

May 10, 2024

Hey all,

Here's this week's report.

Blessings and keep the faith.

Bill

Williamson County Commission

The Budget committee met on Monday and passed 27 resolutions. Here is a sampling of the resolutions:

5-24-2 \$5,496,232 TIFA funds from the state for the school's district's general fund. This is revenue from the state based, in part, on performance of the school district for the 22-23 school year. It is \$2.5M less than anticipated. Part of the formula for these funds is the tax base of the school district and ours is pretty high.

5-24-3 \$12,881,249 for information technology security needs for the school district. These include Paging, intercom and emergency systems; physical security items including video cameras, locks, access control panels and monitors for security systems; network security items including access switches, video servers and wireless access points. They will be paid for via **tax exempt** bonds issued by the county.

5-24-4 \$11,405,000 Major asphalt, roofs and HVAC needs. The Budget committee asked for a list of the locations of these needs. They will be paid for via **tax exempt bonds** issues by the county.

5-24-13 \$14,829 for the election commission

5-24-14 \$800,000 medical and dental services for inmates in our county jail. This goes on top of the \$2,000,000 already spent in the current budget.

There is a pressing issue that has come to light this week. It seems that the county has been giving money to Williamson Inc., which is basically our Chamber of Commerce, to the tune of **\$400,000 per year**. There is a contract that spells out the obligation of both parties that is not being followed by Williamson Inc.

- They are supposed to meet four times a year but only meeting three times.
- They are supposed to keep records of where the donated money is going but have denied providing that information when requested by commissioner Richards.
- Their contract for these donations ran out in June of 2023 and has not been renewed by the board and yet they have continued to receive the money.

- Mayor Anderson has approved the continual payments and is the only one who oversees the payments.

There Is another issue that will be brought up by Commissioner Richards on Monday and that is the lack of transparency. As it stands, none of the committee meetings are recorded, so if you want to know what goes on in the budget or education committees, you have to attend yourself. Commissioner Richards is going to propose that all committee meetings be taped so that we, the people, can listen in on what our county commissioners are discussing and voting on.

Monday, May 13th at 1320 Main St. The full county board is meeting to vote on these and other resolutions. Doors open at 6:30 pm and the meeting starts at 7:00pm. We are asking Residents of Williamson County to come to this meeting to ask the commission what is going on.

Mary Smith (County Commissioner) has graciously shared her take on the current situation in the county.

WARNING: Growing Debt = Higher Taxes

While there was not a County Commission meeting this month, there was plenty of activity going on with the Commission and Committee meetings:

- **SCHOOL BUDGET** - The budget is still being reviewed and amended but here is where we currently stand:
 - The current budget request is \$557 million. This is a \$40 million increase over last year. This includes:
 - 6% Raises to the full staff including administration.
 - \$6.5 million for ChromeBooks
 - \$5.5 million for Textbooks
 - Additional funding for Interventionists
 - This equates to an \$18 million deficit between projected revenue plus fund balance minus projected expenses.
 - In comparison, Rutherford County, with almost 51,000 students, is requesting an overall budget of \$543 million, a difference of \$14 million more for Williamson County which currently has 41,500 students, about 10,000 less students than Rutherford.
 - FYI. this budget request does NOT include the additional \$37 million being requested by WCS for capital improvements.
 - In an effort to reduce the current gap, several commissioners are requesting a review by the state on the amount of state funds received through the current TISA formula.
- **TRIPLE J PROJECT UPDATE**
 - This project consists of a County Jail, Sheriff's Office, Juvenile Justice Court &

Detention Center and Alternative Learning Center (ALC). The current price tag is **\$325 million**. It has been stated on several occasions that to fund this project, there will be a need to raise property taxes.

