

# Henard Apologizes For Delay In Mailing Letters On Proposed Airport Expansion

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**New Chairman  
Of Authority  
Explains Reason  
Delay Occurred**

**By AMY ROSE**

**Staff Writer**

In his first meeting as new member and chairman of the Greeneville-Greene County Airport Authority, Dr. Don Henard on Monday apologized for a delay in letters being mailed to property owners who could be affected by the proposed expansion of the Greeneville Municipal Airport.

Henard, a retired surgeon, opened the one-hour meeting by speaking to the crowd that filled the boardroom at Town Hall.

"I want to apologize to anyone who first learned that their property was going to be included in the proposed airport expansion by reading about it in the newspaper. This was never the intention of the Airport Authority," Henard said.

An article in the Dec. 30 edition of *The Greeneville Sun* listed the owners of 69 tracts

of property that are included in the environmental assessment for the proposed airport expansion for realignment of its runway.

A public hearing for potentially-affected property owners is scheduled for 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 24, at the EastView Recreation Center.

Henard said, "At a called meeting of the Airport Authority in December, a decision was made to mail a letter to each of the affected property owners. Unfortunately, during the process of preparing these letters, the Christmas and New Year's holidays came.

"I went out of town after Christmas, and before I returned, Amy (Rose) had written an in-depth article in *The Greeneville Sun*, and the involved properties were listed in her article.

"Last week, when I found out that the letters had not yet been mailed, I wrote a personal letter to each of the property owners expressing my regret that this situation had occurred.

"The reason the property

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## Airport

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owners did not receive a letter before Amy's article appeared in the newspaper was simply because of unfortunate timing during the Christmas and New Year's holidays when many employees were off work.

"I regret that this happened, and I apologize for any inconvenience or embarrassment that this may have caused anyone," Henard said.

**Runway Safety Project**

He also said the most important thing that needs to be done at the airport is the "runway safety project, which has been mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)."

"If this project is not completed within the allotted time frame, the airport will lose all federal and state funding and therefore will have to be closed," he said.

According to the environmental assessment, the project must be completed within three years to qualify for federal funding.

The document also says that the project is scheduled to begin in July 2006. However, Henard said that recent delays will cause the project, if approved, to start later.

Henard said having a successful airport is important to all Greene County residents because, along with schools and roads, it is an important thing that companies look for when they are deciding

if they want to located or expand here.

"The FAA has thrown down the gauntlet. The challenge is ours, and it involves the entire community," he said. "We can either bring our airport up to meet the new federal safety standards, or we can shut it down. To me, the choice is obvious."

Claire Showman, of 2285 Kingsport Highway, asked about who will make the final decision on the proposed airport expansion.

County Mayor Roger Jones responded that the FAA will make the initial approval of grant funding, followed by approval of local funding by the Greene County and Greeneville governmental bodies, with final approval to be made by the Airport Authority.

Henard urged Showman to attend the public hearing on Jan. 24, noting that a court reporter will be there to record all comments from the property owners, which will be sent to the FAA for consideration.

Henard explained that the airport expansion plan currently being considered is one of 12 original plans prepared by Barge, Waggoner, Sumner & Cannon, of Nashville, for a solution to the line-of-sight problem caused by a hump in the runway.

He said if the hump of earth is simply removed from the runway, the airport would be shut down for a year, which would be a great disadvantage for the community. Mayor Jones added that this current plan to realign the

runway is more economical than the other plans.

**Invoices Approved**

In other business, the board voted to pay \$42,347 to Vaughn & Melton for work on the environmental assessment for the proposed airport expansion.

Henard said he recently received three invoices from the local architectural and engineering firm — for \$9,964, \$24,910 and \$7,473.

He said these amounts totaled 85 percent of the contract cost of \$49,820, noting that 90 percent of the cost would be paid for by state grant funds.

**Henard Expresses Thanks**

During his opening comments, Henard also thanked several people for his appointment to the Airport Authority, election to chairman and helping him make a smooth transition onto the board.

He thanked Greene County Mayor Jones, the Greene County Commission and the Airport Authority. He also thanked former chairman Bill Brown and John Carter, who has agreed to continue serving as vice chairman.

Henard also thanked former airport manager Michael Roberts, "for the job that he has done and the improvements he has made at the airport over the last two years. And also, for the invaluable assistance that he has provided to me. Michael's presence at the airport will be missed."

In November, the Airport Authority informed Roberts that it had, for financial reasons, decided not to extend his two-year contract that ended Dec. 31.

Roberts said then that he and his wife expected to concentrate on developing a residential home inspection business.

**Other Business**

The board did not take action on a change order for a planned T-hangar gate controller after Phillip Ottinger of Vaughn & Melton said he planned to meet with the contractor later on Monday.

Ottinger said he will present a change order for the board's consideration at its next meeting.

Board member Janet Malone said she is working with City Attorney Ron Woods on the airport's lease agreements for J.B. Marshall's maintenance operation and Forward Air Corporation.

