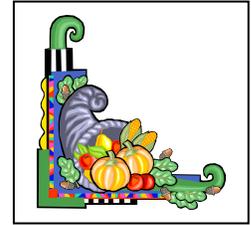




County Executive's Newsletter to the Commission

"Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning." -- Benjamin Franklin



Ready to Grow. . .

When we look at our county, we often ask ourselves the questions of "are we the county we want to be?" Do we want to grow in population, with services so every citizen will have the amenities of restaurants and shops like other areas? Our citizens are often in disagreement about what they want Roane County to look like in 5-20 years. Growth is often both a good thing and a bad thing because change is involved. But change will happen; either we plan and work with change to give it direction, or we sit back and be impacted by the change. I wanted to say all of this to get us to what we see potentially happening in Roane County over the next several years.

The county and region is preparing to grow. Roane County has available land (six industrial parks), and a number of other industrial sites that are, or will be, available in the near future: (1) Roane Regional Business and Technology Park (Hackney location), (2) Oak Ridge National Lab, (3) Horizon Center, (4) Heritage Center, (5) Roane County Industrial Park, and (6) Harriman Industrial Park. **Available Land**

Further, the Department of Energy (DOE) is preparing to release additional acreage near the Heritage Center; some acreage is coming through a clean-up phase, and some has never been used. These industrial sites have existing infrastructure. **Infrastructure on site**

Roane County's road system would probably be considered an excellent asset with I-40 and the four-laning of North Highway 58 and State and County road improvements. **Transportation System**

As Energy Solutions consolidates their operation to their Bear Creek Road (Roane County) property, then their surplus property should become available near the Gallaher exit of I-40. The corridor from the Gallaher exit to Oak Ridge will continue to grow with business. **Business creates other business**

The county has **available housing** in various new developments. To name a few: (1) Rarity Ridge, (2) Rarity Oaks, (3) Ladd Landing, (4) Woodland Reserves, and (5) Grande Vista Bay; just to name a few.

We have **Favorable climate**, **Strong work ethic**, **Educated work force**, and a good **Educational system**, including access to private education with technical schools, community colleges and universities.

In recent discussions about growth in existing business or new ventures, the question came up about education and the strength or weakness related to education. It was noted that it was not the education need of the new worker that was exclusively important, but what would be available for the new workers' children. Will my children have access to highly performing schools, either public or private? This is nothing new to us but it desires repeating. Funding of education was not a consideration issue, but performance and availability are overriding issues.

We will change whether we plan for it or not. Just look at history. We must continue to identify our strengths, weaknesses, and plan for the coming changes.

Commission Action October 17, 2011

Budget resolutions were deferred until the Budget Committee can meet and make recommendations.

Budget Committee was elected: Ron Woody, Chair; Jerry Goddard, Steve Kelley, Copper Bacon, and Bobby Collier.

Committee Action

Ambulance Committee: Met October 13th and recommended transport rate increases (Resolution #11-11-xx).

Back Tax Committee: Met October 20th and voted to recommend setting a minimum bid of \$200 on 12 properties, and to accept bids on 2 other properties (Resolution #11-11-xx).

Sheriff's Liaison Committee: Met October 3rd and voted to check with County Executive Woody on how to obtain a contract for probation revenue.

Subjects for possible committee consideration:

Property Committee

- Proposed parking lot construction at the Building & Codes building
- Status of old jail re-roofing project
- Status of reuse plans for old jail
- Status of recently purchased property (house behind jail)

Legislative Committee

- Law on regional partnerships
- Basic Education Program (BEP) money

Purchasing Commission

- Procedure on pink sheets
- Updated Purchasing Manual

Road Committee

- Alternative method to approve or abandon roads
- Discussion about Rose Crossing

Recent Meetings

During the last few weeks we have had the opportunity to meet with several State officials.

On August 25th, State Treasurer David Lillard visited Roane County. He met with County Executive Ron Woody, Commissioners, and other elected officials during his visit.

On September 28th, Commissioner Karla Davis, Department of Labor and Workforce Development visited the Roane County Career Center.

On September 30th, Commissioner John Schroer, Department of Transportation, toured various project sites.

On August 4th Commissioner Susan Whitaker, Department of Tourist Development spoke at a workshop hosted by Senator Ken Yager

During the Governor's Conference on September 22nd and 23rd, Governor Haslam addressed the conference attendees

On October 14, 2011, Commissioner Bill Gibbons, Department of Safety and Homeland Security was the speaker at the weekly East Tennessee Economic Council (ETEC) meeting. Former Hamblen County Mayor David Purkey, now Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, and former Scott County Sheriff Anthony Lay also attended the meeting.

October 25, 2011, County Executive Ron Woody and Insurance/Payroll Clerk Linda Stooksbury attended a meeting in Farragut where State Treasurer David Lillard spoke about the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement Program. More about that in another article in this newsletter.



DOE Upgrading Supercomputer

CRAY announced that the company has signed a contract to upgrade the Cray XT5 supercomputer nicknamed "Jaguar" located at the DOE's Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), to a new Cray XK6 supercomputer, which will be nicknamed "Titan". The multi-year, multi-phase contract is valued at more than \$97 million. The company currently targets achieving acceptance of the initial phase of the contract in late 2011.