- As an alternative to building new, Pete Stresser, Property Committee Chair, set up two onsite meetings at vacant commercial office space to tour as an alternative to building new. Currently commercial real estate is less than half of what building new would cost.
- Also, with jail construction being a very specialized project, several commissioners along with Sheriff Jeff Hughes toured other county jails to get a better understanding of what all goes into the building process. This included trips to:
 - Lewis County Jail - \$57 million dollar project
 - Davidson County Jail - \$200 million dollar project
 - Putnam County Jail - \$50 million dollar project
- Another concern raised by several commissioners is the proposed location for this project. Back in 2022, Vulcan Construction was granted a 40-year lease (by the County Commission) to continue mining under the area of the proposed building site. Anyone who has visited the current jail would question the impact of the blasting to the stability of the structure by seeing all the cracks in the walls and shattered windows.
- The total amount of 2025 capital projects being requested = **~\$53 million**. \$28 million will go out for bond issue. Included in this amount:
 - Williamson County Sheriff's Office - \$8.3 million (Vehicles, Body Cameras)
 - Public Safety - \$11 million (Ambulances, Fire Apparatus)
 - Parks & Rec - \$22 million (Includes Bethesda Parks & Rec Center)
 - Library - \$3.5 million
- The projected 5-year total for capital projects for WCS & County = **\$1.525 Billion**
 - WCS = \$961 million
 - All Other Departments = \$564 million (\$307 million is Triple J)

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST:

- **WILLIAMSON INC** - Williamson Inc receives \$400,000 a year for Economic Development from the county. Each year, the county renews a contract with this organization to provide strategies for growing our local economy. It was discovered by Commissioner Richards that in FY24 the contract was not in compliance and had actually expired. Despite this fact, the county still contributed taxpayer dollars to this organization. At this month's meeting there will be a vote on whether or not to allow the mayor to draw up a new contract with Williamson Inc.
- **TRANSPARENCY** – Commissioner Richards has introduced a resolution to begin recording and publishing committee meetings. This resolution is important to allow constituents to understand the conversations that occur amongst the public, the commissioners and county administrators with regards to all county business.
- **LEGISLATIVE** – I have requested the formation of a Legislative Committee which will focus on creating, reviewing, and promoting legislation that will most likely benefit the citizens of our county in cooperation with our state delegation.

- **LAND USE** – The new County Growth Plan that includes proposed Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) is still being reviewed but will come back to the County Commission for a vote in June. There have been several groups speaking out about wanting to be removed from the current UGBs for Franklin and Thompsons Station. Please reach out to your local commissioner for more information on these municipal and rural development efforts.
- **SEPTIC/BUILDING PERMITS** - [SB 2100](#) was passed in this past General Session. This bill should allow the building and septic permit process to move more expeditiously for property owners by putting some limits on local authorities and giving more authority to state licensed third party examiners.
- **SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES** - If you or someone you know might be interested in joining one of our County Committees or Boards, please fill out the [nominee form](#) and email to me.
- **COMMUNICATION** - It is extremely important to share your thoughts, concerns, and questions with your district commissioner. Without feedback from the community, it is more difficult to know what you may or may not support. There are quite a few fiduciary decisions coming up in the next month that may lead to a property tax increase. Now is the time to make your voice be heard. Find your local commissioner email by clicking this [link](#).

RESOLUTIONS FOR MAY 2024

1) ZONING

- PUBLIC HEARING — Regarding Resolution No. 5-24-36, Resolution to Amend Article 18 of the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Signage on Athletic Fields Associated with Educational Facilities
- Resolution No. 5-24-36, Resolution to Amend Article 18 of the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Signage on Athletic Fields Associated with Educational Facilities - Commissioner Clifford
- PUBLIC HEARING - Regarding Resolution No. 5-24-37, Resolution to Amend Article 11 of the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Setbacks for Athletic Facilities
- Resolution No. 5-24-37, Resolution to Amend Article 11 of the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Setbacks for Athletic Facilities — Commissioner Clifford

