



# County Executive's Newsletter to the Commission



“Decision is a choice among alternatives.” ...unknown

## One Year Newsletter Anniversary!

It's hard to believe that it has been one year since we started publishing our newsletter. We hope you have enjoyed and learned more about Roane County Government's operation and employees over this year. We cannot encourage you enough to submit us items of interest and areas of concern you would like for us to address. It is not an easy task to put this newsletter together and we hope you appreciate our efforts. I would like to personally thank our staff for assisting with articles and Sheila for struggling to interpret my late-night writing on the many notes I take while attending meetings when ideas are often reduced to writing. Again, I encourage you to contact us with articles or items of interest and I want to personally thank each of you for spending time reading and learning about county government.

## ATVG

The Association of Tennessee Valley Governments is an advocate for TVA and the local governments that reside in the Tennessee Valley region. ATVG is a 501(c)(3) public interest organization formed in 1981. Roane County Government is a member of ATVG. Ron Woody was requested to consider becoming a Board member upon his election as Roane County Executive. At the ATVG quarterly board meeting in April, Woody was elected to fill an East Tennessee Director's position. At the April meeting in Chattanooga, the ATVG Board toured the TVA Power Control Center and Trading Floor and discussed at length various issues regarding TVA and their position on meeting peak power demand for the region. A continued debate, discussion and study was held on Atlanta GA's request to tap into the Tennessee River to help provide water to the Atlanta and North Georgia area, known as an inter-basin transfer. Water diverted from the Tennessee River South of Chattanooga could have a negative impact on upstream reservoirs including Watts Bar.

At the ATVG Board meeting at Kentucky Dam on July 28 – 29, 2011, Troy Beets, Kingston City Mayor, was elected to fill an East Tennessee City board vacancy. Roane County now is actively involved in ATVG with two board seats.

## Student Involvement in County Government

### ERB

The Environmental Review Board was recently re-organized and the Board was expanded to include two high school students. Each will serve on the Board until their graduation from high school. Hailey Caldwell and Riley Collins have agreed to serve on the Board as student representatives.

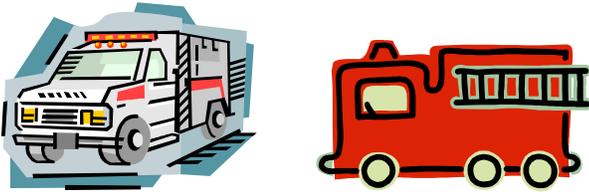
### Advisory Board on Recreation

The Roane County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was also recently re-organized to include four student members. The Recreation Board is important to the county because the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, which administers parks and recreation grants, awards additional grant evaluation points to counties that have established such an advisory board. Our student members are: Lindsey Higgins, Riley Clem, Adam Houser, and Shelby Henderson.



## Commission Action:

At the August 8, 2011 Commission meeting, the Commission approved a resolution to allow Ron Woody, County Executive, to enter into negotiations to purchase property located behind the new jail, on Parks Avenue. The plan is to tear down the house, or sell it at surplus auction to someone who will move it or tear it down, and use the area for much needed additional parking. The Commission also approved the issuance of bonds to finance the construction of the new hospital building in Midtown. This action did not commit the county to any financial obligation as the funds are being borrowed by Covenant Hospital.



## Vehicle Fleet Maintenance

The operating cost of our vehicle fleet has brought a lot of discussion over the past year; from ambulances being out of service for extended periods of time to a lawsuit against the county for storage of vehicles; and a class action lawsuit against a manufacturing and service provider accusing others of improper service.

A Decision Making Analysis (DMA) was completed in the spring to explore if the county should consider paid staff and a service center area. Even though the concept sounded reasonable, without the Highway Department and School Department involved the cost appeared very prohibitive. We did make various fleet maintenance decisions which we believe will help in the long term cost of fleet maintenance:

- (1) Capital Plan for fleet replacement.
- (2) As long as a vehicle is under warranty, the dealership shall service the vehicle. It appeared that various warranties were not used or were voided due to service not being performed by dealer; recalls were not properly maintained; and finger-pointing of who is to blame.
- (3) All emergency vehicles will be serviced by a full service provider who will perform a series of inspections on each vehicle. We had various ambulances placed out of service due to vehicle maintenance issues, and even one pulled from service by a state inspector.

