

## Government Watch - County Commission

### *A look at what is happening in Bradley County*

by Ashley Murphy

While there weren't many items to discuss under new business, the Bradley County Commission still had their hands full with the weekly agendas. The following are highlights from the commission meetings during the month of November.

During the November 2nd voting meeting, Debbie Ledford Melton, General Manager of Don Ledford Automotive came before the Commission to discuss her family's business. The Don Ledford Auto Dealership in Cleveland, TN has recently had its GM franchise pulled and is no longer sponsored by the GM company. Ledford-Melton had come to ask for the Commission's support to help the Don Ledford franchise become reinstated so that it could keep operating under the GM name. Commissioner Lisa Stanbery made a motion to draw up a resolution to show the Commission's support of Don Ledford Automotive. After a second by Commissioner Jeff Yarber, the mo-

tion passed unanimously.

Joe Ayers, from Cumberland Securities, was present at the November 9th work session to give a short presentation on the current finances of Bradley County. The County's debt stands at \$83 million and at this rate, will have a 20 year payback. Ayers stated Bradley County will be receiving roughly \$5.5 million back from the Build America Bonds. Ayers also brought a resolution before the Commission to authorize the novation of interest rate swap. Commissioner Jim Smith placed the resolution on the agenda. When brought up at the November 16th voting session, Commissioner Yarber made a substitute motion to table the original motion of authorizing the novation. Commissioner Ed Elkins made the second, but the substitute motion failed with a vote of 5-7; 2 commissioners were absent. The vote on the original motion authorizing the Novation of Interest Rate Swap Agreements passed 9-3; 2 absent.

Also brought before the

Commission during the voting session was the written resolution stating the Commission's support of Don Ledford Automotive. The resolution passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jim Smith made a motion to approve the transfer of \$200,000 from the Fire Fund Balance to make the \$350,000 that is needed to purchase a new fire truck for Bradley County Fire and Rescue's new Tasso Station.

Commissioner Howard Thompson made a second to the motion. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding this purchase after the motion was presented. Commissioner Yarber stated that a contract was signed in December of 2008, before any bids had been put out. Bids were not advertised until March of 2009. The intended line item that the purchase was to come out of only had approximately \$69,000 in it at the time. Lynn Burns, Bradley County Finance Director, said that a purchase order was made on April 8, 2009, but immediately

voided due to the lack of funds. Bradley County Fire-Rescue Fire Chief Dewey Woody said that the purpose of the contract was an attempt to hold a fire truck that was on the dealers lot in Florida. This would assure that the truck would be here in Cleveland in an allotted amount of time. The contract signed specifically states, "this contract is contingent upon successful completion of competitive bidding procedures pursuant to TCA 5-14-108 and approval of the Bradley County Commission." Meaning the contract was not binding until the contingent requirements have been met. Only one bid was given from Pierce Manufacturing, Inc. This is the company who held the contract with Bradley County Fire Rescue. Now, all that was left to do, was to have the commission approve the contract.

Commissioner Ed Elkins still had concerns and made a substitute motion to table the issue for further review. Commissioner Lisa Stanbery made the second. The substi-

tute motion failed with a vote of 4-8.

Commissioner Connie Wilson stated that she saw two problems: Tasso was in need of a fire truck and there are still too many questions by some regarding the purchasing process. However, according to Wilson, she saw the need to purchase the truck and that's what should be done. The original motion passed unanimously.

County Mayor D. Gary Davis presented several employees with certificates and pins and thanked them for their 20 years of service. They are: Christian Jensen, Charles Boggess, Doug Collins, Karen Hunsucker, Joe Thomason, Linda Ballew, Richard Clark, Barry Snyder, and Jimmy Woody, Gail Qualls and Jackie Blackburn. Patsy Neeley was recognized for 30 years of service.

Several Bradley County residents were in attendance at the November 23rd work session to voice their opposition and concerns regarding the Urban Growth Boundaries that are currently being

reviewed by the Urban Growth Coordinating Committee. Many of the residents were seeking help to stop the expansion of urban growth into their neighborhoods. Others had concerns about the environmental impact on surrounding streams.

Resident John Chandler asked that another public hearing be held so that more residents could attend and try to understand the current situation more clearly. Chairman Louie Alford asked County Planner, Corey Divel to request an additional public hearing from the Growth Coordinating Committee. Divel agreed.

