

June 7, 2024

Hey all,

Here's this week's report.

Blessings and keep the faith.

Bill

Williamson County School Board

The Policy Committee met on Monday June 3rd to discuss the new library policy and the attendance policy. Most of the time was spent on the library policy. [Agenda audio](#).

Note: For those of you who are new. Anytime you see a word in blue, it is a link. Once you get to an agenda link, scroll down to the section you want. In the policy meeting case, you can scroll down to the policy and the decision tree to read for yourself. The audio or video is always enlightening.

There was a lot of talk about it, but the reality is that there needs to be a policy in place by July 1st which means that they are literally out of time. A major part of the discussion revolved around the apparent conundrum of attempting to stay on the right side of the law vis-a-vis the **1st Amendment vs. Tennessee code**. Several times someone mentioned that they could get sued for taking a book out as well as leaving it in. A few key points were brought up:

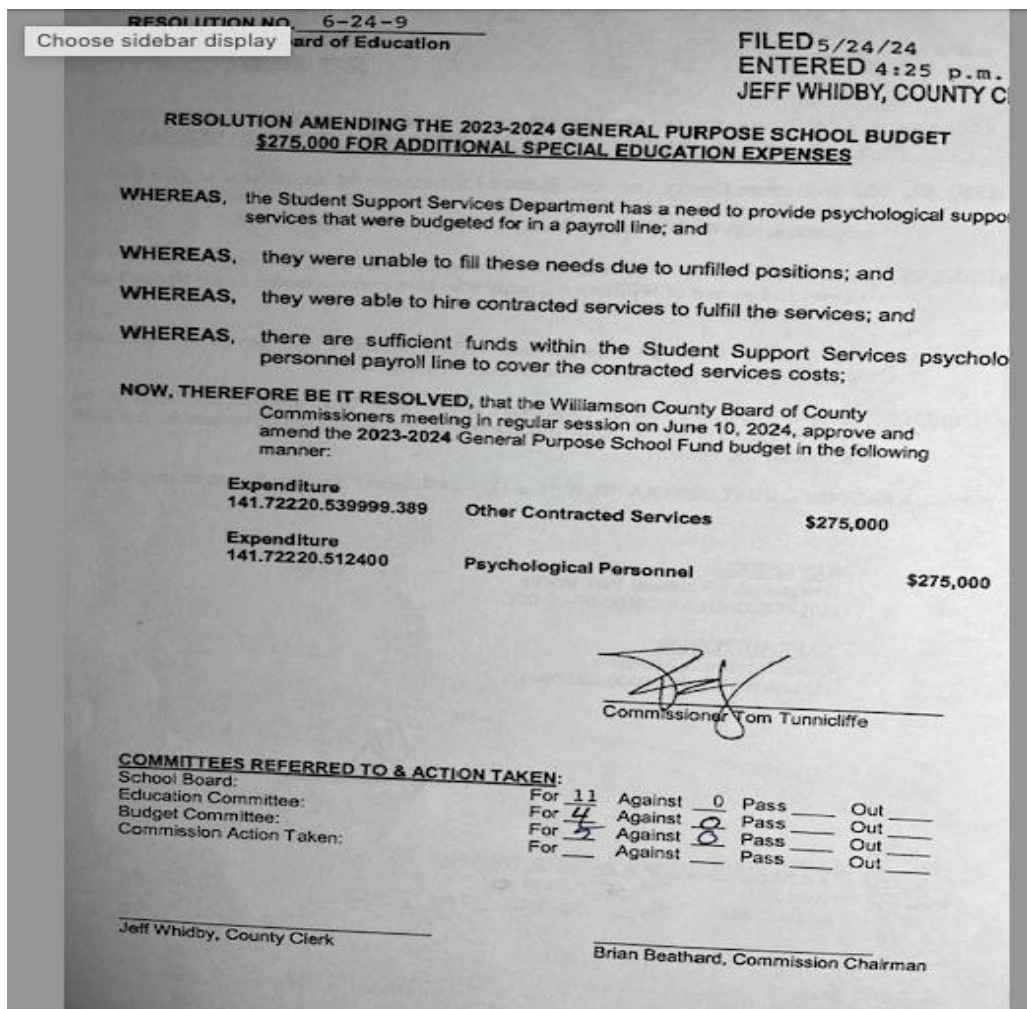
- Lines 1 and 2 are redundant and should be taken out.
- We should have someone at the central office who is responsible for overseeing the book review process.
- There are 680K books to review.
- Why don't the librarians split up the books; they shouldn't be reviewing the same books
- Nobody knows where the 15% came from.
- The law doesn't require the librarians to read the entire book.
- The librarians know which books are likely to be challenged and should start with them
- The new law is explicit, so why have the "decision tree"
- Instead of 15% or 10% of book reviews each year, why don't we say something like "a reasonable number of books"?
- We have a policy and we need to get it in place. We can alter it as time goes on.
- There will be court challenges and the General Assembly may amend the code both of which would generate changes in the policy.
- Question 8 on the decision tree is not appropriate because what children are exposed to outside of the classroom should not have any bearing on what is allowed inside the classroom.