The Airport Authority heard a report from Todd Hensley, the new commander of the Greeneville Civil Air Patrol, who said the local CAP is growing and hopes to be fully operating "within a short time."

Pam Smead, who operates the airport's fixed-base operation (FBO), said one new T-hangar has been rented, and she expects three more to be rented by March and one more to be rented within the next six months.

She said a total of 21 out of the new 40 T-hangars are now rented.

Ron Nimick, president of the Greeneville Airport Support Association, invited Airport Authority members to the association's general membership meeting Thursday night at the office of the airport's fixed-base operation.

# TDOT work to close lanes on Chapman

<sup>321</sup>

## Project expected to last until Memorial Day

By **JEFF FARRELL**  
Staff Writer

SEVIERVILLE — Tennessee Department of Transportation will close some lanes of the bridge where Chapman Highway rolls into downtown Sevierville starting early next week, city officials said.

The lanes will be closed as contractors work to refurbish the bridge, City Administrator Doug Bishop said at Monday's regular meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Bishop announced the planned closing at the end of Monday's regular meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Bishop said he and other officials had been meeting with TDOT representatives about that and other area projects for several months, but were only recently made aware when the work would start.

TDOT officials report they hope to have work on that bridge and two others on Chapman Highway completed by Memorial Day, Bishop said.

TDOT also hopes to complete work on the Highway 448 bypass at the same time. The bypass will provide an alternative route through the city for traffic on Highway 66.

City Engineer Jerry Hickman said he understood the contract calls for the work to be completed as quickly as possible.

"They're going to work on it 24-7, that's

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### TDOT

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part of the contract," he said.

TDOT officials are expected to announce more details to the project this week.

Also Monday, the board approved amendments to its lease agreement for the Welcome Center on Highway 66 and Chamber of Commerce office in the Municipal Complex.

The amendments call for the tenants to insure the contents and pay liability insurance on the buildings.

Several aldermen praised Public Works Director Byron Fortner Monday for his department's efforts to pick up leaves over the last few weeks; they had passed on complaints from residents about that service at previous meetings.

In other action, the board:

- Approved second reading of an annexation on Allensville Road.

- Approved on second reading the rezoning of property in the Municipal Complex from R-3 to C-4.

- Approved on second reading the rezoning of property on Alder Branch

Road from R-1 to C-4.

- Approved an additional \$578 for construction of the pedestrian bridge on the city's new greenway.

- Approved speeding \$12,125 each on two new printers for the city. The cost should cover all expenses for the printers for the next three years, said Jim information services director for the city.

- Approved the expenditure of \$8,330 for boring augers for the water department.

- Reappointed Police Chief Don Myers to the E-911 board of directors.

- Voted to spend \$51,890 for solid steel casing pipe for the water and sewer departments.

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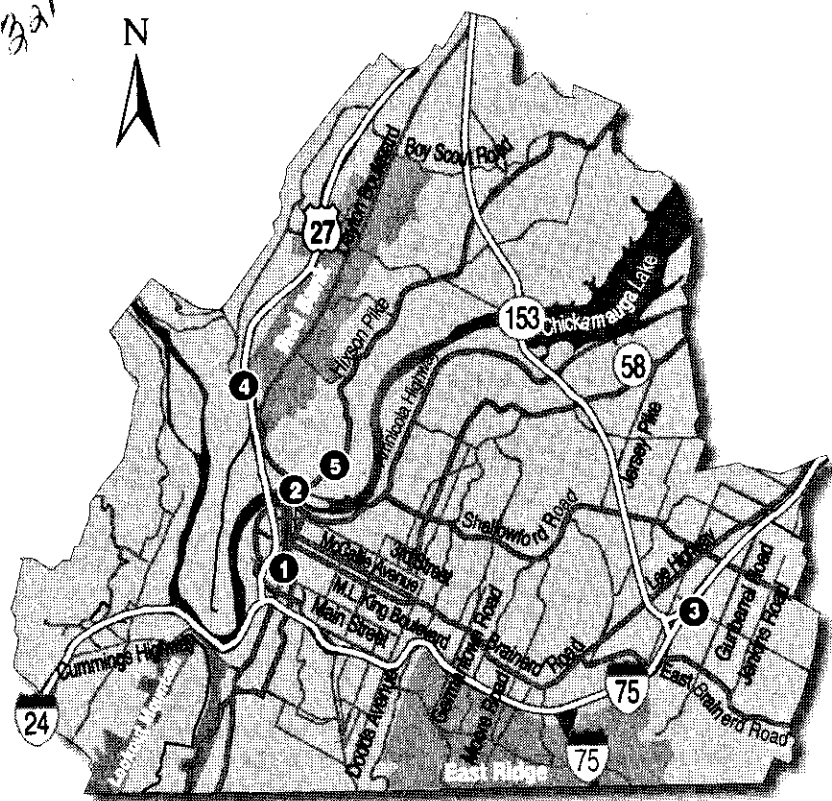
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## Area road construction