The Bradley County Commission meetings and committee meetings are open to the public. Commission meetings are held in the Bradley County Courthouse. Their voting sessions are on the 1st Monday at 7pm and the 3rd Monday at 10am. Commission work sessions are on the 2nd Monday at 12pm and on the 4th Monday at 7pm. Committees meet as needed.

## Government Watch - City Council

### *A look at what is happening in the City of Cleveland*

by Tonya Brantley

The Cleveland City Council made several important decisions during the month of November. The following are highlights from those meetings.

During their November 9th regular meeting, Cherif El-sadek with Traffipax gave a presentation on speed cameras. El-sadek mentioned the purpose of speed cameras is to change bad driving behavior and that they are not intended as a source of revenue, but for safety. The current red light cameras can be converted to accommodate speed cameras. There are combo, fixed, portable and mobile forms of speed detection cameras. The cameras would detect several factors including the location of the violation, a vehicle's speed, the date and time of the offence, as well as the posted speed limit. A \$50 citation would be sent to offenders. Also mentioned was the possibility of having speed en-

forcing helicopters in the future. During the council's November 23rd voting meeting, Vice Mayor Avery Johnson questioned the need for speed cameras due to fewer speeding violations reported from 2007 to the present. Ordinance No: 2009-74 - Amending the Municipal Code concerning Automated Traffic Enforcement (speed cameras) died for lack of a motion.

A motion was made by Councilman David May and seconded by Vice Mayor Avery Johnson to purchase property (just under an acre) at Hill St. and 3rd St. from Bill Presswood for \$5000 to be utilized by the public works department.

The council unanimously voted to support Don Ledford Automotive in its appeal to General Motors franchise to reconsider its decision to close the dealership.

Councilman David May mentioned the widening project on North Ocoee Street is a great project and

wanted to get the word out to tax payers their tax dollars paid for the project and the city saved a lot of money by doing the project in-house.

May asked Fire Chief Chuck Atchley why the Cleveland Fire Department did not respond to the fire at Thompson Springs Baptist Church. Chief Atchley said the city was not called or requested to respond. Polk County, Hwy. 58 and Tri Community responded. May said, "I don't understand" to which Councilman George Poe stated, "It's pretty simple... they didn't want us there."

The council unanimously voted for Resolution No: 2009-123 in support of Wacker Polysilicon North America LLC's application for the advanced energy manufacturing tax credit authorized by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 (stimulus). Wacker has applied for a \$281 million tax credit for the construction of their facility in Bradley

County.

In regards to the lack of high speed cable Internet service provided to the Mountain Pointe Subdivision, Mayor Tom Rowland said he would draft a letter to Charter Communications regarding other subdivisions in the city limits who also do not have Internet service. Rowland said, "As far as I know, only three neighborhoods in the city do not have service."

During the November 23rd meeting, City Manager Janice Casteel requested council members to turn in their strategic plan priorities for 2010. Councilman Poe mentioned he would like to add personnel to take care of medical calls due to an increase in medical response calls. Councilman Richard Banks mentioned one of his priorities is to include city staff in any future bid processes from the City School Board. Banks said, "Since we fund the projects, we should be involved in that process." A completed list of priorities

will be presented at an upcoming council meeting.

The council unanimously voted to accept a property donation located on Mouse Creek Road, NW, from James L. Harner and wife, Nina S. Harner for the Greenway project.

Councilman Bill Estes made a motion, seconded by councilwoman Bambi Hines to amend the municipal code concerning solid waste and refuse collection to update definition changes to reflect current practices.

The Council unanimously voted for a resolution authorizing the submission of a SAFER grant for hiring firefighters to fill three vacant positions. The grant provides funding for the positions for two years with no matching funds required by the city.

Councilman Banks asked Public Works Director Tommy Myers what citizens can do to help with the leaf collection process. Myers stated to keep leaves out of storm drains, do not pile them

around fire hydrants or power poles because it slows down the process. As far as bagging or piling leaves, either way is fine. Due to the abundance of leaves to collect, Public Works does not have a specific collection schedule for leaves. The leaves are picked up by the department regularly, however Myers mentioned, "if someone gets missed we can send the truck back out to their location." The collected leaves are not taken to the landfill, but instead taken to the Mouse Creek Soccer Complex and Hill Street next to the Cleveland Animal Shelter.

The Tennessee Municipal League (TML) District 3 meeting will be held December 3rd from 9am to 11am at the Collegedale City Hall.

The Cleveland City Council meetings are open to the public each month at the Municipal Building on Church Street on the 2nd and 4th Monday with the work session at 2pm and the voting session at 4pm.