## Plateau Partnership Park

The Plateau Partnership Park Board met on August 18 and approved an application for an EDA 50/50 planning grant. The planning grant would develop a plan for Phase 1 Development – 100 acres by identifying and providing. . .

- a. 2 ft. contour maps
- b. Sewer, water, gas, and electric needs and costs
- c. Required easements
- d. Road improvements
- e. Potential spec building costs
- f. Funding sources for Phase 1 – 100 acres

The partnership community has around \$2 million dollars to invest in public improvements and marketing. Roane County has three board members.

## Recreation Planning continued...

When we discuss recreation and its impact on our quality of life there are two main focuses or benefits, (1) our citizens enjoying recreational activities which the government provides, and (2) new dollars that come into our community from our neighbors who also enjoy our parks, walking trails, ball field complex, rivers and lakes, to name just a few.

### What are we planning and studying?

1. Use of Swan Pond TVA property – 75 acres
2. Potential biking/hiking trail similar to the Virginia Creeper ([www.vacreeper.com](http://www.vacreeper.com))
3. Use of old Caney Creek Campground

**Look for an Executive Summary coming soon.**

## Founders' Day 2011

Don't forget! **Founders' Day 2011** will be celebrated Monday, November 7, 2011 this year. We have received nominations from Civil Districts 1 and 3 and we have a nomination for Golden Treasure. We still need to hear from Commissioners in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Civil District (Oliver Springs/Oak Ridge), 4<sup>th</sup> Civil District (South of the River) and 5<sup>th</sup> Civil District (Rockwood).

## Volunteerism

Volunteerism has always been, and will continue to be, a very important part in the livability aspect of communities, government and our personal lives. Through volunteerism we connect with each other as family, friends, and neighbors. The government will never be able to afford or meet the needs of society with enough money or just money; it takes commitment, loyalty and ownership to your fellow man. Tennessee is the Volunteer State, named for the number of volunteers who stood up to serve our country during both the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. Roane County is blessed with a number of volunteers in our civil, social, and church lives. I would like to personally say thank you for your service to our community and government.

Tennessee has a program to celebrate and honor our volunteers. The program, called "Volunteer Tennessee", is now taking applications. If you know of someone you would like to nominate please submit your nomination to Sheila at [sklemons@roanegov.org](mailto:sklemons@roanegov.org). More information about the program can be found at [www.volunteertennessee.net](http://www.volunteertennessee.net). Nominations will be accepted until December 31, 2011.

## LIFE INSURANCE BID

The Purchasing Department will be bidding out life insurance during the week of September 5<sup>th</sup> for county employees. Historically, the Life Insurance program has been bid every four to five years for all county employees and the school system's employees. There were discussions between the Purchasing Department and the schools' administration early in the spring as to when would be the best time to bid this benefit. The decision was made to wait until the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

The schools' administration chose to negotiate privately and contract independently with Lincoln Life through Strategic Employee Benefit Services, a Knoxville firm. Thus, the school system's employees will not be included in this bid process. This quite likely will result in higher premiums for the county's employees due to not having the schools' employees included in the bid.

## County Committees

As the county committees are being re-established we should consider and start formulating agendas and focus on goals to accomplish in the coming year. Some considerations for the coming year are:

### **Legislative Committee:**

- Structure of Regional Industrial Park Partnership
- Building Code and Inspections – less, more, or no change in requirements
- Improvement of state funding for the Basic Education Program

### **Budget Committee:**

- Continue to focus on long term financial stability of all county budgets
- Work for bonus/raises; pay equality for employees

## tnAchieves

**What is tnAchieves?** A program that offers any public high school graduate in 22 Tennessee counties a last-dollar scholarship to attend community college. Each student is given a volunteer mentor to help them through the college access process as a majority of our students are first-generation college students.

**What does a tnAchieves mentor do?** Mentors guide students through the college application process which includes meeting financial aid and college registration deadlines. tnAchieves mentors are "task masters" and encouragers; ensuring mentees are staying on task to complete the college access process.

**How much time does mentoring take?** Less than 15 hours annually! You can change the lives of up to 4 high school students with such a small time commitment. Mentors are required to attend one 2-hour training and encouraged to attend three team meetings at the high school of your choice. Otherwise, it is just communicating via telephone, email, Facebook, or text message.

tnAchieves is currently recruiting mentors to work with its fourth class of students. If you are interested please check out the tnAchieves website – [www.tnachieves.org](http://www.tnachieves.org) to learn more about the program. If you are interested in becoming a mentor you can fill out an application on-line on the website.

