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PHOTO BY KYLE LEE

Graduating senior quarterback Dakota Fawcett holds his state championship aloft as his fellow senior teammates examine their own rings. Former Central High School football coach Bryson Rosser makes a surprise visit to present the Bobcats with their 2019 Class 5A State Championship rings in a ceremony Thursday at Dan Y. Boring Stadium.

Central football team receives title rings, surprise visit at ceremony

By Ken Lay

The 2019 Central High School football team got its Class 5A State Championship rings Thursday at Dan Y. Boring Stadium. The rings were the jewels that culminated a second consecutive championship.

The ceremony, which was conducted with social distancing

protocols in place, was expected. But the surprise guest who presented the players, coaches and support staff with their rings wasn't expected.

Former Bobcats' head coach Bryson Rosser returned to Knoxville to present the rings.

Rosser came down from Massachusetts for one last

hurrah with the 2019 'Cats. Rosser, who guided Central to a pair of consecutive state titles in 2018 and 2019, left earlier this year because his wife got a new job.

"People asked if I was going to be here and I told (athletic director) J.D. (Lambert) to tell everybody 'no' because I wanted

this to be a surprise," Rosser said.

But anyone who knows Rosser knows that he wouldn't have missed this ceremony for anything.

And he didn't.

He wanted to be there for his players, especially his seniors

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Changes to the law director role rejected by Charter Commission

By Mike Steely
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In a split vote, an attempt to change who selects the Knox County Law Director was rejected by the Knox County Charter Commission Wednesday.

A motion by committee member Mike Arms to make the county's chief law authority appointed by the county mayor failed in a 12-9-3 vote. It means the law director will continue to be elected by county voters.

An attempt to have actions by the law director approved by the mayor was withdrawn after introduced by committee member James Cochran. He would have removed the authority to pursue, try or settle suits from the law director and any matter greater than \$50,000.

"The Knox County Law Director shall abide by the decisions of the Mayor or the Mayor's designee," the proposed charter change read.

Cochran withdrew the proposals after Law Director Richard (Bud) Armstrong said the changes would not pass legal challenges.

The Charter Commission is under a deadline to submit changes by August 15 to get suggested changes on the November ballot. Charter Chairman Brad Anders said all charter items are on the table for discussion given the time limits.

"I think we've taken care of the

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E-911 gets a one-time, \$2.2M sum from the state

By Mike Steely
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When the Knox County Emergency Communications District meets on Wednesday it will vote on its upcoming budget. The E-911 Finance Committee met Tuesday to discuss what the new budget will be, what it will cover and what's new for the coming fiscal year.

Finance Chairman John Fugate told The Focus that about \$15 million is being requested and E-911 Executive Director Brad Anders said the state is allocating an additional \$2.2 million. He expects to use about half of it to focus on training and renovations at the 911 call center.

Anders said that \$1.1 million is available now and the remainder is available in January.

The proposed budget includes hiring four new call processors, adding two per 12-hour shift. The Emergency District board may also add a human

resources slot or hire an outside HR consultant.

Anders also said the city is offering space in the new Safety Center at the former St. Mary's/Tennova Hospital for \$1 per year and E-911 may use it as a backup location. He also said that FEMA is interested in space there.

The call center at 605 Bernard Avenue may also get some stand-up desks to permit call operators to sit or stand during their shifts.

Anders also said they are working with UT for leadership training and may create a "public outreach" effort. He said E-911 is looking to save about \$20,000 each year by eliminating some unused phone lines and other services no longer needed.

He said additional revenue will come from state action which increases the 911 cost on cell phones to \$1.50 per phone from the current charge of \$1.16.

Planning Commission allows development on Dutchtown by narrowest of margins

By Bill Howard

Far more often than not, cases that appear before the Knoxville-Knox Co. Planning Commission each month are decided by a unanimous vote, or close. Cases decided by a single vote seem exceedingly rare.

Such rarity occurred Thursday, June 11, when the commission held its monthly meeting, it's third straight online. At issue was a request by applicant Georges Brandon - represented by Brian Pierce - to develop two acres at the intersection of Dutchtown Road and Bob Kirby Road in commission district 3.

The case had been postponed for two months.

The request included an amendment to the County Sector Plan from HC (Neighborhood Commercial) to MDR (Medium Density Residential). The case also included a request for Rezoning from CN (Neighborhood Commercial) to PR (Planned Residential).

The proposed density was for up to 12 dwelling units per acre. The staff recommendation for the case was to approve both the sector plan and the rezoning because "additional opportunities for a variety of residential housing types are needed ... and this area is adjacent to the Urban Growth Area for Knoxville."

Pierce addressed the commission to argue for the changes. "What the owner plans to do with this is a development with one-bedroom apartments, and first-time workers, basically a workforce-type housing project," said Pierce. "This will be a good use for this

property at this location."

At that point, Commissioner Art Clancy made a motion to approve both the Sector Plan and Rezoning, whereupon a variety of perspectives immediately surfaced. Commissioner Tim Hill spoke first.

"I'm just struggling to get comfortable with the density as I look around," Hill said. "I don't see where this fits within that community. I could get comfortable with a little bit less density, which would be more than the LDR (low density residential)."

New commission member Sandra Korbelik said that allowing for maximum density didn't mean the developers would necessarily aim for that number. She also expressed concern about flooding on Dutchtown Road. An engineer for Knox County then said that there was no awareness of flooding problems in that area.

Commissioner Pat Phillips inquired about public

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