2) APPROPRIATIONS

- Resolution No. 5-24-2, Resolution Requesting the Williamson County Board of County Commissioners’
- Approval of \$5,496,232 for TISA Outcomes Funding for the 2023-24 School Year — Commissioner Tunncliffe
- **Resolution No. 5-24-3, Resolution Requesting an Intent to Fund in the Amount of \$12,881,249 for the Williamson County Board of Education 2023-24 Information Technology Security Needs — Commissioner Tunncliffe**
- **Resolution No. 5-24-4, Resolution Requesting an Intent to Fund in the Amount of \$11,405,000 for the Williamson County Board of Education 2023-24 Major Asphalt, Roofs and HVAC Needs — Commissioner Tunncliffe**
- Resolution No. 5-24-5, Resolution Authorizing the Williamson County Mayor to Enter into a Grant Contract with the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Office of Safety for Funding the Development of the SS4A Williamson County Roadway and Multimodal Action Plan and Appropriating the 2023-24 County General Budget by \$500,000 — Revenues to Come from Existing Budgeted Funds and Federal Grant Funds — Commissioner Clifford
- Resolution No. 5-24-6, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Public Safety-Emergency Communications Budget by \$1,000,000 — Revenues to Come from Contributions Received from the Emergency Communications District - Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-7, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Public Safety Budget for Qualified Volunteer Firefighting Personnel — Revenues to Come from State of Tennessee and Unappropriated County General Fund Balance — Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-8 Resolution Accepting a Donation from Friends of Williamson County Animal Center and Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Animal Center Budget by \$1,000 — Revenues to Come from Donations — Commissioner Hester
- Resolution No. 5-24-9, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Animal Control Budget by \$800 — Revenues to Come from Donations — Commissioner Hester
- Resolution No. 5-24-11, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Animal Control Budget by \$900 — Revenues to Come from Donations - Commissioner Hester
- Resolution No. 5-24-12, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 County Commissioner — Tax Relief Budget by \$60,000 — Revenues to Come From unappropriated County General Funds — Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-13, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Election

Commissioner Budget by \$14,829.77 — Revenues to Come from County General Fund Balance - Commissioner Morton

- Resolution No. 5-24-14, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Sheriff's Office Detention Budget by \$800,000 for Medical Services — Revenues to Come from Unappropriated County General Funds — Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-15, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Sheriff's Office Budget by \$1,500 — Revenues to Come from Sexual Offender Registry Reserve — Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-16, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 County Clerk's Budget by \$20,000 for Equipment and Personnel Costs — Revenues to Come from Filing Fees - Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-17, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Library Budget by \$23,681.70 — Revenues to Come from Fines, Donations and Contributions - Commissioner Webb
- Resolution No 5-24-18, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Parks and Recreation Budget by \$90,743.83 — Revenues to Come from Donations — Commissioner Webb
- Resolution No. 5-24-19, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Parks and Recreation Budget by \$428,000 — Revenues to Come from Parks and Recreation Fees — Commissioner Webb
- Resolution No. 5-24-20, Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Williamson County Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Interlocal Agreement with the Franklin Housing Authority and Appropriating Funds Not to Exceed \$1,000,000 — Revenue to Come from American Rescue Plan Act Funds — Commissioner Webb
- Resolution No. 5-24-21, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Clerk and Master (Chancery Court) Budget by \$52,500 — Revenues to Come from Reserve Account — Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-22, Resolution Appropriating and Amending the 2023-24 Circuit Court Clerk's Budget by \$25,000 — Revenues to Come from Reserve Account — Commissioner Morton

3) OTHER

- **Resolution No. 5-24-1, Resolution Amending the Rules, Regulations and Procedures of the Williamson County Board of Commissioners Concerning the Recording and Archiving of Williamson County Commission Meetings — Commissioner Richards**
- Resolution No. 5-24-10, Resolution Accepting the Donation of Vet Supplies Valuing

Approximately \$1,300 from the Friends of Williamson County Animal Center — Commissioner Hester

