

Opinion

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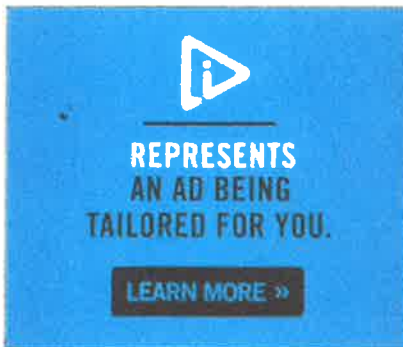
Wanting The Best For Walker County Residents - And Response (4)

Friday, March 25, 2016

On March 23, 2016 Katie Ward with the TFP wrote an article on the county working to address issues of crime and rundown buildings.

I just wanted to make sure that everyone knew that I brought 20 pictures of abandoned and burned homes to Commissioner Heiskell on Jan. 28, 2015. I explained to her that these had been here for years. I asked for her help with this issue.

I wrote letters, emails and left phone messages for the commissioner and others in Codes and Enforcement on: March 31, Aug. 6, July 28, Sept. 8, Sept. 9, Dec. 9 and Dec. 16.



On Dec. 17, 2015 Commissioner Heiskell responded with an apology of being in the hospital with respiratory issues. She had talked to Sheriff Wilson and learned that crime issues are becoming worse. She said she would get the road man in touch with me in the next few days and see what he can come up with. The road man never visited me.

On Jan. 31, 2016 I wrote the commissioner to let her know the road man never visited me.

I believe it was Feb. 2 or 3 that I wrote Sheriff Wilson asking for help after a daylight break-in at our community. He was in my parking lot within two hours. He came back in two days with five local pastors and a meeting place for a community discussion. This meeting on March 1 was moved to Mission Glen Baptist Church due to the large turnout. The parking lot could not hold the cars.

I bring this article to your attention as well as others at the TFP and WCM, The Chattanooga.com and Judy O'Neal's show to respond to Commissioner Heiskell's comments. I hope to set the record straight, not to provoke a confrontation.

In the article Commissioner Heiskell said, "We are trying to do what David Roden wants us to do. It will take community pride to do this cleanup, not just the county. I think we are on the right track and moving forward. No one hates an eyesore more than me."

First, please note that this is not just what I want, there were over 120 people at that first meeting and this is what they want. This effort is not the work of one person. It is a group of very respectable persons who want the best for Walker County. To say it's what David Roden wants is very very wrong. I just brought it to her attention on Jan. 2015. A whole community is demanding for change and working together to do something about it. It is not one person.

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Second, her comments that no one hates an eyesore more than me is very odd to me. After a year of being notified about this issue, why were the houses and the commercial building torn down after the March 1, 2016 meeting. I have looked at these homes and buildings for 15 years and all the residents on this end of the county have as well. There had been plenty of time to do something before the community rose up and demanded a change.

Third, I wish Ms. Heiskell only the best, I have nothing personal against her. But if her health is to the point that it is hindering progress of this county, let us thank her for her service to the county all these years and retire and let someone else start fresh and let's all work together to build Walker County to be the best it can be. While things have not gone 100 percent to the satisfaction of the commissioner and residents in the past, we do owe her a thank you for doing the best she could.

On a sidenote- I have been invited to attend a meeting of the Planning Commission on Thursday, April 14, at 7 p.m. at the Walker County Civic Center in Rock Springs to approve a laundry mat at the site of the old building where the tarps on the roof were. I do plan to attend and hope we can discuss if a facility that lends itself to renters who cannot afford a washer and dryer is really what is best for our community. Seems to me we should be looking for solutions on how we can attract home ownership in our neighborhoods. And if we are going to have homes or mobile homes for rent in our community, these homes should be in good working order, such as heat and air, no holes in the floors, electrical panels and switches that are exposed, windows that have jagged glass that kids can cut themselves on, and so on. Let's raise the standard of what is acceptable for our Walker County families and kids rent and not accept sub-par housing for them to live in.

I appreciate the media covering this project as the project it was intended to be- a rebirth of a community- and not a political rally or endorsement for one person for a elected position, nor a bashing of elected folks. On the other hand, if this community needs to expose and bring attention to a problem that is hurting our community, it is my opinion we should be able to meet with our elected officials and find out why things are not being done.