The policy will be further discussed at the June 13th working session and voted on at the June 17th board meeting.

Next week is the work session scheduled for Thursday the 13th 6:00 PM in the Professional Development Center unless otherwise noted. The PD Center building is located at 1761 West Main Street, Franklin. [Agenda Video](#) (tune in at 6 pm on the 13th)

Williamson County Commission

There was a budget meeting on Monday June 3rd. This meeting was dedicated to transferring funds from one account to another. A perfect example is resolution no. 6-24-9 that moved \$275,000 out of the general-purpose school budget contracted services to psychological personnel. The \$275,000 was an excess balance because they couldn't hire psychologist so, instead, contracted the services out.



There were about 34 resolutions and they all passed except for one small one that was pulled.

On Tuesday 4th. The Budget committee met in the county building auditorium for a hearing on the school district budget. This hearing must be held each year by law. It lasted maybe an hour and the majority of the dozen or so speakers were asking for a recommendation to the full board to stick to the commission's offer of \$445m for school year 24-25. The school board is asking for \$553m.

On Monday the 10th, the full board will be meeting and, since **Mary Smith** has so graciously sent me her latest newsletter today, I will defer to her except for some additional information about the Williamson Inc. situation which I will cover below her newsletter. **Read her newsletter [here](#)**

I admit that the whole Williamson Inc. issue is new to me, having known about for about a month. I am certainly not a legal mind by any stretch of the imagination, but there is enough doubt about how that entity is being managed that I think it is worth sharing the following from a fellow Williamson Countian:

The Chamber of Commerce, Comprehensive Growth Policies, and YOU.

According to a comment attributed to a WC administrator that the state requires an Economic Development Office, please take a moment to read the 'Comprehensive Growth Policies (Public Chapter 1101), copied below, which is what is being referred to.

While the county did develop a growth plan, the 2018 Strategic Plan, which covered educational development and opportunities, 'intentional' housing, business recruitment, the now rejected social engineering ideology of DEI, community engagement and communication, the county's contract with the Chamber laid all the eggs in the Chamber's basket. It made the Chamber the de facto county Economic Development Office, and as such, subject to FOIA requests.

As noted in the last paragraph of the copied piece (bold type and underlined), has anyone seen any of these activities taken place? Are any of you aware of how many liaison committees were established, especially one representing homeowners?

At the last Commission meeting a member of the audit committee noted he had not received the documentation the Chamber is supposed to provide in a required quarterly report. In fact, some quarterly reports were not received at all. In fact, the Chamber's contract had expired, although there was a comment about a legal technicality regarding whether the mayor's authority to authorize the Chamber to continue was valid.

Have you seen more of a timing coordination for the development and provision of public services, or has there been a 'catch-up' mentality? The expansion of McEwen from Cool Springs Blvd. to Wilson Pike being one such example. High density subdivisions another.

