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Industrial Board to consider grant for water line addition

The January meeting of the Industrial Board of Coffee County will be held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 10, at the Manchester-Coffee County Conference Center, behind Holiday Inn Express at 111

Hospitality Boulevard in Manchester.

An expected topic for discussion is the seeking of a FastTrak grant to fund waterline expansion along Park Tower Drive at the county industrial park.

La Vergne family still dubious of city's H2O

Defective valve apparently resulted in pink-tinted water

By **MEALAND RAGLAND**
mragland@dnj.com

LA VERGNE — Three weeks after Jim Hughes found pink water flowing through his water pipes, and even though the problem has been corrected, the family is still drinking bottled water.

"We use the other stuff (tap water) to cook with. I'm still leery," he said.

On Dec. 14, a valve regulating the amount of permanganate

and its backup failed simultaneously at the city's Water Treatment Plant on Bon Aqua Drive, engineer Bill Griggs told the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Griggs' company, Murfreesboro-based Griggs and Maloney, designed the plant.

Permanganate is used to oxidize iron and manganese from water supplies. If too much of the chemical is released, the water will change color. Griggs said it is a "proven, well-known" (See LA VERGNE, page A4)

LA VERGNE...

(Continued from page 1)
process."

"We used to use chlorine gas to disinfect the water, but as more houses were being built (in Lake Forest Estates), we decided it was unsafe," he said.

The water plant and subdivision are adjacent to J. Percy Priest Lake, just behind the sprawling Lake Forest Estates subdivision.

Dana Coleman, spokesperson for the Tennessee Environment and Conservation (TDEC), said department staff did advise the city to inform residents to avoid

consuming the water if it was pink or darker. According to an advisory from the city, water may have also appeared lavender in color.

That same advisory also said the water was "harmless," however, Coleman said the only way to be sure was to have it tested. TDEC did not have data to confirm that statement.

A screw that holds the chemical's valve in place came off, Griggs told board members.

"The valve failed and the line (holding the chemical) drained. The backup failed as well," he said. "I know (pink water) created concern. I'm sorry it happened."

Griggs said his company was not notified about the problem until Dec. 16. By that time, all of the pipes had been flushed out and the water was clear again. Board members Tuesday approved a change order for \$9,900 to replace the faulty valves and perform upgrades to the plant.

Sherwin Smith, an assistant

manager in TDEC's Division of Water Supply, said he and several other staff members visited the water plant the day the incident occurred. He said it would be premature to say if there would be any violations against the city, as the inspectors have yet to sit down together and discuss the incident.

No violations, per se, have been found, but deficiencies were identified.

"I can say we did document there were uncertified staff performing operations," Smith said, adding that uncertified employees are able to conduct certain tasks as long as there is a supervisor on hand or a standard operating procedure (SOP) in place.

Neither was in place at the time the incident occurred, according to Smith.

"That's obviously an issue we need to address," he said.

Another issue TDEC staff noticed was that the plant's daily records were not accurate.

La Vergne may be able to resolve some issues by working with TDEC rather than being handed a notice of violation. TDEC would follow up at a later time to make sure everything is being done correctly, Smith added.

County commission preview:

Airport upgrade, rezoning, taxes among county topics Monday, Jan. 9

BY STEVE SHORT, MILAN MIRROR-EXCHANGE

The Gibson County Airport, located between Milan and Trenton, is set to get a near-\$50,000 upgrade thanks to a state grant.

The money would pay for the design, engineering and construction of an overlay of the taxiway and apron at the airport.

Under a proposal, the county would pay about \$5,000 (10-percent of cost) and the state would provide about \$44,000, or 90-percent of the total cost of improvements through a Department of Aeronautics grant. Total cost of the project would be \$49,200.

The airport improvements are part of the agenda when the Commission conducts its first meeting of 2006, January 9 at 9 a.m. in the Ed Jones Agri-Complex on Manufacturers Row in Trenton.

Other agenda items for the County Commission to consider:

Property rezoning – There are requests to rezone four parcels of property from Agriculture A-1 to Local Business B-2. Two parcels are just north of Fruitland and south of Trenton east of Hwy 45W and near Newt Blackwell Road and Cain Creek. One parcel is owned by Marshal Easley and one by Kirk Hale. No acreage size is indicated in the resolution. Two other land parcels totaling about 3.5 acres that will be voted on are at the intersection of Hwy 45 and Chapel Hill Rd. between Milan and Medina. The land parcels are owned by Allen Brown.

