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Recode meeting long, confrontational

By Mike Steely
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The year of 2019 may well be remembered as the year Knoxville City Council struggled with Recode.

A second marathon session on Recode became exhausting and labored as the city council once again tried to correct the

working changes to zoning and building standards. The special calling meeting began at 3 p.m. and went well beyond 9 o'clock Thursday evening.

"Expect a protracted meeting," Mayor Madeline Rogers told the council as the meeting started.

Several citizens,

including representatives of neighborhoods, reality groups and members of the Community Forum, spoke on changes to the regulations.

Well into the meeting the council continued to make major and minor changes to the proposed revamping of regulations. At one point

Councilwoman Seema Singh-Perez confronted representatives of Community Forum, the umbrella group representing West Knoxville neighborhoods, for its continual suggestions and corrections of the proposed regulation.

Singh-Perez said the city council and Community

Forum is rewriting the rules while other neighborhoods and citizens are being left out of the process. She asked about Community Forum's diversity and income level. She asked if anyone in the group made less than \$25,000.

Community Forum's Carlene Malone had been

doing most of the Forum's speaking but Attorney Larry Silverstein stepped forward to reply to Singh-Perez. He said the Forum represents a variety of members of neighborhood groups.

"We need more opinions here," Singh-Perez said.

"I understand your
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LEADING THE WAY! STUDENT-ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

The Knoxville Focus' annual series recognizing local TSSAA member high schools' female and male Student-Athletes of the Year starts in today's Sports section and will continue in the month of June.

Each high school chooses a girl and boy who stood out in academics and athletics during the school year and athletic directors are requested to send in the information.

In the spotlight this week are honorees from Career Magnet Academy, Carter High, Christian Academy of Knoxville and Concord Christian School.



Luke Simpson, CAA's male Student-Athlete of the Year, was a valuable wide receiver for the Warriors last fall.

Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center loses state funds

By Mike Steely
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It's crunch time for the Knox County and Knoxville budgets and one item on both budgets getting some attention is the funding of the Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center. The Helen Ross McNabb operated facility, hailed as a victory in treating mentally ill and addicted minor law offenders when it opened, is facing a total state funding cutoff. The center's treatment policies are changing and Jerry Vagner, director of the McNabb center, is looking to local governments for support.

The city upped its contribution to the center from by \$183,950 to \$583,950 and the Knox County budget, which last year gave \$615,000, has increased to \$840,000 for the Behavioral Center.

Vagner spoke recently at the commission's work session and said that the previous state funding accounted for about 75% of the Urgent Care Center's budget. He said the new governor stopped the funding and that is pressing the Center to look to local government. He said the judicial process has also changed as many of the minor offenders with mental health or additions are now being arrested rather

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Nicholas Gibbs family assembles Saturday

By Mike Steely
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More than 100 descendants of Revolutionary War veteran and Knox County settler Nicholas Gibbs will assemble Saturday at the patriot's original home on Emory Road. The event, sponsored by the Nicholas Gibbs Historic Society, will feature a tour of the home, a meal, a business meeting of the group, a historic presentation, and live music in the shelter behind the old home.

The Gibbs log cabin, built in 1793, may be the oldest standing log structure in the state and society member Joe Longmire took The Knoxville Focus on a tour recently. The original claim of Nicholas Gibbs was for 450 acres and other acreage was later added. Gibbs was a German immigrant who migrated to what is now Knox County and settled just east of Harbison Crossroads. The entire community there is also known as Gibbs and the elementary, middle and high school carry the Gibbs name.

Longmire said he hopes

the gathering will generate enough money to continue restoring the old two-story house. He said it needs some new chinking as well as new logs although most of the logs are original, and the house has a groundhog problem. He said the society membership fee goes a long way in helping the continual restoration. Membership in the society is open to anyone who is a descendant of the Nicholas Gibbs family.

The old home was occupied until 1985 which is when the historic society bought it. Since then the later additions to the home have been removed and the structure cared for and nursed back to its historical appearance. Longmire, a Gibbs descendant, said that many people in the area are also descended from the settler.

Inside the home are period pieces and relics unearthed by archeologists from the yard. Two of the items are original to Nicholas Gibbs including a small cast iron pot used to melt lead and a grandfather clock. The clock is only in



Joe Longmire stands in front of the historic Nicholas Gibbs House where descendants of the Revolutionary War volunteer and early Knox County resident will gather this Saturday.

the home during the annual Gibbs family homecoming. Back then there wasn't another home nearby on

the stretch of the historic Emory Road and many people, including Andrew Jackson, may have stopped

there Longmire said. The society is still piecing the patchwork of history together for the home.

Longmire said that descendants from across the country come in for the

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