

by some citizens

By Mike Stealy
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On the heels of revised Knoxville Police Use of Force procedures, some local citizens feel those reforms are not enough and let a meeting of PeARC lapse in a loud and verbal confrontation Thursday evening.

Meeting publicly for the first time this year due to COVID-19 the Police Advisory and Review Committee voted to approve Mayor Indya Rincannon's selection of Lathanya Middlebrook as executive director. There had been 18 applications for the position and Middlebrook told *The Focus* she "thought, 'long and hard'" before accepting the position.

PeARC Chair Ross Mar welcomed Middlebrook and a new member, Ken St. Germain, to the group and told the new director she's facing many changing situations ahead for the body and the police department.

Police Chief Eve Thomas



Congressman Tim Burchett and Knox County Commissioner John Schoenmaker meet with attendees at the GOP headquarters at 5718 Kingston Pike.

Knox County GOP celebrates re-opening of headquarters

By Ken Lay

It was not only the first day of summer but it was a day for the Knox County Republican Party to celebrate the grand re-opening of its headquarters in West Knoxville.

It was a warm and slightly humid day but that didn't

available for purchase thanks to a food truck provided by John Gabriel.

Several elected officials and candidates who are running in the upcoming August election were on hand to meet voters and campaign volunteers.

The building that houses

draw numbers for door prizes and other Knox County Republican merchandise including hats, t-shirts, bumper stickers and keychains.

Plasek organized the meet and greet, which was held on Saturday, June 20. And she did it in a quick fashion.

for August

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The upcoming August 6 local general election and state and federal primaries may be one of the most trying in recent history not only for voters but especially for the Knox County Election officials and poll workers.

The new Administrator of Elections, Chris Davis, told the Knox County Election Commission recently about the challenges of this year. Hiring poll workers and training new and existing staff on the new paper ballot system and its equipment would be a challenge on its own without considering the limitations imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic and the huge increase in requests for absentee ballots. Twenty-four boxes are set back for the expected absentee ballots, estimated now at more than 7,500.

The election office has been training poll workers, about 12 at a time, in the Downtown West office. Additional space and one more room are being