



# Blount County Government

359 Court Street  
Maryville, TN 37804-5906

## Meeting Minutes - Final

### Board of Commissioners

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Thursday, January 16, 2025

6:30 PM

Blount County Courthouse, Room 430

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Live stream via <https://zoom.us/join>

Zoom Meeting ID: 849 5136 0228

### ROLL CALL

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Blount County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Blount County Courthouse of Maryville, Tennessee. Blount County Commission Chairman Jared Anderson called the meeting to order. An electronic roll call was taken by Blount County Deputy Clerk Lauri Bell. There were 16 members present and 5 were absent. The Chairman declared that a quorum was present. The following proceedings were held, to wit:

- Present:** 16 - Commissioner Mike Akard, Chairperson Jared Anderson, Commissioner Robbie Bennett, Commissioner Brad Bowers, Vice Chair Nick Bright, Commissioner Richard Carver, Commissioner Mike Caylor, Commissioner Misty Davis, Commissioner John Giles, Commissioner Scott King, Commissioner Staci Martin, Commissioner Earl McMahan, Commissioner Steve Mikels, Commissioner Dawn Reagan, Commissioner Linda Webb, and Commissioner David Wells
- Absent:** 5 - Commissioner Dyran Bledsoe, Commissioner Quentin Caldwell, Commissioner Ron French, Commissioner Jessica Hannah, and Commissioner Jeff Jopling

**A. SETTING OF AGENDA.**

A motion was made by Vice Chair Bright, seconded by Commissioner Akard, that the agenda be set as posted. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 16 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

**B. CONSENT CALENDAR.**

A motion was made by Vice Chair Bright, seconded by Commissioner Carver, that the Consent Calendar be approved. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 16 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

1. [Resolution No. 25-01-012, A Proclamation Honoring Alcoa Football](#)

**Attachments:** [proclamation Alcoa high school Football Recognition 2024](#)

The Resolution was adopted. Commissioner Akard read this Proclamation out loud, and it was presented to the AHS Football team and head coach Nix.

2. [Minutes of Regular Commission Meeting on December 19, 2024.](#)

**Attachments:** [Minutes of Regular BOC 2024-Dec-19](#)

The minutes were approved.

3. [Minutes of Zoning Public Hearing on December 10, 2024.](#)

**Attachments:** [Minutes of ZPH 2024-Dec-10](#)

The minutes were approved.

4. [Approval of Bonds and Oaths.](#)

**Attachments:** [BONDS AND OATHS RESOLUTION 25-01-011](#)  
[Oaths of Deputy Assessors 2025-Jan-16](#)  
[Oaths of Deputy Sheriff 2025-Jan-16](#)  
[Notary Public Bonds Oaths 2025-Jan-16](#)

The Resolution was adopted.

5. [Notaries to be Elected.](#)

**Attachments:** [Notaries to be Elected 2025-Jan-16](#)

The notaries were elected.

6. [Receiving of Reports. \(Information Only\)](#)

**Attachments:** [Minutes of Budget Committee Meeting 2024-Nov-12](#)  
[Trustee Report November 2024](#)

The reports were received and filed.

7. [December 2024 Financial Reports. \(Information Only\)](#)

**Attachments:** [ARPA Utility Project Update December 2024](#)  
[ARPA Tracking 12.31.24](#)  
[FY24.25 Proposed Capital Plan](#)  
[December 2024 Expense Report](#)  
[December 2024 Revenue Report](#)  
[YTD Expense Report as of December 31, 2024](#)  
[YTD Revenue Report as of December 31, 2024](#)  
[US Bank Report December 2024](#)

The reports were received and filed.

**C. PUBLIC INPUT ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

**D. ELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, AND CONFIRMATIONS.**

1. [Budget Committee \(1-Year Term\) Confirmation of Mayoral Appointments of Commissioners Jared Anderson, Nick Bright and Mike Caylor, and Ms. Sharon Hannum.](#)

**Attachments:** [Budget Committee 2025](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Akard, seconded by Commissioner Giles, that the appointments be approved. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 13 - Akard, Bennett, Bowers, Carver, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 3 - Anderson, Bright, and Caylor

**2. [County Medical Examiner \(5-Year Term\) Confirmation of Mayoral Appointment of Dr. Jean M. Coviello.](#)**

**Attachments:** [Blount County Medical Examiner Jan 2025 Coviello](#)

[CV - Jean Marie Coviello, D.O](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Martin, seconded by Commissioner Carver, that the appointment be approved. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 16 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

**3. [Commission Rules Committee \(September 2025\) Appointment of 5 Commissioners.](#)**

**The Chairman opened the floor for nominations to the Rules Committee. Vice Chair Bright nominated Commissioners Anderson, Carver, French, Giles and Mikels. That was seconded by Commissioner McMahan. The Chairman asked if there were any further nominations. Hearing none, he asked if there was an objection to ceasing nominations. There was none. An electronic vote was taken on the nominations to appoint Commissioners Anderson, Carver, French, Giles and Mikels to the Rules Committee. The Chairman declared there to be cause for abstaining. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 12 - Akard, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Caylor, Davis, King, Martin, McMahan, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 4 - Anderson, Carver, Giles, and Mikels