Expansion of Sewer Services

On October 13, 2011, the County Board of Public Utilities (PUB) hosted a tour of the Roane County Wastewater Treatment Plant operations, as well as areas of planned expansion. PUB members Stan Malone (Chair), Jim Ryans, Paul Hester, and Glen Long, along with Gene McClure (Plant Director), James Hill, Michael Stout and David Griffis, hosted the meeting. County Commissioners Randy Ellis, Bobby Collier, Carolyn Granger, Jerry Goddard and County Executive Ron Woody attended the tour. The group toured Keylon Drive, Highway 70, and Dodson, Harbin and College Grove Subdivisions, along with work areas along Highway 70.

The group briefly discussed that work on North Pine Ridge Road in Midtown (north of the interstate) was probably not feasible at this time. Since that area is in the Harriman City Government service area, the PUB will notify Harriman that this work is not scheduled and if the City desires the PUB to service this area, then negotiations should be scheduled with the PUB regarding the service area and costs.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION EXPENDITURES DOWN

The October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011 claim year for Worker’s Compensation costs dropped significantly from previous years.

Worker’s compensation claims are calculated on actual amount paid and a reserve amount that is established when the claim is filed. These two components make up the total incurred amount for a claim. Last year’s total incurred (2009-2010) amount was \$597,694.11. The total incurred amount for the 2010-2011 year is \$166,768.31. Of the total incurred amount the county has actually paid \$96,571.46.

Below is a breakdown by department funds of the claims for the 2010-2011 claims year with a comparison to 2009-2010 claims. The amounts listed are total incurred.

Department Fund	2010-2011	2009-2010	
Ambulance Service	\$6,127.81	\$254,476.73	
Animal Shelter	\$0.00	\$114.00	
General Fund	\$14,269.69	\$3,538.30	
Highway Department	\$21,788.48	\$39,660.76	
Schools - General Purpose	\$65,576.59	\$70,491.02	
Schools – Cafeteria	\$3,467.08	\$21,449.74	
Schools – Transportation	\$44,911.50	\$201,635.35	
Sheriff’s Department	\$5,965.76	\$6,018.39	
Solid Waste	\$261.40	\$309.82	
Waste Water	\$4,400.00	\$0.00	
Total	\$166,768.31	\$597,694.11	<\$430,925.80>

There were noticeable monetary reductions with the Ambulance Service, Highway Department, Schools Cafeteria and Schools Transportation, however, only eight less claims (65 vs. 57). We all need to remember SAFETY FIRST.

The Courthouse will be closed Veterans’ Day – November 11, 2011

“Thank a Veteran for their service”

Retirement is wonderful. It's doing nothing without worrying about getting caught at it. ~Gene Perret

TCSA Fall Conference:

October 26-28, 2011, County Executive Ron Woody, Budget Director Kaley Walker, and Commissioners Ray Cantrell, Bobby Collier, Randy Ellis, and Carolyn Granger attended the TCSA Fall Conference in Murfreesboro, TN. Presentations were made by Deputy Comptroller Jason Mumpower, TDOT Commissioner John Schroer, ECD Commissioner Bill Hagerty, and State Treasurer David Lillard.

One of our very own Commissioners, Bobby Collier, was promoted from 2nd Vice President of the TCSA Board of Directors to 1st Vice President.

Congratulations Bobby!



Employee Spotlight:

New Employees:

Welcome Julie Bracey! Julie started work in the Accounting Department on October 17, 2011.

Belated welcome to Dale Collins! Dale started work full-time in the Purchasing Department on August 22, 2011.

Retiring Employees:

**Retiring from Emergency Medical Services
(Ambulance Department)**

- Nancy Basford – June 1989 – October 31, 2011

(Retirement reception for Nancy on Wednesday, Nov. 2 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Midtown Station)

- Mike McCoy – July 1974 – November 17, 2011

Happy Retirement

Happy Thanksgiving!

The Courthouse will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 24th and 25th.

**Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System
(County Pension/Retirement Plan)**

October 25, 2011, State Treasurer David Lillard presented an overview of our retirement plans and the anticipated direction of the retirement plans. Roane County Government has two separate programs under the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS). First, Roane County teachers are under a state program of TCRS. All other employees are under a county program of TCRS. Benefits of both programs are similar but the contribution rates (percentage of payroll the county has to pay) are different.

Currently the local government group (statewide, excluding schools) is 86.34% funded, with unfunded liability of \$839 million. The state and teacher group is 90.64% funded, with unfunded liability of \$2.7 billion.

Roane County employees, including teachers, are under a contributory plan where 5% of the funding of the program is made by the employee. Every two years the county has a new contribution rate set by an actuarial study. The rate is anticipated to increase.

The unfunded liability presents a problem for retirement systems. What is the State discussing to solve the problem? New employees could be under a Hybrid of a Defined Benefit (known benefit at retirement) and a Defined Contribution (known contribution % or \$ amount at each payroll) or under only a Defined Contribution.

The state has already taken the steps to allow counties to join the State's 401k with approval in state law, T.C.A. §8-25-111. More to come on pensions. . . .

November Events:

November 7th – Founders' Day Celebration

Come and celebrate Roane County's 210th birthday
6:00 p.m. – 2nd floor - Courthouse

November 11th – Veterans' Day

Attend one of the services in the county
9:45 a.m. – Gazebo at Old Courthouse - Kingston
11:00 a.m. – Oak Grove Cemetery – Rockwood
The Courthouse will be closed Friday, November 11th.

November 24th and 25th – Thanksgiving holiday

The Courthouse will be closed.

If you have an item of interest related to our county, please submit to Sheila or me. Deadline for submission is the last Friday of the month.

Ron