

## Government Watch - County Commission

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

by Ashley Murphy

The following are highlights from the meetings of the Bradley County Commission for the month of February.

During the commission voting session on February 1st, Mayor D. Gary Davis recognized Philip Earhart, an officer with the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency. Earhart, along with Officers Matt Majors and Ben Davis, thanked and honored Michael Stewart for saving the lives of four men.

These four men were out hunting from a boat on a cold January morning. Their boat was tipped over when a wave came over the boat, throwing the men into the frigid waters of the Tennessee River. One of the men swam ashore to seek help, finding Stewart who happened to be duck hunting. Stewart went back and pulled the men from the river before calling 911.

Stewart received a standing ovation from the commission and everyone in the audience when he was pre-

sented with a certificate from the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency.

Commissioner Jim Smith made a motion to allow Highways Incorporated to put a trailer on the new Waterville Elementary School property for the next three years. Highways Incorporated has been contracted by the Tennessee Department of Transportation to widen Dalton Pike. The trailer is needed for use by the company and this seemed the most logical location. Highways Incorporated will plan to hook up to sewer, electrical and water at their own expense. The company will also hold their own insurance for liability purchases.

A request from Mayor D. Gary Davis was made at the commission's work session on February 8th. Mayor Davis presented a resolution to ask the State of Tennessee to not pass down any unfunded mandates to local governments.

Commissioner Ed Elkins expressed his agreement with the resolution and re-

quested that language be included to pass this on to other local governments so that they, too, could be included. Mayor Davis stated that this same resolution was already being presented and voted on by other commissions across the state of Tennessee.

Commissioner Howard Thompson even expressed interest in making sure that this resolution is sent to President Barack Obama, in hopes of insuring the mandate is taken seriously and made successful.

Thompson also presented a resolution commending the Bradley County Road Department for their response during the recent snow that came through Bradley County.

Commissioner Michael Plumley brought forth a recommendation to disband the Grievance Committee. This came directly from the Grievance Committee. Plumley stated that he will work with Legislative Assistant Amy Moore and County Attorney Joe Byrd to come up with a policy for all county

employees.

All of the resolutions, as follows, were passed unanimously by the commission on February 15th: Resolution opposing unfunded local government mandates and additions to local government maintenance of effort requirements; Resolution to commend Bradley County Road Superintendent Tom Collins and the Road Department staff for exceptional work; and Resolution to dissolve the Grievance Committee.

A North Lee Elementary field trip was also scheduled to be held during the February 15th voting session and the attending fourth graders were going to interact with the commission and hold mock meetings. However, due to the weather, the trip was cancelled.

Hannah Moore is currently a fourth grader at North Lee Elementary. She was going to act as Chair in one of the mock meetings that were to be held. However, she is Legislative Assistant Amy Moore's daugh-

ter and was able to be present with her mom during the meeting. Hannah opened the County Commission voting session with the Pledge of Allegiance and also assisted Amy Moore with various tasks, such as passing out needed paperwork to the commissioners.

Mayor Davis brought forth a resolution to support the construction industry and the rights of sole proprietors, partners and up to three members of an LLC in the home building trade. There are proposals in the State Legislature to force a financial burden of workers compensation premiums to a sole proprietor, partner or member of an LLC during economic times when they can least afford it.

The purpose of this bill is to support the right of sole proprietors, partners and up to three members of an LLC in the construction industry to make an elective exemption of themselves if so chosen. The resolution was passed unanimously.

Thompson introduced a

resolution requesting a crossover on Highway 64 at London Acres Drive. Commissioner Jeff Yarber inquired about the cost of such a project. Thompson responded by saying there should be no cost. The intent of the resolution is to ask the State to develop the crossover, with no cost to the county, because it is a State controlled highway. During one previous conversation, it was said that a crossover could be placed, but at an expense to the county government.