## **Volunteer Fire Departments and the County Fire Board**

We are very appreciative of the effort and work of the many volunteer fire departments; their respective district boards, and the county Fire Board. Over the years many improvements have been made and much money has been invested in local departments. Also, over the years some departments have become stronger and more efficient; but sometimes departments suffer and lose ground.

Again, we appreciate these departments' service to their communities but also must require accountability for the public funds invested into the communities. Our office has tightened up on what we feel is our fiduciary and financial responsibility, as charged by the County Commission. I say this to say, if Commission desires to loosen these accountability requirements, then Commission policy changes should be studied and implemented.

Our current budget appropriates money in the following accounts:

### **Operating – Contributions Capital – Contributions**

Our procedures for distribution of funds are as follows:

**Operational Contributions** - Distributed quarterly at the first of each quarter with the following requirements (summarized):

1. – Report prior months service calls
2. – Report prior months training reports
3. – Be current on all state reports
4. – Submit financial reports

**Capital Contributions** – Distributed upon request with proper operational requests being filed along with:

1. Minutes from the individual department's board reflecting approval of capital request.
2. Minutes of the Fire Board approving distribution of the funds
3. Both minutes must reflect the use of the funds and the use must be capital in nature.

If Commission desires to change the appropriation amount or loosen the requirements of distribution, action should be taken at the Commission level and we will work with Commission to insure compliance with legal and Comptroller's guidelines.

## **ROOFING PROJECTS UNDERWAY**



The Purchasing Department opened the bids for reroofing the old Roane County Jail on August 4<sup>th</sup>. The design of the reroof project was done by Roof Designs & Consulting. Five bids were received with Turner Roofing out of Crossville coming in with the lowest bid of \$76,800 for the base bid which includes reroofing the old jail and making wood repairs on the building. Turner Roofing's alternate bid of \$2,000 to reroof and repair the wood on the utility building was also accepted. The contractor is completing the process of getting the bonds for the project at which time the contracts will be signed. The jail project is scheduled to be completed in sixty days and the contractor expects to start sometime in September.

Roof Designs & Consulting has also designed the roofing project at the Roane County Health Department. A pre-bid meeting was held on Tuesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. The bids for this project will open on Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. This project is scheduled to be done in seventy-five days for the base bid and an additional fifteen days if the alternate bid is accepted. The base bid consists of tearing away the old roof and repairing any decking. The alternate bid is for installing new metal coping in some areas of the roof.

### **TCCA Regional Meeting**

September 7<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 p.m.  
Knoxville City/County Bldg.

A chance to meet with fellow commissioners and talk about issues that concern you. Call Sheila @ 865-717-4101 to let her know if you will attend.

**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**

# Roane County Corn Maze

@ the Roane State Softball Field

Open August 27 – November 19, 2011

## Hours:

Friday: 1:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Sunday: 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

MONDAY – THURSDAY: By Appointment (Call 865-882-2640)

## Cost:

Adults: \$5 -- Children ages 4-12: \$4

Group rates available

## Sponsored by:

Roane County Parks & Recreation

Roane State Community College

Roane County Extension Service



# The Scarecrow RCP Fall 5K

October 8, 2011

Begins and ends at the Roane County Park

Sign in: 7:00 a.m.

Race begins: 8:00 a.m.

5k Run/1 mile Fun Walk

All ages and skill levels welcome



The race course is USATF certified. Pre-Registration closes Monday, October 3, 2011. The registration fee is \$25 in advance and \$30 on race day. Runners and walkers must sign in before the race. Pre-registered runners and walkers will receive t-shirts on race day. Late or race day participants will receive shirts while supplies last. The awards ceremony will be held in Shed #1, 30 minutes after the last runners finish. Awards will be given to the top male and female, plus the top male and female in the following age groups: 19 and under; 20-29; 30-39; 40-49; 50-59; and 60 plus (*top male and female not eligible for division awards.*)

Leashed pets are welcome for the 1 mile fun walk only. Owners must clean up after pets.

Show your support for our park and enjoy a fabulous fall morning by the lake.

To print a copy of the Registration Form visit the website @ [www.roanegov.org](http://www.roanegov.org).

(There is a link on the home page.)

For more information call Kym Abernathy at 865-399-5725.