**E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.**

**F. NEW BUSINESS.**

1. [Juvenile Court Grant Application - \\$100,000.00 \(To request state funds to support safe baby court coordinator position and salary supplement to the juvenile court services director for oversight of the program; no matching funds are required\).](#)  
[Referred to full commission with a favorable recommendation by the Budget Committee \(5-0\).](#)

**Attachments:** [Grant Worksheet and Grant Confirmation Letter](#)

[Memo Juvenile Court Safe Baby Court](#)

[Back up Safe Baby Court TCA 37 1 901](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Carver, that the Resolution be adopted. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 16 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

2. [Resolution 25-01-001, Budget Increase – BCSO - \\$17,567.00 \(Appropriate awarded Department of Justice, Justice Assistance Grant \(JAG\) funds for the purchase of a portable light tower, allowing for higher visibility while working cases and incidents\).](#)  
[Referred to full commission with a favorable recommendation by the Budget Committee \(5-0\).](#)

**Attachments:** [Resolution BCSO JAG Grant](#)

[Amendment BCSO JAG Grant](#)

[Memo BCSO JAG Grant](#)

[Back up Grant Information Worksheet BCSO JAG](#)

[Back up JAG grant award letter](#)

[Back up JAG Grant Light tower quote](#)

[Back up JAG Grant local allocations-tn](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Mikels, seconded by Commissioner Akard, that the Resolution be adopted. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 16 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

3. [Resolution 25-01-002, Budget Increase – Elections - \\$55,000.00 \(Appropriate funds to increase the election worker budget by use of fund balance to adjust the election workers budget line for FY24-25\). Referred to full commission with a favorable recommendation by the Budget Committee \(5-0\).](#)

**Attachments:** [Resolution Elections Budget Adjustment](#)  
[Amendment Elections Budget Adjustment](#)  
[Memo Elections Budget Adjustment](#)  
[Back up Elections Budget Adjustment](#)

**A motion was made by Vice Chair Bright, seconded by Commissioner Carver, that the Resolution be adopted. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 16 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

4. [Resolution No. 25-01-013, Resolution to Amend the Zoning Map of Blount County, Tennessee, from S \(Suburbanizing\) to C \(Commercial\) for a 19.345 Acre Portion of a 34.832 Acre Parcel Located at 3652 U.S. Highway 411 South. The Property is Identified as Tax Map 090 Parcel 018.00.](#)

**Attachments:** [Resolution 25-01-013 3652 US Hwy 411S](#)  
[NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING 2025-01-07](#)  
[Request for ZPH Sub-Com 3652 US411S](#)  
[Draft Resolution Sub-Com 3652 US411S](#)  
[Report of Action Sub-Com 3652 US411S](#)  
[Staff Memo and Attached Exhibits](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Carver, seconded by Commissioner Giles, that the Resolution be adopted. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 15 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 1 - Bright

5. [Resolution No. 25-01-014, A Resolution Protecting Property Ownership Rights of Citizens of Blount County.](#)

Attachments: [Resolution Protecting Property Owners Rights MA-NB](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Akard, seconded by Vice Chair Bright, that the Resolution be adopted.

Commissioner Akard proposed the following amendment to the Resolution:  
"A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING PROTECTING PROPERTY OWNERSHIP RIGHTS OF CITIZENS OF BLOUNT COUNTY.

WHEREAS, the Blount County Zoning Regulations are intended to provide clarity and guidance on land use and development within the county; and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of this commission that in the United States of America, a free nation as declared on July 4, 1776, the absence of a specific prohibition or restriction on property owners in Blount County Zoning Regulations should never be systematically interpreted as grounds for denial of requests not specifically prohibited in Zoning Regulations; and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of this commission that private property rights are fundamental to the freedoms enjoyed by the citizens of Blount County, and protecting those rights is a priority of this Commission; and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of this commission that transparency and accountability in the planning process are essential to maintaining public trust and ensuring fair application of zoning laws; and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of this commission that it is in the best interest of Blount County to ensure that all residents and property owners have clear, consistent, and equitable guidance from the Planning Department; and  
WHEREAS, it is the opinion of this commission that it is in the best interest of Blount County citizens for any/all denied permits to only be denied in writing and always citing the specific Federal, State or Blount County ordinance(s) prohibiting activities on private property owners have applied for to ensure that all residents and property owners have clear, consistent, and equitable guidance from the Planning Department.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BLOUNT COUNTY COMMISSION THAT:

This commission opines that all Blount County Zoning Regulations, State, and Federal laws should be enforced fairly and equally among all Blount County property owners without prejudice.