This is a much needed project due to the high volume of traffic and issues with emergency crews. Commissioners Lisa Stanbery and Ed Elkins requested a memo also be placed with the resolution to include all of the current and incurring problems, plus the amount of people this will affect, so that the State will also see the need for such an intersection and be more open to the idea of using State funds. The resolution passed unanimously.

**Continued on page 24.**

## Government Watch - City Council

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

by Ashley Murphy

The following are highlights from the regular sessions of the Cleveland City Council held during the month of February.

Tricia Hawes, a resident in the fourth district, came before the council on February 8th to express concerns over serious flooding issues in the area near Clearwater Drive. Hawes requested that a short-term fix be implemented until something can be done permanently for the long-term. The council asked Tommy Myers of the Public Works Department to look into the situation.

Karen Stanley of the United States Census Bureau was present for the City Council's work session, updating everyone about census information and why it is so important. She stated that several census workers will be out soon, going

door-to-door collecting census information from those who were unable to go to a local office or fill out forms beforehand.

Stanley made aware that census workers will be identified by a badge stating that they are with the United States Census Bureau. They will also be carrying a bag with print similar to their badge and will hand a privacy notice over upon first arriving. Stanley also pressed that no census worker will ever ask for social security numbers or banking information and to never give out such information. It's time to start gathering census statistics and Stanley wanted to make these factors known to everyone.

Several motorists have requested a left turn signal be added to the traffic light on Michigan Avenue. The light would be placed for the

north to west traffic flow. Megan Wilson, Traffic Engineer, stated in a memo to Tommy Myers, that a complete study will need to be performed to warrant if the signal at the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Stuart Road would be beneficial.

The first order of business for the City Council's regular voting session was to have Mayor Tom Rowland swear in a new police officer. Officer Walter DeWitt officially became a Cleveland City Police Officer after reading his Oath of Office.

Afterwards, Councilman Richard Banks commended Police Chief Wes Snyder and the whole department for their quick response time. It takes an average of 7.2 minutes for a cruiser to respond to a call. In addition, he thanked the police department for helping to

bring Cleveland's crime rate down 21% from last year's rate.

Gloria Malone of the City of Cleveland gave a presentation regarding sanitation fees for city residents. In 2009, a new contract went into effect that cost home and business owners a monthly fee of \$7.04 and many living in apartment buildings were only paying \$1.97 for their waste removal. The idea of this presentation was to propose to the City Council a rate change. The change would equalize sanitation fees across the city and reduce the \$7.04 fee to \$6.95 for everyone receiving waste pick-up.

The council unanimously voted for the change.

Traffipax, the company whom the City of Cleveland was in a contract with for the red light camera systems currently in place, sent a

letter to City Manager Janice Casteel notifying the city of a termination of agreement. The 5 sites which the cameras are currently located are not producing enough money. Traffipax called it a "financial loss" and are planning to have all 5 systems decommissioned by March 31, 2010.

The council took a vote to discontinue the red light camera program, and the vote was a unanimous 'yes' across the board.

The council also wished to propose a resolution recognizing the Bradley Central and Cleveland High School wrestling programs. Both teams have made multiple appearances in the State Championships and most recently placed 1st and 2nd in the state at the recent match held early in the month of February in Franklin, TN.

Amy Hicks of Helping Paws Healing Hearts opened

the Feb. 22 meeting. Hicks came to ask for support from the City of Cleveland to help keep the non-profit program alive and free in our community. Hicks also brought with her one of her co-workers, a black Labrador mix named Daryl. Daryl is just one of two of the paws helping in this program. The other is Larry.

Helping Paws Healing Hearts is a non-profit program designed to assist children with educational and therapeutic needs in the community. Amy, Daryl and Larry have visited over 10,000 students in Cleveland and Bradley County over the past four years. However, the program is also provided to churches and the juvenile justice center, not just schools. More information can be found at [www.helpingpawshealinghearts.com](http://www.helpingpawshealinghearts.com).

**Continued on page 24.**