



# Carter County Commission

## Minutes of:

### Health & Welfare Committee

October 1, 2019 6:00 PM

#### Members:

Ginger Holdren

Isaiah Grindstaff sitting in for Austin Jaynes

Dr. Robert Acuff

Randall Jenkins

Mike Hill

Ray Lyons - absent

Robin McKamey

Layla Ward – sitting in as pervious Vice

Brad Johnson

Chairwoman

#### I. Call to Order

The Health & Welfare Committee was called to order by Dr. Robert Acuff at 7:15 pm.

#### II. Approval of Agenda

Dr. Acuff asked for an amendment to the agenda before approval. He asked to add the Resolution in Recognition of National Adoption Day be added after the approval of the September minutes. A motion was made to approve the amended agenda by Mike Hill second by Randall Jenkins. The motion to approve the amended agenda was unanimously approved.

#### III. Public Comments

None

#### IV. Elect a Chair and a Vice Chair for the H&W Committee

Mr. Hill nominated Dr. Robert Acuff, Robin McKamey second the nomination, all in favor. Dr. Acuff is the Chairman for the Health & Welfare Committee.

Randall Jenkins nominated Ginger Holdren for the Vice Chair, Robin McKamey second the nomination. She informed the committee that she messaged Austin Jaynes and asked him if he would accept the Chair for Buildings & Grounds, he stated yes, he would, she wants to let him confirm that before it is decided on. If he is the Chair for that committee, she doesn't think that she will be able to take a position such as Vice Chair. She declined the position for now.

Randall Jenkins nominated Robin McKamey for the Vice Chair; her acceptance is contingent on Ginger Holdren desires the position later. If Ms. Holdren wants to be Vice Chair, she will resign and nominate her for the position, all in favor. Robin McKamey is the Vice Chair for the Health & Welfare Committee.

#### V. Approval of the minutes from the September 2019 meeting

A motion to approve the September minutes was made by Mike Hill, second by Randall Jenkins. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### VI. National Adoption Day Resolution – attached

Attorney Hardin brought before the committee a resolution to make the week of November 17-23, 2019 Adoption Awareness Week and Saturday, November 23, 2019, National Adoption Day in Carter County, TN. Mike Hill made the motion to approve the resolution, second by Dr. Acuff and Ginger Holdren. The resolution was unanimously passed.

**VII. Continue the discussion on The Victim Assistance Program Funding**

Discussion started about what entities should get the funds that would be added onto the perpetrators that cause the problems that these centers help, and how those funds should be split. Several recommendations were made. Shepard's Inn, The Child Advocacy Center, were among those mentioned. Mr. Hill made a motion to support both the Shepard's Inn and The Child Advocacy Center as the recipients of the funds. Dr. Acuff asked if it should be a 50/50 split. Mr. Hill suggests that it be 50/50 split and be revisited next year. Second by Dr. Acuff.

Roll Call

Dr. Robert Acuff - Yes

Mr. Mike Hill - Yes

Mr. Brad Johnson - Yes

Mr. Isaiah Grindstaff - Yes

Ms. Ginger Holdren - Yes

Mr. Randall Jenkins - Yes

Ms. Robin McKamey - Yes

Motion to split the Victims Assistance Program funds between the Shepard's Inn and the Child Advocacy Center 50/50 was unanimously approved.

**VIII. Health and Welfare Issues / Topics for the 2019-20 Agenda Items**

Topics from last year were Health Insurance Issues that were turned over to Financial Management. The Opioid Epidemic, and the food advocacy in the county with The Second Harvest Food Bank were a couple of other topics that were discussed. Topics don't need to be picked tonight but Chairman Acuff is asking members to bring ideas to be placed on the agenda. Incentives for healthy actions by employees is another topic that has been discussed.

Attached is a letter from the District Attorney General to Mayor Barnett briefing him about the about the Opioid suits and Opioid crisis. The county will be included in the suit because the AG filed for the entire state.

**IX. New Business**

None

**X. Old Business**

None

**XI. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mike Hill, second by Isaiah Grindstaff. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR CARTER COUNTY, TENNESSEE

REGULAR MEETING, MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

"A RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY AND TO PROCLAIM THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 17-23, 2019 AS ADOPTION AWARENESS WEEK IN CARTER COUNTY."