- Resolution No. 5-24-23, Resolution Amending the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program for Schools, Roads, Fire Protection and Recreation — Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-24, Resolution to Establish a One-Year Term for the Office of Judicial Commissioners for Appointments and Reappointments Made Subsequent to the Adoption of this Resolution — Commissioner Herbert
- Resolution No. 5-24-25, Resolution of the Governing Body of Williamson County, Tennessee Supporting an application to Participate in the Recreational Trails Program Grant and the Local Parks and Recreation Fund Grant for the Construction of Improvements for Three Outdoor Parks - Commissioner Webb
- Resolution No. 5-24-26, Resolution Authorizing the County Mayor to Execute a Contract Between the State of Tennessee Department of Transportation and Williamson County for a Trash Collecting Grant for Fiscal Year 2024-25 — Commissioner Morton
- **Resolution No. 5-24-27, Resolution Amending the Rules, Regulations and Procedures of the Williamson County Board of Commissioners to Establish a Legislative Standing Committee to Review, Study, Recommend and Monitor State Legislation Related to Local Governments - Commissioner Mary Smith**
- Resolution No. 5-24-28, Resolution Authorizing the Williamson County Juvenile Court Judge and Williamson County Mayor to Amend Grant Contract Documents with the State of Tennessee Department of Children’s Services — Commissioner Morton
- Resolution No. 5-24-29, Resolution to Overrule the Denial of the City of Franklin Planning Department’s Action Regarding the City’s Sign Ordinance - Commissioners Webb, Williams, Landrum and Herbert
- **Resolution No. 5-24-30, Resolution Authorizing the Williamson County Mayor to Execute a License Agreement with the Williamson County Hospital District d/b/a Williamson Health for Storage of Disaster Recovery Equipment — Commissioner Stresser**
- Resolution No. 5-24-31, Resolution Setting the Williamson County Hotel-Motel Tax Rate for the 2024-25 Fiscal Year — Commissioner Morton
- **Resolution No. 5-24-35, Resolution Authorizing the Williamson County Mayor to Execute a Lease Agreement with American National Red Cross for Office Space in the County Community Services Building — Commissioner Stresser**
- **Resolution No. 5-24-38, Resolution Authorizing the Williamson County Mayor to Enter into a Service Agreement with Williamson Inc., d/b/a Williamson County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development for Continued Operation of the Williamson County Office of Economic Development — Commissioner Morton**

- LATE FILED Resolution No. 5-24-39, Resolution Objecting to the Implementation and Calculation of Williamson County's Portion of State Education Funding Through the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) Act — Commissioners Torres, Webb, Morton

IMPORTANT DATES

- For all public meeting notices, please see the [County Calendar](#).
- May 13, 2024 @ 7:00pm - Next County Commission Meeting
 - 1320 West Main, Franklin, TN
 - If you are unable to attend in person, you can always view virtually by going to the [WC-TV website](#).

REMINDER: The public is now invited to give input at any County Committee Meeting. Click [here](#) to see the full list of Committees and when they meet. You can find the most up to date public notices including County Commission, Planning Committee and Election Committee meetings [here](#).

Williamson County School Board

The Policy committee met on Monday to discuss several policy changes [agenda audio](#) Just click on these and you will be taken to the agenda and/or audio.

Most of the time was spent on the proposed changes to the library policy. Last week, I gave you the lowdown and a copy of the new law [SB1060](#) about library books that just passed in the Tennessee General Assembly. Go [here](#) and scroll down to File: 4403 Library Materials New Statutory Amendments to see the proposed policy they discussed Monday night.

There are a number of questions that I and others are asking about this proposed policy:

- The librarians are to evaluate 15% of their collections every year and yet there is no mechanism for reporting the books they have evaluated or even if they have evaluated any books at all. There is no requirement to make these evaluations public.
- The prescription against nudity in any form may create a problem for biology books and art books.
- The decision tree is very subjective.
- If the board doesn't respond to a challenge in 60 days, the challenger must submit a challenge to the state which gets the board off the hook and the book(s) stay in circulation until the state decides, which could take an unspecified amount of time.
- If the policy and decision tree are useful then, why doesn't the board take a couple of books from the Gino Bulso lawsuit (see attached file) and run them thru the process. That way, we would know if the new policy was any good.