What about education? As one Commissioner pointed out, why build another elementary school while there are still 1,000 open seats available in two existing schools that service the same area as the proposed new school?

Has there been a ‘stabilization’ of the county’s education funding base, or was the Commission just asked for more money from WCS, and this after a report from the Independent Audit Committee’s recommendation(s), notably to centralize purchasing for efficiency and cost savings as a ‘best practice’?

Has the growth minimized ‘urban sprawl’ as the ‘Act’ intends, or rather maximized it, prompting a ‘transportation seminar’ to discuss various transportation alternatives to vehicles, such as a rail system, to address the continued high growth resulting in the current and future traffic issues.

The Chamber’s interests do not align with the best interests of residents and taxpayers, nor with businesses that are not members, and even some that are.

Rapid growth is occurring without any effort from the Chamber. Conforming to Public Chapter 1101 should still be the priority, but it should be done with common sense growth in mind, and input from, and consideration for ALL the stakeholders who are impacted.

If you agree, contact your commissioners and ask them to vote ‘NO’ on the resolution to renew the contract with the Chamber when the vote comes up again on June 10th.

Comprehensive Growth Policies (Public Chapter 1101)

[Tennessee’s Growth Policy Act](#) (known as Public Chapter 1101) created a growth planning process for local governments at the same time it changed the state’s annexation laws to require consent outside cities’ urban growth boundaries. The purpose stated by the [General Assembly](#) for the Act is to

- ❑ eliminate annexation or incorporation out of fear,
- ❑ establish incentives to annex or incorporate where appropriate,
- ❑ more closely match the timing of development and the provision of public services,
- ❑ stabilize each county’s education funding base and establish an incentive for each county legislative body to be more interested in education matters
- ❑ **minimize urban sprawl.**⁵⁸

While the focus of the Act was to deal with Tennessee’s tumultuous battles over annexation and incorporation, it was also an attempt to further growth planning statewide. Although cities, counties, and regions already had the ability to develop growth plans under Title 13, recommendations resulting from those plans are advisory. With the passage of the [Growth Policy Act](#), growth plans with defined boundaries for annexation and incorporation were required in all counties without metropolitan governments. Local governments that failed to adopt growth plans would become ineligible for certain state grants.⁵⁹ The plans could have three distinct types of areas: urban growth boundaries (UGBs), planned growth areas (PGAs), and rural areas (RAs).⁶⁰

The first step in developing plans under the [Growth Policy Act](#) was to create coordinating committees. The coordinating committees were required to include representatives of each of the cities and the county mayor or executive plus representatives of the soil conservation district, utilities, school systems, chambers of commerce, and others representing environmental, construction, and homeowner interests. The committees developed the plans and submitted them to their county commissions and municipal governing bodies. The [Growth Policy Act](#) requires that certain planning studies and land use projections be completed before proposing a UGB, PGA, or RA. These requirements were an effort to link growth plans to existing general city and regional planning under Title 13.⁶¹ Although some counties' plans included these studies and projections, most plans are little more than maps depicting the UGBs, PGAs, and RAs.

⁵⁸ Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-58-102.

⁵⁹ Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-58-110.

⁶⁰ Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-58-106.

⁶¹ Tennessee Code Annotated, Titles 13, Chapters 3 and 4.

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Williamson County Election Committee

They met on Thursday for a very short and uneventful meeting. [Agenda](#).

It was an exceptionally short meeting. The commissioners:

- Reviewed voter registration applications
- Locked absentee/early voting/election day ballot boxes for the August 1 federal/state primary and county general election
- Established the opening closing of the polls for that election as 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- Appointed poll officials for that election

Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA)

There wasn't much this week and you can go [here](#) to see the two meetings including agendas and videos. Next week there are a number of meetings including the BOMA work session and meeting on Tuesday. [Here](#).

School board election

All six republican candidates could use some help.

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. [website](#)

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](#)

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)