourself; they start at the 21:25 mark. I tried to put myself in their position and wonder how I would react. One the board agenda was automatic license readers. It was made clear that these cameras will never be used for traffic control, but only to identify stolen vehicles, illegal plates or outstanding warrants.

There are not meetings scheduled for next week go [here](#) to see what is coming in May.

School Board Elections

Things are starting to heat up for the school board elections. As I mentioned earlier, all the republican candidates met with leadership of the Williamson County Republican Party this afternoon.

I can't over emphasize the importance of this election. There are 12 members to the school board and this year all of the odd districts are up for election. Of the six odd districts there is only one incumbent who is running, and she is running as an independent AKA democrat.

I think our chances of getting all six elected are good, but I never want to take anything for granted. I want to win and win big so that we can send a message to the school administration that we have a new board that is willing to hold the superintendent accountable and expect him to act like an employee of the board and not its boss.

I have about 30 people who have signed up to help the various candidates and am looking for more. If you are willing to help, even if it is only for one day, please let me know by replying to this email and I will put you on the list.

The election is on August 1st. and early voting runs from July 12-27. We need folks who are willing to do the following:

Knock on doors for the candidates. Face to face, person to person is very powerful. It lets people know that the election is important and why. It also allows the homeowner to ask questions and get clarification on the issues. As we get schedules from the candidates, we will be sending out a **signup genius for each candidate.**

Put up yard signs. First, you can put a yard sign at your home (if you live in an odd district). Secondly, we may have a need for a few of us to put out signs for some of the candidates and finally, you can encourage friends and neighbors who live in an odd district to take a sign.

Hold signs at voting places. During early voting and on election day, we need people to hold signs at voting locations. It may be hard to believe, but many people who come to vote don't know much about any of the candidates. At the last election, I was holding a sign for a candidate and several people stopped to ask about her and some of them were very favorable after talking with us.

Attend and encourage others to attend any event put on by the candidate(s). Meet and greets, campaign kickoffs, debates and forums are great places for potential voters to size up the candidates. The more we get people out to see our candidates the better.

Talk to people at your church, service organization, Bible study, bridge club etc. We all need to be talking about the candidates and recruiting everyone we know to get informed and get involved. This is a group effort and we all need to pitch in to ensure that our candidates become school board members and not also rans.

Write them a check. Campaigns aren't free. Flyers, yard signs, text messages, videos all cost money.

Here are the candidates:

District 1

Republican Tony Bostic. [instagram Tony@musiccitymtg.com](https://www.instagram.com/Tony@musiccitymtg.com). Tony is working on a website and should be up and running very soon.

District 3
Republican Dr. Dennis Driggers [website](#)

District 5
Republican Dr. Margie Johnson. [website](#)

District 7
Republican Angela Beaton [website](#)

District 9
Republican Claire Reeves [website](#)

District 11
Republican Tonja Hibma [website](#)

Finally, these two things keep ringing in my head:

**If not me, who?
If not now, when?**

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1)