WHEREAS, more than 123,000 children in the United States are currently in foster care awaiting an adoptive family, and annually on average more than 20,000 children reach the age of 18 without ever finding a forever family; and

WHEREAS, adopting children from foster care can be virtually free because many agencies do not charge for the services they provide to families who are adopting a child from foster care and prospective adoptive parents do not have to be rich, married, own a home, or be a certain race or age to adopt. Resources to help potential parents are available at [www.nationaladoptionday.org](http://www.nationaladoptionday.org) or by calling 1-800-ASK-DFTA; and

WHEREAS, to help these children find permanent, nurturing families local courts, including the Carter County Chancery Court, will open their doors on National Adoption Day, Saturday, November 23, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. to finalize the adoptions of local children and join other organizations to celebrate all adoptions; and

WHEREAS, during the last twenty years more than 70,000 children have been adopted during National Adoption Day Events in more than 400 cities across the United States; and

WHEREAS, this effort will offer children the chance to live with stable and loving families and encourage other dedicated individuals to make a powerful difference in the lives of a child through adoption; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners for Carter County, Tennessee recognizes the importance of giving children permanent, safe and loving families through adoption.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners for Carter County, Tennessee, meeting in regular session on this the 21<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2019, with a lawful quorum of said Board being present and with a majority voting in the affirmative that the week of November 17-23, 2019, is hereby declared as Adoption Awareness Week in Carter County, Tennessee, and we urge our fellow citizens to join us in a national effort to raise awareness about the importance of adoption and to be present to witness the joy of the children and parents who will finalize their adoptions in Carter County on National Adoption Day on November 23, 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this Resolution in its entirety shall be effective from and after its adoption, the welfare of the county demanding.

Reviewed and approved by the Health and Welfare Committee on 10/1/19.

Reply to:

Washington County Office  
Washington County Courthouse  
P.O. Box 38  
Jonesborough, TN 37659  
Phone: (423) 753-5020  
Fax: (423) 753-4803



Unicoi County Office  
Unicoi County Courthouse  
100 N. Main Street  
P.O. Box 730  
Erwin, TN 37650  
Phone: (423) 743-1113  
Fax: (423) 743-1120

Carter County Office  
1500 West Elk Avenue, Suite 208  
Elizabethton, TN 37643  
Phone: (423) 547-5897  
Fax: (423) 547-5896

**KENNETH C. BALDWIN**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY GENERAL  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Johnson County Office  
301 West Main Street  
Mountain City, TN 37683  
Phone: (423) 727-3959  
Fax: (423) 727-3965

September 24, 2019

Mayor Rusty Barnett  
801 East Elk Avenue, #201  
Elizabethton, TN 37643

Dear Mayor Barnett:

The opioid epidemic is the greatest public health crisis in our community's history. As your district attorney, it is my responsibility to fight back against this epidemic, protect your rights, and bring the drug companies to justice. In 2017, I sued to recover money for the political subdivisions in my judicial district from three drug companies that caused the opioid epidemic. I write to update you about the lawsuit.

I sued the drug companies under a Tennessee law called the "Drug Dealer Liability Act." That law allows me to hold drug companies responsible for harming Carter County. Most importantly, it allows me to recover money directly for your benefit.

The drug companies called it "absurd" to sue them as "drug dealers." They also challenged my authority to recover money for you. They were wrong on both counts. This week, the Tennessee Court of Appeals held that district attorneys can hold those drug companies liable as "drug dealers," even though each company's headquarters "is an office building" rather than a "back alley." If you would like a copy of that ruling, I am happy to provide it.

In my lawsuit, I have brought the fight directly to the drug companies. At my direction, our attorneys took testimony from over **80 drug company witnesses in six months, across 21 different states**. On your behalf, the attorneys flew all across the country to force defense witnesses to testify, under oath, about the drug companies' misconduct. Other than the district attorneys, no one else in Tennessee participated in these depositions. No other state court plaintiffs in the country did either. I and the other district attorneys have fought for you in a way that no one else has.

We have also reviewed over **220 million pages of documents** produced by the drug companies. The information that we have found is devastating. I have attached one example, in which a top

salesperson for one of the companies compares opioids to "Doritos" and jokes about opioid addiction.

You may have heard about one of the drug companies, Purdue, filing bankruptcy last week and proposing a potential settlement. It is too early to tell precisely how that will play out. However, we have hired our own bankruptcy attorneys to fight for you in the bankruptcy case. Our goal is to bring back all the money that we can from Purdue (and the Sackler family that controls it) to our community.

Also, as a result of our efforts to bring big pharma to justice, a federal court appointed one of our lawyers to represent the interests of local governments nationwide in settlement negotiations. Through that appointment to a settlement "negotiation class," our lawyers will continue to protect your interests.

You may also have read or heard about a communication from the Tennessee Attorney General concerning potential settlement through the State or the "negotiation class." I assure you that you do not need to worry about these issues. Just know that I am fighting to make sure that any potential settlement money will benefit **our community** directly and will **not** be controlled by officials in Nashville.

Regardless of what happens with Purdue, my case is continuing against the remaining two drug companies, Mallinckrodt and Endo. The case is moving towards trial next year. I will be trying that case in our community before a jury of our citizens, who will determine how much money the defendants owe.

Finally, I want to thank you for your continued cooperation with my lawsuit and the Branstetter law firm. Your efforts are helping me bring back money to our community. I will continue to fight for you every day until justice is served.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, I am available to speak with you at any time, as are the attorneys at Branstetter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenneth C. Baldwin". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kenneth C. Baldwin  
District Attorney General