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Board of Education sends controversial policy changes back to committee

By Pete Gawda

At their meeting Wednesday evening, September 13 the Knox County Board of Education delayed action on the two proposed policies that generated a lot of discussion in the work session the previous Monday evening. J-210 Harassment of Students and G-220 Harassment of Employees. Jennifer Owen made

a motion, which passed unanimously, that these policies be referred back to the policy review committee for further consideration. A variety of other proposed policy changes were passed on the first and second reading with no discussion.

Several routine contracts were passed with no discussion. However, there

was some discussion about spending almost \$400,000 for a culinary arts program at Karns High School since Austin-East High School has not yet received promised funds for a similar program. When he learned that there is currently no funding source and no money budgeted for the requested program at Karns, Mike McMillan requested, and

the board approved, a delay of action for 30 days to see if a funding source could be found.

The board spent some time discussing a memorandum of understanding between the Knox County Education Association and Knox County Schools. The discussion centered around wording that the school system would work

for a minimum of 4 percent pay raise for teachers. The board unanimously passed the memorandum of understanding after the explanation that the school system was not bound to the four percent. It was understood that the four percent would be based on the availability of funds and it might not be possible to grant that large a pay increase especially

with two new schools under construction.

There was also some discussion about a motion to freeze the current teacher retirement program and not make it available to new hires. It was decided to defer action for 30 days to allow further study of the issue by staff.

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Patriotic week at Karns High

Karns remembers anniversary of terrorist attacks

By Ken Lay

Patriotic music played as the students, faculty, administration and staff at Karns High School paused to remember the biggest terrorist attack on American soil and pay tribute to those who lost their lives on Sept. 11, 2001.

On this cloudy morning on the 16th anniversary of a terrorist attack that brought the United States to a temporary standstill, the Patriot Day ceremony began with the Karns High School marching band playing the National Anthem.

The school's choral group then sang a rendition of Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA" as the Air Force JROTC raised the flag to half-staff. The band also played a patriotic piece and Karns JROTC Senior Aerospace Instructor Lt. Col. John O'Donnell read a narrative recounting the day in 2001 when four separate planes were hijacked by terrorists and crashed into the World Trade Center in New York, at the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania in suicide attacks.

"These attacks were carried out by those who fear and despise the blessing of the freedoms that we know and enjoy," O'Donnell said during the program, which took place in front of the school and was attended by the student body as well as many



PHOTO BY MICHAEL DUBRULE

Members of the Karns High School Air Force JROTC raise the American flag in a ceremony marking the 16th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks last week.

of the faculty, staff and administration of the school.

"Today, we celebrate the cohesive power of a free and

prosperous nation."

The ceremony has become

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Major zoning changes proposed for Knox County

By Mike Steely
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Knox County is being asked to make some major changes to its zoning regulations and the commissioners are beginning their learning curve about things like rural retreats, supportive housing and self-service storage facilities. The Metropolitan Planning Commission is proposing the changes and the Knox County Commission has scheduled a public hearing before considering the changes in a second and final reading next Monday.

Recently several commissioners had a special meeting with MPC to get more information about the changes. Commissioners Charlie Busler, John Schoonmaker, Evelyn Gill and Michelle Carringer met with MPC Director Gerald Green and his staff.

The growing number of events like festivals, gatherings, weddings and such are being eyed as needing regulations.

The initial discussion was about rural retreats and events planned and held by property owners within agriculturally zoned areas. Green told them that occasional or regular public events held in

several zones, including low density residential, general residential, estates, transition and planned residential districts, are currently illegal.

Green told the meeting the proposed ordinance, a change to the Knox County Code, is to "enable legal operation" on those activities that are not currently addressed in county zoning ordinances. He said the idea has been to study ordinances in other counties, preserve family farms, protect neighborhoods, insure bathroom facilities, require adequate parking, etc.

Busler, who represents north Knox County which contains several rural areas outside of Halls and Powell, questioned the ordinance's requirements of 10, 20 and 50 acres for events. He also asked about the setback requirements from other properties.

Green replied that the regulations are for commercial events only and would not apply to things like weddings being held on farms. He said that each commercial gathering would require a use-on-review hearing prior to approval.

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New standards for C-1 zones fail at council

By Mike Steely
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The proposal to limit the size of businesses in C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) zones failed at city council Tuesday in a 6-3 vote amid accusations that the attempt to restrict the size was a backdoor way to stop the proliferation of dollar-type stores in those zones.

Actually there are few C-1 zones in Knoxville. The current idea is to have a small

zone in a residential neighborhood for the convenient shopping of the surrounding population.

Fountain City Town Hall member Carlene Malone told the city council that the proposal is an "excellent ordinance" and urged them to "make sure you have a limitation on the size" of the businesses locating there.

Attorney Arthur Seymour Jr. said the proposal was an attempt to "pick apart

one little zone" and said it is "designed to go after the Dollar Stores." Seymoursaid there are 26 Dollar General Stores in Knox County and most of those type stores are larger than the 5,000 square limit in the proposal.

MPC Director Gerald Green told the meeting that the planning commission did not designate any store name and the idea is to create an ordinance for

businesses to serve a small neighborhood.

Councilman George Wallace said the proposed ordinance "appears to be very reactionary" and said it may have resulted from the approval of a Dollar General on Boyd's Creek Road.

He suggested that the ReCode effort in Knoxville can address the issue.

Councilman Marshall Stair said the proposal is trying to "mix them into

neighborhoods and it gets at that."

"It is prudent to wait and see," said Councilman Nick Pavlis, adding, "We've got pockets out there that drive a distance to shop and Dollar General fills that gap."

Voting against the proposed ordinance were Pavlis, Wallace, Finbarr Saunders, Mark Campen, and Brenda Palmer. Supporting the ordinance were Stair, Duane Grieve and Nick

Della Volpe.

Other zoning changes on First Reading included allowing mixed residential and business within C-3 and C-6 zones. The proposed ordinance is somewhat based on the Bearden Village Plan and the idea was first introduced by Grieve several years ago. He described the proposal as "A big step for this council."

The council also voted

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