



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

*Commissioner Bob Thomas meets the press following the dismissal of an ethics complaint against him and Commissioner Charles Busler. Thomas is a candidate for Knox County Mayor and has said all along that this issue was nothing more than a political attack by his opponents in the current election.*

## Ethics committee dismisses complaints against Busler and Thomas

By Mike Steely  
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When is it not wise to make an ethics complaint?

Answer: When you can't prove it. That's what happened when the Knox County Ethics Committee voted 7-1 to dismiss charges against Commissioners Bob Thomas and Charles Busler Friday.

story about a golf tournament that Thomas and Busler took part in. He was unable to prove the allegations and only ethics member Barbara Chandler voted to uphold the complaint.

Both men were accused by Bennett of accepting a gift card and playing on the Priority Ambulance Golf Team in August. Bennett also accused

renewal.

The result of the hearing means that Bennett may be liable for the all expenses incurred by the county and that Thomas and Busler may now ask the county to repay their attorney fees as well.

Following the dismissal of charges, Busler and his wife prayed together and left the meeting without making

## 2018-19 Budget

By Anne Primm

Knox County Board of Education Chair Patti Bounds welcomed local officials in attendance at the beginning of the board's regular meeting last Wednesday Present were: Commission Chairman Randy Smith; Commissioners Dave Wright and Evelyn Gilt; City Council representatives Stephanie Welch, Lauren Rider and Gwen McKenzie; County Education Association President Tonya Coates; Lydia McCoy of UTK; and Knox County Trustee Ed Shouse.

Changes to the agenda included postponing recognition of both Farragut and Bearden High School Dance teams. Deputy Law Director Gary Dupler requested withdrawal of item 7.D.16 from

the final vote on Regular Agenda Item 11E -To approve the Fiscal year 2019 Knox County Board of Education General Purpose Budget at the Major Category Level for \$483,300,000.00. This proposal was seconded by Fourth District Representative Lynne Fugate. Hill stated that she had contacted State Representative Eddie Smith regarding some of the specifics of state funding that affects Knox County Schools, like TCRS and RTI. Representative Smith said he did not have all the numbers but would obtain them as soon as possible and get back to Sixth District Representative Hill. For this reason, Hill wanted to postpone the vote until the board has a clearer picture of