Jan. 9 — Jan. 15



- 1 Market Street is reduced to one lane in each direction between 13th and Cowart streets while northbound lanes are repaired.
- 2 The Chief John Ross (Market Street) Bridge is closed for renovation and rehabilitation until September 2007. Traffic is being rerouted to the Olgiatei (U.S. 27) and Veterans (Georgia and Barton avenues) bridges.
- 3 The construction of an interchange to Enterprise South on Interstate 75 between the Lee Highway and Ooltewah exits will continue until December 2006.
- 4 Work on U.S. 127 (Signal Mountain Road) between Suck Creek Road and Baylor Road continues and will require lane closures for pipe installation and paving. Work will be scheduled during nonpeak times, but closures can be expected daily from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Completion of this project now is expected by May.
- 5 Hixson Pike will be narrowed to one lane, in each direction, between Tremont Street and Englewood Avenue for about 60 days. These lane restrictions are necessary for a sewer replacement project.

STAFF GRAPHIC

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## Pigeon Forge greenway runs over budget, extra \$100,000 allotted

By **JOEL DAVIS**

Staff Writer

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PIGEON FORGE — Rushed planning and unforeseen circumstances have caused the first Phase of the Pigeon Forge greenway project to run nearly \$100,000 over estimates.

The Pigeon Forge City Commission on Monday approved a change order in the amount of \$99,709.40 for drainage and erosion control procedures not detailed in the original plans.

Project Manager Steven Fritts briefed the commissioners on the cause of the increased price. He said that because of the rush to complete the paperwork to meet a grant deadline some items were left off the original construction drawing.

"We never like to do that but, in this case, you had a financial advantage in getting out to bid," he said.

The city also ran into a time crunch because planning could only take place after all the needed property rights for the greenway were acquired.

"By the time we got the easements settled, that

pushed us up to the deadline," Parks and Recreation Director John Wilbanks said.

Another contributing factor was the condition of the soil under the Jake Thomas Road bridge was different than expected, so extra steps are needed to prevent erosion, Fritts said.

In June 2005, the commissioners awarded the \$421,823 contract for the construction of a greenway trail along the Little Pigeon River to Rich Construction of Knoxville.

The first phase of the project runs from Jake Thomas Road to Butler Street. Construction is expected to be finished in summer 2006.

In other business, the City Commission approved the second reading of an ordinance to rezone about 20 acres of land along Wears Valley Road and Glen Eden Way to high density residential. In October, commissioners voted to annex the tract, owned by Mountain Ridge, LLC, into the city.

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### **Request for Release of Funds**

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On or about January 27, 2006, the City of Maynardville will submit a request to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the release of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, to undertake a project known as the City of Maynardville Water System Improvement project, for the purpose of upgrading approximately 68,000 linear feet of water lines, \$537,700, in the Maynardville Water Service Area, Maynardville, Union County, Tennessee.

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Greenville Sun  
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## **Sewer Line To Be Installed Along Old Tusculum Road**

321 The Greenville Water Department on Wednesday will begin installing a sewer "force main" off of Old Tusculum Road. two months, according to Doug Carver, a Water Department engineer.

Motorists could experience delays because of work along the roadside during the next The work will begin near the intersection of Old Tusculum Road and Grapevine Trail and end near Tusculum College, Carver said.

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**LETTERS**

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**Writers Question Wisdom, Necessity Of Airport Expansion**

Dear Sir:

We join Clare Showman in her justifiable anger at the manner in which those of us affected by the decision to expand the airport were informed. It is inconceivable that such a crucial decision could be made with so little regard to those affected, both directly and indirectly. Lives are being upset and uprooted. Yet, lack of sensitivity and very poor communication indicate obvious indifference to the impact on the lives of our families.

And, there is an objection to the justification of such an elaborate expansion. It is not obvious to us and others with whom we have spoken of the necessity of such an expansive airport project in Greeneville.

Certainly, safety is of concern for all of us. But, we would argue that the airport is no less safe than our highways with hidden views, dangerous curves, dips in the road, and a myriad of other dangers. And our highways are used by exponentially more people on a daily basis than the airport. We see no comparison to the dangers. And, as reported, the hump in

the airport runway has been there for decades — and without mishap.

We would ask for the real reason the airport is being so greatly expanded when the traffic obviously does not support such an expansion. Fixing the hump in the line of view was one of seven options for the airport runway situation. And even though the hump has been no problem for decades, it can be repaired.

But, expand the airport, no. Repair is a better option than expansion. If repair necessitates air traffic to move to the Morristown airport for a few months, does it not make more sense for a few months' inconvenience for the air traffic than for so many families to forever be disrupted and relocated from their established homes?

Would the fix not be less expensive than the expansion? Where is the wisdom in the expansion? Where is the better good being served in the expansion?

Robert and Martha Beamer  
Kingsport Highway

**Editor's Note: Please see related news article, Page A-1.**