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School board recognizes student rep, retiring principal

By Anne Primm

The June 5, 2019 Knox County School Board meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Hill at 5:02 p.m. with all nine districts represented. Fourth District Representative Virginia Babb led the Pledge of Allegiance and the moment of silence. Hill reminded everyone that the deadline for transfers is July 1, 2019.

Chair Terry Hill took the opportunity to recognize the Knox County School Board's 2019 Student Representative, Hannah Selph. Hannah is from Chairperson Hill's own sixth district. Hannah is an academic scholar who was designated as an AP Scholar and member of Mu Alpha Theta, and has been accepted into the University of Tennessee's prestigious Chancellors Honors Program. She also served as a member of the Hardin Valley High School Marching Band, was a STEM Academy Ambassador, was a Tennessee TSA State Official Coach for two years, and volunteered at church, KARM, and at the American Cancer Society. Last but not least, she was nominated for the Hardin Valley Academy Hawk Award, the school's most prestigious award. Kudos and best wishes to Hannah!

Superintendent Bob Thomas was next to give his report. He congratulated retiring L & M STEM Academy Principal Becky Ashe for receiving the Tennessee Stem Innovator Award. Thomas also congratulated Farragut High School for receiving STEM school designation. Farragut High was one of eleven schools in Tennessee to receive such distinction. Thomas also related that he and Mayor Jacobs visited Sam E. Hill School in late May in a joint effort between the mayor's office, Knox County Schools, and the Knox County Public Library System to distribute 6,800 library cards to 17 elementary and middle schools to encourage reading in

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PHOTO BY KEN LAY

Pictured left to right, Nick Pavlis, former city council member District 1; Lynne Fugate, candidate for city council at large seat A; Eddie Mannis, candidate for city mayor; and George Wallace, city council member seat A.

Mannis supporters gather at SoKno Taco Cantina

By Ken Lay

Knoxville Republican mayoral candidate Eddie Mannis made a campaign stop at SoKno Taco late Thursday afternoon where he was greeted by supporters and despite overcast skies and a few sprinkles, spirits weren't dampened.

The gathering was held on the patio of the restaurant and was an

informal meet and greet.

Mannis spoke with supporters individually but did not make a formal address and his schedule, which was extremely packed last week, excluded him from enjoying appetizers with the crowd.

But he wanted to stump in South Knoxville before the August primary election and the gathering was

organized by City Councilman Nick Pavlis.

Councilman George Wallace was in attendance along with County Commissioner Carson Dailey and others.

"It's been a busy week but it was important for me to come here, to

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Meetings allow public input on Knox County greenways

By Bill Howard

Citizens and communities debate many issues, but few people are against greenways.

The paved paths provide numerous benefits by connecting neighborhoods, encouraging walking and biking and supporting economic development.

In 2009, the Metropolitan Planning Commission (as it was known then) included in a Parks and Recreation Master Plan the approval of an expansion to Knox County's greenway system. It was decided that the public should have a say in determining where, and by how much, the expansion should occur.

On Wed., June 5, the first of four community-input presentations about the greenway corridor was held at Karns Elementary School to educate the public about the issue, and to allow citizen feedback. Of the county's four greenway corridors, Beaver Creek West, which would connect Hardin Valley to Powell, was the focus.

The other three corridors are

Northshore Drive, Beaver Creek East, and South Knox Co.

John Houghton works for Gresham, Smith and Partners, an architectural/engineering firm consulting on the project for Knox County.

"The county's looking to add new greenways throughout the county," said Houghton. "Tonight we're looking at where a new greenway can go in those communities. There's been a lot of demand for additional greenways. They've done some projects (since 2009); this is the next wave of potential projects."

Informational exhibits outlined the health and economic benefits of greenways, and there were aerial photos of the entire county with the proposed construction in color-coded dots.

Visitors could indicate their preference for greenway expansion in three different ways.

One exhibit had 12 photos - six each of locations and features of greenways - and anyone could put an orange sticker on the photos of their choice.

Another exhibit allowed placing a sticker on a least-to-greatest (1-5) scale for each of three different greenway benefits: connectivity, quality-of-life, and economic development. Written post-it notes could be placed anywhere on the aerial photos.

Said Shauna Godlevsky, Knox Co. Parks Planning and Development Manager: "We have a grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation; it's a \$300,000 grant and it has an 80%-20% match, so 20% comes from the county. It's a project that should be done by the end of the year and it will give us a focus on which greenways we should work on for different reasons, whether it's health, economic impact, alternate transportation opportunities, or connectivity."

According to Godlevsky, the information and input gathered at the four meetings will be finalized at a series of meetings currently scheduled for August.

"We have a team of engineers and landscape architects and from all this information they'll

revise these routes based on the comments, along with some of other data they have gathered, and then they'll come up with a revised plan," she said. "We'll then have another round of public meetings to show the final product. At these meetings they're gonna have cost estimates, and then they'll recommend phasing."

Funding, of course, not only will be critical to the entire project, but will determine the pace of expansion. According to Godlevsky, a single mile of greenway can cost up to \$1 million.

"In the near future progress will be slow," said Godlevsky. "We really rely on grants from the TDOT (as well as county funding). They put in heavy requirements on how we have to build and it makes the costs go higher."

But, she says, greenway expansion is worth it.

"Big businesses will come into a city if they have a good greenway system. The value of these greenways, when they're done right, is massive."

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Commission approves Mayor Jacobs' Budget

By Mike Steely
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The Knox County Commission passed Mayor Glenn Jacobs' first budget Thursday, an increase over last year's amount, but only after an attempt to restore funds to the Health Department for indigent care.

While the \$ 853 million budget gained final unanimous approval on the way to the vote three commissioners voted unsuccessfully to restore funds for the care of poor people to the previous level.

Jacob proposed cutting the funds to the health department and its indigent care program by about 43%. Commissioner Brad Anders began the budget meeting Thursday afternoon by offering a substitute motion to restore the funds. He said that the county's unappropriated funds could cover the needed money and suggested that over the coming year the program could be defined.

Anders said the restoration of to the current balance would be a "one time"

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