“Alternative” taxes – Gibson Co. Commissioners are being asked to support state legislation that would give counties “additional taxing authority.” A proposal, said to have originated in Shelby County, is asking the Tennessee State Legislature to give counties the ability to “enact alternative tax measures at the local level to relieve the pressure on the local property tax.” Many counties in Tenn. are struggling to find sufficient revenue sources, the proposal says. Counties are limited by state law in imposing taxes. As a result, county governments are overly dependent on property taxes as a primary source of revenue, says the resolution. The proposal does not point to a specific tax change. Counties can currently obtain revenues from sales tax, property tax, vehicle tax, real estate transfer fees, and court fees. An income tax could not be applied locally unless it was approved at the state level, said Com. Terry Carroll.

County Health Dept. renovation – The county has located additional funds that can be used in the renovations of the Gibson County Health Department on Manufacturers Row. The facility will be used by the state as a TennCare “safety net” clinic. In November the Commission approved spending about \$10,300 on the renovation. Now, about \$8,600 in extra funds has been found for the project. The \$8,600 must be budgeted by the Commission Jan. 9.

More Homeland Security funds coming – Gibson County is receiving about \$153,000 through a 2005 Homeland Security Grant. The funds will be used to enhance capabilities of the local police, fire, EMS, and Emergency Management Agency. Funds must be budgeted by the commission. \$18,000 would go for inservice training, \$32,000 for communication equipment, and \$103,074 for other equipment.

Cable TV franchise laws – Gibson County Commissioners will discuss a resolution opposing the Video Choice Act of 2005 regarding local franchising authority over new providers of video in communities. According to the resolution, the Video Choice Act of 2005 (H.R. 3146/S. 1349), sponsored by Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, strips local governments of much of the franchising authority with regard to new cable firms. The Act hampers local governments’ ability to manage the public right-of-way, impose customer service requirements, and enforce obligations of the video programmer, the resolution states. The Video Choice Act gives new cable firms a competition advantage over existing cable television providers, the resolution states. “While the legislation does allow local government the authority to collect franchise fees, the local government under the (Video Choice Act) would no longer have any effective mechanism to audit or enforce a local franchise fee,” according to the resolution.

Roadwork by the county – A resolution before the Commission is asking that the County Highway Commission be authorized to approve road work for other government agencies. State law requires that the “county governing body” authorize such reimbursed work.

County road list – State law requires the County Commission to approve a yearly list of all county roads that must be on file.

Countywide Education Committee – Jim Acree is scheduled to speak about a countywide education committee that is part of the state Three-Star certification program. The Milan Chamber of Commerce is also on the agenda.

Reports from committees – Reports will be given by County Attorney Floyd Flippin (Pending Lawsuits), Com. David Martin (Jail Committee), Com. Curtis Halford (EMS/Public Safety Committee), Com. Tommy Price (Fire & Rescue Committee), Com. Mark Flake (Delinquent Tax Committee).

Elections – Members of the Agriculture Committee are facing term expirations January 2006. Four incumbents are up for re-election: Eugenia Jetton (first term), Tim Luckey (second term), Keith Steele (second term), and Tracy Griggs (second term).

Cost of delinquent tax collections – The Commission will vote on paying an attorney to collect delinquent tax bills for 2004. The rate of compensation is set by state law at 10-percent of the principal and interest of the amount collected. The Commission will vote on the rate of pay.

Harlan-Morris barbecue lunch – Commissioners are invited to a luncheon with the Harlan-Morris retirement home board of directors after the January 9 meeting. The commission annually appropriates funds for the retirement center in Trenton, and this year gave the facility \$15,000 in county funds.

Notary applications – 14 applications for Notary authority are on the agenda. These include: Tonya Baker (Carroll County), Lois Akin, Lisa Wall, Joanne Hudspeth, Donna J. Smith from Milan; Krystle D. Powell, Hollie Carter, Shirley Reasons, Doris Warrington, Cathy Cain, Richard Liptock, and Tammie Deaton from Humboldt; Janet Gates and George Rasberry from Trenton.

Lack of water supply for new developments a concern

³³¹ Crossville planners hope to meet with representatives of rural water utility districts in hopes of addressing a concern over water supplies sufficient to provide fire protection to prospective homeowners in developing subdivisions.

The issue surfaced again before members of the Crossville Regional Planning Commission during the regular December meeting when developer Steve Robinson presented plans for an upscale subdivision proposed for the west side of POW Camp Rd. just south of Earl Jones Rd.

Robinson, representing Pioneer Properties, had submitted a plat plan for preliminary approval and among several concerns addressed

City planners to meet with rural water districts on matter

by the city planners was sufficient water supply to meet requirements of subdivision regulations.

