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Superintendent's contract extended one year

By Anne Primm

In a special called meeting at 5:00 p.m. Wednesday afternoon June 13, 2018, Bob Thomas, superintendent of Knox County Schools, was awarded an additional year to his contract. The Knox County School Board determined, in a 7-2 vote, that Superintendent Thomas was

entitled to an additional year due to satisfactory performance on this year's performance evaluation. Third District Representative Tony Norman had originally proposed a motion to award the superintendent two additional years to his contract but that motion was superseded by a substitute motion by

Eighth District Representative Mike McMillan to only grant one additional year.

At 5:30 p.m. Wednesday evening the Regular Session of the Knox County School Board was called to order by Chair Patti Bounds. Elected officials attending the meeting were Randy Smith, Dave Wright, Evelyn Gill and Stephanie

Welch.

First on the agenda was recognition of the L&N STEM Academy Frisbee Team. Principal Becky Aehe introduced the players and their coaches and sponsors. The team finished the season seventh in the county.

Next to be honored was Kinley Fooritz, 2017-2018

Board of Education Student Representative. After serving for the past year as the student liaison on the Knox County School Board, Kinley graduated in May and moves on to college in the fall. She is the first Haslam Scholar from West High School and of that she is most proud. Kinley has also distinguished herself

in numerous ways including founding a local non-profit organization called "The Garden Project." At her young age, she has already established herself as a leader by taking the helm of many school and community groups. Kinley plans to major in Bio-medical Engineering at the

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Outreach workers for homeless may be funded

By Mike Steely
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The Knoxville City Council is being asked by the Community Development Department to authorize \$135,955 for Volunteer Ministry Center to hire two community outreach workers. The idea is to have these Ministry Center employees to work with "unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness" primarily around the intersection of Broadway and Magnolia Avenue.

The spot on Broadway has long been a gathering place for homeless, just across the street from the Volunteer Ministry Center, and some of the homeless who congregate there do not seek shelter there or at other homeless shelters.

Mike Dunham, Homeless Coordinator, told The Focus the city's contract with Volunteer Ministry calls for two trained social workers with at least a Bachelor's Degree to work with homeless people who, for one reason or another, don't seek shelter.

"There's a lot being done inside the walls of shelters but that's not what you see at Broadway and Magnolia," he said, adding, "Often a homeless person is not psychologically ready" for shelter.

Dunham said the city is also working on an agreement with the state Department of Transportation to create a safe place beneath the I-40 Bridge there for use during day time.

The council, which meets in regular session Tuesday at 6 p.m. in the City-County main assembly room, will also vote on several second

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Leading the way!



PHOTO BY LUTHER SIMMONS

Rebecca Story of the Christian Academy of Knoxville finished 24 seconds ahead of her closest challenger in winning the 2-mile run at the Volunteer Track Classic this spring. Story received the Warrior Award in her senior year at CAK and signed with Stanford University. Please see Part 3 of The Knoxville Focus' feature recognizing local high schools' Student-Athletes of the Year in Sports & Recreation, Section C.

Complaint against Brad Anders dismissed by ethics committee

By Mike Steely
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It took almost two hours in what would have been a preliminary discussion at the Knox County Ethics Committee for complaints against Commissioner Brad Anders to be dismissed. Initially Chairman Jonathan Cooper said the meeting was a "preliminary review" to see if the complaint, involving Anders' taking part in three golf tournaments sponsored by Rural/Metro Ambulance would violate the \$35 allowable gift per diem amount for county employees.

But Cooper said that several items in the complaint

didn't apply and focused on the entry fee for the events. He also said that any ambiguity in the charges must be ruled in favor of Anders.

"I don't see anything that constitutes anything but hearsay," committee member Jennifer Roche told the meeting.

Cooper said that there were "no factual allegations that gifts would impact a vote" by Anders since the gifts and tournaments were years before the vote last year to extend Rural/Metro's contract.

But Cooper went on to say that a hearing should be heard where the

complainant, resident Bruce Williams, could possibly bring witnesses.

Committee member Michael Covington said that the complaint is based on a previous complaint by Bo Bennett against Commissioners Bob Thomas and Charles Busler. Both had taken part in a golf tournament and were given gifts while part of a team sponsored by Premier Ambulance. Those complaints were dismissed by the ethics committee earlier this year. Covington said the complaint against Anders, who was opposing Thomas in

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Commissioner Brad Anders speaks following the 4-3 vote to dismiss an ethics complaint against him. Asked if the complaints against him cost him the Republican nomination for Knox County Mayor, Anders told The Focus "There's no question about it."

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