The discussion on this policy will continue **next Thursday at the monthly work session** for the board which is held at **6:00 PM in the Professional Development Center located at 1761 West Main Street, Franklin, TN 37064.**

The public is welcome at these meetings, however, there are no public comments allowed at work sessions.

Monday the 20th is the monthly board meeting, if you want to comment, here is what you must do:

School Board Meeting, sign up to speak during public comment will be done by emailing publiccomment@wcs.edu. Thirty (30) minutes is placed on the agenda for the Chair to recognize individuals to make comments.

If you would like to speak at the May 20, 2024, meeting, sign up will begin at 12 pm on Thursday, May 16, 2024, through Monday, May 20, 2024 at 12 pm.

After the district receives your email request to speak and the items listed below, you will receive a confirmation email. That email must be brought with you to the meeting.

To be considered to speak we will need the following items:

Your First and Last Name
Complete Address
Your Topic of Comment
Any Organization You Represent

Lawsuits against Williamson County Schools

We have good news; the **Parents' Choice Tennessee** lawsuit is finally moving ahead. The Tennessee Court of Appeals has overturned the decision to dismiss. [Here](#) is the original suit and [here](#) is the Appeals Court Decision. They are both long reads of legalese for anyone who has the time and inclination.

In summary, the higher court concluded: **...we conclude that trial court erred in finding the Plaintiffs lacked standing. We affirm the trial court's dismissal of the prohibited concepts claim for failure to exhaust administrative remedies. We reverse, however, the dismissal of the Plaintiffs' Common Core claim and remand for further proceedings.**

Where this goes from here, I do not know, but the good news is that it is not dead, and it will go to trial.

On another front, the lawsuit filed by Gino Bulso against the Williamson County Schools that you can read in the attached file, should be on the court's docket very soon. When I hear for sure, I will let you know.

Williamson Election Commission

The next meeting is Tuesday the 14th [agenda](#) There's not much going on this time, but it is always instructive to attend these meetings.

Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA)

There were only two meetings this week and next week is loaded. You can go [here](#) and click on any meeting to see the ones that have occurred including agendas and videos and see the agendas for the ones coming up.

5G info

The 5G issue has not gone away and here is an update on what is currently going on. I think this is a legitimate concern that is not getting enough attention.

This is an important update about the cell tower issue in Williamson County. Our ACTION ALERT is that the Williamson County Mayor, Planning Commission, County Commissioners, and also our city officials need to hear from citizens that they do not want towers near their neighborhoods.

Right now, they are discussing distancing from residential neighborhoods.

Part of the process is engaging residents, so decisions are not made without our input.

We are much stronger together and power to the people. Your voice is important!

This is about standing up for our health freedoms and human rights.

The goal is for the county and every city to write a good code for distancing cell towers from residential areas that protects residents' health and helps maintain the quality and character of our neighborhoods. For letter writing it is important to be respectful and clear with your message.

Some talking points are that we do not want cell towers, 5G small cells, 5G antenna, streetlights with 5G, or cameras in or near our neighborhoods. We don't want to be under surveillance.

Here is a link to the petition update with contact information of our leaders, talking points, and a general overview of the situation.

https://www.change.org/p/stop-neighborhood-5g-tower-roll-out-in-williamson-county-tennessee/u/32569522?cs_tk=Ajl-EoMFOFsIA2lyPmYAAXicyyvNyQEABF8BvJpR_Yr4abOGT0Gz3tFJnKQ%3D&utm_campaign=59b3bd2cf1f447309bdd6faa20198bcd&utm_content=initial_v0_7_1&utm_medium=email&utm_source=petition_update&utm_term=cs

**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)