The residential development is planned for 29.57 acres with 13 lots ranging from 1.91 to 3.85 acres. The clash comes from a lack of a fire hydrant within the required 500-foot distance and every 500 feet afterwards. The subdivision is serviced by a four-inch water line.

The subdivision requirement clashes with utility district policy prohibiting a developer from installing a fire hydrant on a four-inch water line or line smaller.

Another dilemma for planners is that if the fire hydrant regulation is enforced, who would pay for upgrading the water line? There has also been a discussion about requiring the developers to purchase fire hydrants and give them to the utility district for installation later when smaller lines are upgraded.

Planners gave preliminary approval for the subdivision plat subject to required changes to the plan as required by planning region regulations with the fire hydrant issue to be addressed at a later date.

Outlaw Field chairman Uffelman turns in his resignation

By **DAVID R. ROSS**
The Leaf-Chronicle

Jack Uffelman, chairman of the Clarksville-Montgomery County Regional Airport Authority, is stepping down.

Uffelman, who resigned effective Sunday, served on the authority for less than two years. He cited health concerns and personal reasons for stepping down.

"I agreed to take a seat on the authority at a time when there was no airport manager, and now we have one. Also the city and county have again started mak-

ing financial allocations to the Airport Authority. I served at a critical time, I believe, and progress has been made that can be built on," Uffelman said. "It's time for me to step down and let others with fresh ideas step up."

While Uffelman's resignation letter states his departure is effective Jan. 1, Montgomery County Mayor Doug Weiland said Uffelman has agreed to remain as a member and chairman of the authority until February, when he's replaced on the five-member panel.

Uffelman is one of two authority members named by the County Commission. The other county member is John Morris Jr., District 9 Montgomery County Commissioner.

Hugh Poland and James Halford are appointed by the city and Ward 8 City Councilman James Doyle is the authority appointee.

Airport Authority members serve five-year terms.

Weiland said the county commission's five-person nominating committee will make name a recommendation to the full commission

for Uffelman's replacement.

"I doubt this can be done during the January commission meeting and will likely have to wait until February," Weiland said.

Patrick A. Ryan, the local airport manager for about six weeks, said Uffelman's presence on the board will be missed. Ryan said he enjoyed the short time he has worked with Uffelman.

"He is dedicated to the progress and advancement of Outlaw Field," Ryan said. "We will miss him, as will the community. These positions are often thankless

jobs, but fortunately there are people like Mr. Uffelman who will take on these necessary responsibilities."

The Airport Authority has been mired in controversy and debt in recent years. Former manager Mark Davis walked off the job Sept. 6 without any explanation. The Airport Authority, along with former airport manager Michael Dranttel and former authority members Robert Burdette and Christopher Ferraraccio, also is being sued by fixed-base operator Robert Wyatt over a

\$150,000 fuel facility the authority built. Wyatt says he had a contract to be the sole fuel provider at Outlaw Field.

The Airport Authority also is about \$400,000 in debt — \$200,000 of which is owed to the city of Clarksville. The authority also owes about \$190,000 to Legends Bank, with about \$40,000 of the amount for runway paving and \$150,000 borrowed for the fuel tanks and ancillary facilities.

David Ross covers city government and can be reached by telephone at 245-0262 or by e-mail at davidross@theleafchronicle.com.

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Motorists: Expect delays at Mercury, Middle Tennessee

Because of sewer and water construction at the intersection of Middle Tennessee Boulevard and Mercury Boulevard, traffic on Mercury Boulevard will be rerouted beginning Thursday at 9 a.m.

Traffic in both directions will be rerouted to the north lanes on Mercury. There will be left-turn lanes in both directions at the intersection. When the sewer work is complete — the job is expected to take three weeks — traffic will be rerouted to the south lanes. Some signal modifications will be made to facilitate the traffic changes, but motorists should expect delays near the intersection while the work continues.

No change in heliport area plan

Regional Planning and County Commission still at odds over possible nearby housing restrictions

By REGAN LOYOLA HUNEYCUTT
The Leaf-Chronicle

The debate over a proposed overlay designed to protect Fort Campbell's Sabre Heliport and future surrounding homeowners continued Tuesday at the County Commission's informational session.

Last month, the commission sent back the overlay resolution to the Regional Planning Commission to see if cluster housing could be part of the final proposal. Clusters allow developers to create

residential neighborhoods with smaller lots in exchange for providing sidewalks, underground utilities and open spaces.