This recommendation of this commission is non-binding and is merely the official opinion of this commission effective immediately upon passage in suggesting action be taken by Blount County Planning Commission to convert Blount County Zoning Regulations from "PROHIBITIVE" to "PERMISSIVE" in written form concerning any/all uses not specifically listed therein.

This commission recommends that Blount County Planning Commission adopt policy that any action, use, or request that is denied for any Blount County property owner for his/her private property should be done so in writing with a Requirement to Cite Pertinent Rules, Regulations, Ordinances, and/or Tennessee state laws & US federal laws applied/requested use violates.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this recommendation shall be provided to the Blount County Planning Commission and made publicly available to promote awareness and understanding of this official opinion of this commission concerning property ownership rights in Blount County, TN."

Vice Chair Bright seconded this proposed amendment to the Resolution. An electronic vote was taken on the motion to amend the Resolution. An electronic

vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 16 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

Commissioner Giles asked to suspend the rules in order to ask another commissioner a question. Hearing no objection, the Chairman declared the rules to be suspended for the purpose stated.

A motion was made by Commissioner Akard, seconded by Vice Chair Bright, that the words "PROHIBITIVE" and "PERMISSIVE", in the second paragraph of the now therefore be it resolved clause, to be switched. Commissioner Akard withdrew the motion. With no objection, the Chairman declared this amendment to be withdrawn. There was none.

A motion was made by Commissioner Akard, seconded by Vice Chair Bright, that both words "PROHIBITIVE" and "PERMISSIVE" be removed from the second point under the now therefore be it resolved clause. Commissioner Akard withdrew the motion. With no objection, the Chairman declared this amendment to be withdrawn. There was none.

A motion was made by Commissioner Akard, seconded by Vice Chair Bright, that the second paragraph in the now therefore be it resolved clause be amended by striking the phrase "from 'PROHIBITIVE' to 'PERMISSIVE' in written form concerning any/all uses not specifically listed therein."; and inserting the words "from a system that assumes the answer is 'no' concerning any/all uses not specifically listed therein, to a system that assumes the answer is 'yes', unless the use or activity is not specifically forbidden."

A motion was made by Commissioner King, seconded by Commissioner Caylor, that the Resolution be postponed until next month's commission meeting. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have failed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 5 - Bennett, Caylor, King, Martin, and McMahan

**No:** 11 - Akard, Anderson, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Davis, Giles, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0



A motion was made by Commissioner Wells that the Resolution be amended by striking the second paragraph of the now therefore be it resolved clause that states, "This recommendation of this commission is non-binding and is merely the official opinion of this commission effective immediately upon passage in suggesting action be taken by Blount County Planning Commission to convert Blount County Zoning Regulations from "PROHIBITIVE" to "PERMISSIVE" in written form concerning any/all uses not specifically listed therein."

With unanimous consent, Commissioner Akard requested to withdraw his motion to amend the second paragraph in the now therefore be it resolved clause (by striking the phrase "from PROHIBITIVE" to "PERMISSIVE" in written form concerning any/all uses not specifically listed therein."; and inserting the words ; and inserting the words "from a system that assumes the answer is 'no' concerning any/all uses not specifically listed therein, to a system that assumes the answer is 'yes', unless the use or activity is not specifically forbidden.") Hearing no objection, the Chairman declared this amendment to be withdrawn.

Commissioner Akard seconded the motion Commissioner Wells made to amend the resolution by striking the second paragraph of the now therefore be it resolved clause.

A motion was made by Commissioner King, seconded by Commissioner Bowers, that called for the question. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have failed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 13 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Carver, Caylor, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 3 - Bright, Davis, and Mikels

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

An electronic vote was taken on the motion by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Akard, that the Resolution be amended by striking the second paragraph entirely from the now therefore be it resolved clause. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 15 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

**Did Not Vote:** 1 - Caylor

An electronic vote was taken on the motion to adopt the Resolution as amended. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:

**Yes:** 14 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Davis, Giles, King, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 2 - Caylor, and Reagan

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

**6.** [Resolution No. 25-01-015, A Resolution of the Blount County Commission Reaffirming Opposition to Diverting Public Dollars Away From K-12 Public Schools for Private Use.](#)

**Attachments:** [Vouchers Resolution 2025](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Akard, seconded by Commissioner Reagan, that the Resolution be adopted. An electronic vote was taken. The Chairman declared the motion to have passed by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 15 - Akard, Anderson, Bennett, Bowers, Bright, Carver, Caylor, Davis, Giles, Martin, McMahan, Mikels, Reagan, Webb, and Wells

**No:** 1 - King

**Absent:** 5 - Bledsoe, Caldwell, French, Hannah, and Jopling

**Abstain:** 0

**G. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND STATEMENTS.**

**H. PUBLIC INPUT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

**I. ADJOURNMENT.**

**The Chairman declared, that with no further business and in hearing no objection, the meeting to be adjourned. The Blount County Board of Commissioners having met in regular session on Thursday, January 16, 2025, adjourned at 8:42 p.m.**