

Tom Spangler for Sheriff Campaign Opens Headquarters

By Focus Staff

With the holidays over and a new year underway, the 2018 political season has begun. Tom Spangler, Republican candidate for Knox County Sheriff, opened his campaign headquarters last week on 1601 Eastern Avenue.

In a two-day event, occurring over Thursday and Saturday, Spangler treated guests to appetizers, coffee, tea and desserts and a big welcome. The Spangler headquarters was packed with visitors on Thursday when The Focus visited.

Tom Spangler worked his way up through the ranks of the Knox County sheriff's department, serving at various times as a patrolman, SWAT team member, narcotics detective and chief deputy to the sheriff. Spangler eventually became the interim sheriff of Knox County. Spangler dedicated his life to law enforcement after a stint in the Air Force.

The number of retired and current sheriff's deputies and other law enforcement professionals joining Spangler for the opening of his headquarters was amazing. It was impossible to miss that Spangler has deep and strong support from his fellow law enforcement officers, but there was a big crowd of ordinary citizens in attendance as well. That a large crowd turned out was not surprising at all as Spangler is known for being forthright, honest, and less a politician than a law enforcement professional. One thing is for certain, Tom Spangler is off to a great start and isn't the usual courthouse type of candidate.

Matt Faglana, Campaign Aid and former Knox County officer and State Trooper, had this to say about Spangler:

"Tom Spangler is the only candidate with the full experience and background in law enforcement. He has served in leadership roles. He has led the training academy, worked in the jail and on patrol and has truly walked in the shoes of the officers he wants to lead."

"At the end of the day you want to elect someone who has that kind of experience and understanding of what it takes to run the department that keeps our community safe. Tom Spangler is one of most ethical and moral men I know and he has the passion and qualities to lead the sheriff's department. The 1000+ employees can trust the leadership of someone who has the experience to lead the department."

"Tom Spangler is a candidate we the taxpayers can trust to make the most of the county's resources. If given the opportunity by the voters he will make a great sheriff for the citizens of Knox County."



Above, Linda and Tom Spangler at the grand opening of the Spangler for Sheriff Headquarters. Left, Spangler mingles with the crowd of citizens and active and retired law enforcement officers.

MPC talks sidewalks again 2018's political year update

By Pete Gawda

At their meeting on Thursday, January 11, the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) once again came up against the issue of sidewalks when a developer protested what he called "a sidewalk to nowhere."

Primos Land Company presented for concept/use on review approval a proposed 37-lot subdivision on the north side of Crispin Road and the west side of Recreation Lane. One of the conditions for approval was that a sidewalk be constructed outside the subdivision along Crispin Road. The developer requested that condition be removed. He noted that it would not connect to an existing sidewalk and that he had plans for sidewalks within the subdivision and a sidewalk going to a nearby ball field.

"I really have a problem requiring a sidewalk that does not have a connecting sidewalk or where there should be a county sidewalk," was the opinion of Chair Rebecca Longmire. "That just doesn't make sense to me."

In response to a question staff stated that there are no plans for a county sidewalk in that area.

The MPC granted approval without the sidewalk requirement.

Jim Sullivan's request for concept/use on review approval passed with no opposition and no discussion. His proposed 115 lot Hickory Creek Farms

Chair Rebecca Longmire. "That just doesn't make sense to me."

By Mike Steely
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The primary election deadline for filing is a month away but already there are several races drawing opponents, most of them Republican. So far of the 24 announced candidates for the various county offices only four are Democrats. The at-large seat 10, where county mayor candidate Bob Thomas now serves, has two Republicans and two Democrats who have petitions for election.

February 15 is the filing deadline for the county races. Given the August 2 primary date for state and federal filings, 2018 looks like a long and political year for Knox County, the state and the national offices.

Thus far there are few Democrats stepping forward to get petitions for election. County Democrat Chair Emily Gregg told The Focus that there are potential candidates but they have not declared yet.

United States House of Representatives

Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett picked up his petition for U. S. Congress to replace retiring 2nd District Congressman Jimmy Duncan. Republicans announcing to become the next congressman are Jimmy Matlock, Vito Sagliano, Mark Whitmore and Brad

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School board hears from auditors, decides on lobbyist

By Anne Primm

Superintendent Thomas gave his report to the Knox County Board of Education in their regular meeting Wednesday. He stated that he had been directed by the board at the December meeting to appoint a committee to help him organize a new Leadership Academy with the University of Tennessee. Thomas reported that the committee had been chosen and that the first meeting was scheduled for January 12, 2018.

Thomas also reported that the first of many strategic planning meetings had been held at West Valley Middle School on Tuesday night with approximately forty people in attendance. South-Doyle High School, Thomas relayed, has been chosen as a Lighthouse School of Distinction. Also, Julie Thompson was named Supervisor of the Year by the Tennessee Principals Association. Lastly, Thomas congratulated Melissa Glover as being named Assistant Principal of Hardin Valley Middle School and Scott Reed as being named Assistant Principal of Gibbs Middle School.

Fourth district member Lynn Fugate inquired when Knox County Schools and the University of Tennessee will be ready to solicit candidates for the next Leadership Academy and Thomas replied, "In February."

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Knox County School Board Chairman Pat Bouda introduced her former student and current Miss Tennessee, Katy Davis. Miss Davis talked briefly about drug addiction and overcoming issues related to addiction in family members and loved ones. She has devoted her reign to speaking to over 50,000 school age children all over Tennessee about alcohol and opioid addiction. Pictured are board member Terry Hill, Davis, Bouda and Superintendent Thomas.



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