The commission was presented Tuesday with the original proposal, plus the cluster amendment they requested last month, and a recommendation of disapproval from the Regional Planning Commission.

If approved by the County Commission Monday, the land-use overlay would require homes and structures built on private land

near Sabre Heliport to conform to designated noise reduction, building height and lighting standards that have been suggested to protect both the private homeowners and Army helicopter personnel.

District 12 Commissioner Lewis Baggett said not taking action now will create a larger problem down the road.

"If houses go up without the noise attenuation and the restrictions on lights, we'll be dealing with the landowners who buy those

IF YOU GO

WHAT: Montgomery County Commission meeting

WHEN: 7 p.m. Jan. 9

WHERE: Montgomery County Commission Chambers in Court House.

houses," Baggett said. "We are talking about the point at which private property rights and the rights of the federal government and their right to train to defend our country meet. If we develop the land without taking action, the problem will get worse."

Thomas Bateman, an attorney representing the Howell family, whose land

will be affected if the overlay is approved, urged the commission to vote against the proposal. He maintains that affected landowners should have the opportunity to "deal with Fort Campbell" on the issue, and it is not the place of the commission to place restrictions on private citizen's land.

"All the voices that are saying, 'Let's do it,' are saying, 'Let's do it to your land and not our land,'" he said. "If you just let us deal with Fort Campbell, we would appreciate that. You are going to set the tone for what happens to their land."

The amended overlay resolution restricts residential development near

Sabre's high noise areas — designated as Noise Zones II and III — but effectively acts as an incentive for developers to build outside the overlay district because of additional lots being created through the cluster formula.

The proposed cluster housing amendment, covering all single-family residential zoning classifications, would allow no residential structures on any property in Noise Zone III, and no clustering of residential structures in Noise Zone II.

In Noise Zone II, minimum lot sizes and widths would have to conform to

► See Heliport, B3

Heliport

Continued from B1

requirements of the base zoning there, with minimum one-acre lots being the benchmark.

Some have expressed fears that inaction on the overlay could result in Fort Campbell moving an aviation brigade to another U.S. military installation because of residential encroachment.

"Over time, the complaints and lawsuits will accumulate, and Fort Campbell will start looking elsewhere," Baggett said. "If they can't successfully train on the land, the policy is to close the installation."

District 19 Commissioner Suzanne Uffelman warned against that possibility.

"There are a lot of places they can move this unit," Uffelman said. "The responsibility we have as commissioners is to think about what the movement of a unit like this from Fort Campbell will mean to every citizen who lives here."

In other news, the County Commission considered Tuesday a resolution that calls for nearly \$1 million in architect fees for the design of a new high school on Peacher's Mill Road. The resolution has been delayed twice before, largely because of the school's \$40 million price tag. The item did not spark discussion or debate Tuesday night, but will be voted on Monday.

Regan Huneycutt covers county government and school board and can be reached at (931) 245-0719 or by e-mail at reganhuneycutt@theleafchronicle.com

321 Gateway opening delayed again

By Bill Harless
bharless@nashvillecitypaper.com

The opening of Gateway Boulevard downtown has been pushed a few weeks into January, even though the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) said in December it would open to traffic by the end of last month.

The delay was caused by problems laying down brick crosswalks on the road, according to TDOT spokeswoman Julie Oaks, who said Gateway should open less than two weeks from today, after the crosswalks have been installed at Gateway's intersection with Third Avenue.

The area will close for about two days. The road also has to be striped.

Gateway Boulevard is the road to which the Gateway Bridge connects when it crosses the Cumberland River from East Nashville. Construction was originally scheduled to finish in June 2003 at a cost of \$2.4 million, though the cost now, after several construction problems, has totaled about \$3.17 million.

Oaks said the project's contractor, Franklin-based Civil Constructors, will likely be charged

penalties for failing to complete the work by December.

When the boulevard opens to traffic, cars will be able take the Gateway Bridge directly to the road and then from there turn northward to quickly reach the Schermerhorn Symphony Center, the Country Music Hall of Fame and the Broadway entertainment strip.

Full completion of Gateway, with its final surface, streetscaping and pedestrian signaling, has been delayed to spring. The re-making of the road, formerly called Franklin Street, calls for repaving and widening the road to four lanes, installing sidewalks and a planted median, making room for on-street parking and erecting six retaining walls.

The project has faced numerous right-of-way and utility difficulties, especially when dealing with old underground utility pipes.

In 2004, for example, a 100-year-old water line under First Avenue burst and flooded Second Avenue, taking months to replace.

TDOT and Civil Constructors have blamed one another for the delays. [CP]