

School Administration Moving to TVA Towers?

By Mike Steely
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For some time TVA has been talking about doing something with its towers in Knoxville, either selling one or both or leasing them. The Knoxville Focus learned recently that TVA may have a customer, Knox County Schools.

It's been a not-so-public secret for a few weeks now and The Knoxville Focus has spoken with some school board members

who know little about the possible deal. Inquiries have been made to the Knox County Schools Superintendent and the Knox County Mayor's office.

A contract proposal is in the hands of TVA with no timeline for it to go back to the county mayor and the law department for review. The "verbal agreement" or negotiation also includes purchasing a parking lot near the TVA Towers near Summit Hill Drive. Last August TVA Vice President

Mike Skaggs said TVA no longer needs so much office space. He said TVA is "still negotiating on the deal" on an agreement for use of one of the towers but declined to identify who might take possession of space there.

Since TVA is a federal agency and cannot rent or lease property the agreement hinges on a "pass through" or easement which could make part of the West or East Tower available for use by the county with the county

picking up renovation costs, utilities, etc.

"Negotiations right now are verbal," one source told The Focus.

An unannounced tour of the TVA West Tower recently by an unnamed public official resulted in them being told, "It's a done deal." The official was also told that the county has already purchased a parking lot near the towers.

Unofficial plans may include

moving the school administration offices from the Andrew Johnson Building to the first two floors of the towers. The county or school system would obtain some of the building as a "pass through" agreement that would acquire five floors.

County offices in the old Sears Building on Central may also be moved to the Tower and that building sold.

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From Concord to Wild Blue Yonder

Abby Collins and her parents, Dr. Jason and Mrs. Jenna Collins, are pictured at the Concord Christian School senior's signing with the Air Force Academy volleyball program on March 6. Collins is CC's first Division 1 signee and also first-ever military Academy appointee. Please see story in Sports & Recreation, Section C.



Changes on allowance, outside auditor terms on county commission agenda next week

By Mike Steely
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Changing the charter to allow an outside auditor to serve more than eight years and upping the amount of taxpayer-funded per diem of county employees tops the list of agenda items at the Knox County Commissioner's Work Session next Monday.

The 61 things on the agenda, which includes five rezoning requests, has two second and final readings. Pugh CPA is in the sixth year of its second four-year contract with the county to review finances as an independent outside auditor. Apparently the current commission likes Pugh so well that it is moving to have the charter changed in order to keep them.

The proposal would apparently be reviewed each year but places no term limits on Pugh or any other outside auditor. The charter change saw two quick public hearings and may appear on the ballot in August. Commissioners

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South Knox Alliance holds Candidate Forum

By Mike Steely
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Candidates for Knox County Mayor and Sheriff had the opportunity to address citizens last week in a Meet and Greet at Dogwood Elementary Community School, hosted by South Knoxville Alliance of Business and Professionals. Chairman Bill Zeczyrski welcomed the good-sized audience and introduced the candidates in alphabetical order according to their first names.

Mayor candidates Bob Thomas, Brad Anders, Glenn Jacobs and Linda Haney were scheduled to appear but Bob Harr filled in for Jacobs who was not available for the event. Sheriff candidates Lee Tramel and Tom Spangler appeared and spoke. Not appearing were county mayor candidates Rebecca Dellos and Rhonda Galman.

Following the brief talks each candidate went to their table decorated with campaign signs, posters, hand outs and other literature and continued to visit with South Knoxville residents. Several other candidates for office were present and worked the crowd.



Tom Spangler, candidate for Knox County Sheriff, speaks to a large crowd at the South Knoxville Alliance Candidate Forum last week.

During their brief speeches each candidate spoke of issues they support.

Candidates for Knox County Mayor

Commissioner Bob Thomas, who said he's been

campaigning for 38 months and was the first to announce for county mayor spoke of education and "Ride Along" programs that would permit students to ride along with tradesmen and learn a job by doing so. "I want to make sure

every child finds out what they are best at."

The commissioner also spoke of seniors and veterans, more business for Knox County and keeping taxes low.

Commissioner Brad Anders

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Knox County Schools Receive Nutrition Awards

By Anne Primm

Before the announcements at last Wednesday's Knox County Board of Education meeting, Chair Pat Bounds recognized Knox County Commissioner Carson Dailey and City Councilwoman Stephanie Welch for attending the meeting. Bounds continued with information for the board and members of the audience. In April, Ninth District representative Amber Rountree, Councilwoman Welch, also of Great Schools Partnership, and South Knoxville Elementary principal Dr. Tanna Nicely will be attending the National School Boards Association's Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Nicely will be making a presentation at this conference about the Community Schools Initiative ongoing in Knox County Schools.

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