



U.S. Senate candidate Bill Hagerty and State House District 13 candidate Elaine Davis stand for a picture for The Focus at the annual Lincoln Day dinner last Monday evening.

Hagerty said: "So, I encourage you to get out and vote."

"If the Democrats win, they will stack the (Supreme) Court with judges. They wanted to go from nine to 14 judges and they

your law enforcement officers, you'll have chaos, burning and looting."

He also promised to help President Donald Trump revitalize the

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and the creation of a separate body to deal with emergency health events.

Dr. James Shamiyeh told fellow board members that the growing number of hospital admissions in the region is concerning. He said the current increase is the sign of a coming surge of COVID-19 cases. Health Department Director Dr. Martha Buchanan reported the number of new cases is up and hospital capacity is in the "cautious" level in an upward trend.

"I was surprised how the situation changed since we met two weeks ago. We could walk into a big surprise, a data and case county shift. We're entering a new phase," Shamiyeh said.

If the increase continued Shamiyeh said, "We may not be able to supply all the regular services. If you need medical care come to the hospital. We're watching the growth closely."

The board's almost three hour meeting saw three citizens

Two Jacobs officials on paid leave in theft investigation

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Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs confirmed last week that two top employees have been placed on paid leave during an investigation into their activities.

Chief of Staff Bryan Hair and Parks and Recreation Senior Director Paul White are the subjects of an inquiry being conducted by auditors Pugh CPA in an investigation that could stretch over a few weeks. Charges appear

uncertain. Finance Director Chris Caldwell reportedly is contacting the state comptroller to help in the investigation.

Jacobs announced both men being placed on paid "administrative leave" last Tuesday after he said he was informed of potential wrongdoing. Hair, a long time associate of White when they were both executives with the Tennessee State Bank, replied, "I appreciate the mayor launching this investigation and I will fully cooperate. I'm looking

Employees within the county mayor's office have been instructed not to talk about the possible charges until the investigation is completed. Jacobs is promising a full release of details and possible charges.

On Thursday Hair released the following statement:

"Towards the end of May, my wife broke her foot and I reached out to Parks & Rec to see if they had a cart I could borrow that was not being used. I was aware they had recently purchased

summer until her foot healed and then returned it to Parks & Rec. This was not only a mistake on my part, but a lapse in judgment. It was not wise for me to borrow something that belongs to the citizens of Knox County, and for that, I'm deeply sorry."

Rumors about the misuse of county credit cards and the former Hospitality Fund were dismissed by off-the-record comments although a charge of potential theft is definitely involved. Initial public informa-