David Roden

I have been so happy to see the citizens of the Rossville area meet to try to clean up their city and address crime and codes. I live in the Rock Springs area and hope we can do a similar project.

Isn't it a shame that the Rossville area and north part of Walker County has been left to become such an eyesore. Where has Bebe Heiskell been? I commend Mr. Roden addressing she had health issues. But as commissioner she should have stepped down or taken a leave.

I also commend him for saying this is not about him and there were well over 100 people there. If she can read she should know people are fed up with what has happened in Walker County. It should not take a citizen led meeting for her to do her job. But thank heavens for people that care about their community.

People, please get and vote. Sixteen years is way too much of this.

Sara Swanson
Walker County resident

What a shame that it took a community meeting to start a clean up, codes enforcement, whatever else you want to call it to get the county to move in Rossville. What a shame that this had obviously been brought to Ms. Heiskell's attention well over a year ago. She is over the whole county so how in the world did the county let Rossville get to be such an eyesore under her 16 year watch?

After reading the article that Mr. Roden addressed it sounds like she is taking credit for the clean up starting. Well, it is an election year isn't it. I can't wait to hear when the next community meeting is to attend and try to do my part.

Like others are saying, Walker county residents this is the year to vote for change. We have other options finally and everyone just vote. Our county is drowning in debt and I pity the next commissioner trying to dig out of this mess.

But to end on an optimistic note I feel that people are fed up and wanting to be a part of improvement.

Sandy Williams
Concerned Walker County resident

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Kudos to the Rossville area citizens for trying to take things into their own hands. Mr. Roden, anyone that knows about what you and the over 100 citizens are trying to do understand where your heart is. What a pity the commissioner has demonstrated she hasn't had any interest in codes, cleanup or anything else until pushed by publicity through a concerned citizens group.

Wake up people and vote for real leadership this year.

Greg Turner
Rossville

* * *

I will keep it simple:

1. Way to go to the organizers and community residents that are leading the charge to make sure the county does their job to clean up and enforce codes.
2. Vote, vote, vote. Vote for a commissioner that does their job and doesn't wait for citizens and the press to shame them into doing their job.

Steve Webb
Rossville



March 30, 2016

Tennessee Continuing Down The Road To Recovery

It is time to change the conversation in Tennessee. It is time to recognize addiction for what it is: a chronic disease, not a moral failing. Addiction impacts about one in three ... (click for more)

March 30, 2016

We Don't Need An Official State Book - And Response

Does our State Senate have nothing more pressing to worry about and work on other than making an "Official State Book"? We already have enough "Official State" items. Let's see, they could ... (click for more)

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Credit Where Credit's Due

As a long time follower of all things political, I have to stop and recognize a politician when he or she doesn't knuckle under pressure, but takes a stand for the people. Our courageous State ... (click for more)



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It is time to change the conversation in Tennessee. It is time to recognize addiction for what it is: a chronic disease, not a moral failing. Addiction impacts about one in three families in our state. It is a disease to which we are all susceptible by our very nature as human beings. Whether our brains crave nicotine, alcohol, sugar, prescription drugs, or other ... (click for more)

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Breaking News

Strong Storms, Possible Tornadoes Set For Chattanooga Area On Thursday

Strong storms, with the possibility of tornadoes, are set for the Chattanooga area on Thursday. There may also be heavy rain. The National Weather Service reported: PERIODS OF HEAVY RAINS AND LOCALIZED FLASH FLOODING ARE POSSIBLE THURSDAY AND THURSDAY NIGHT... ..STRONG TO SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS POSSIBLE ACROSS THE PLATEAU...CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN TENNESSEE VALLEY...AND ... (click for more)

Sports

Central's Joe Clark Fires Perfect Game Against Red Bank

Joe Clark took domination to another level Tuesday night at Red Bank. Facing the Lions in a key District 6-AA baseball game, the 18-year-old senior took matters into his own hands, firing a perfect game as the visiting Purple Pounders improved to 8-6 overall and 6-0 in district play with the 14-0 win. He needed just 67 pitches to get the job done -- including 49 strikes ... (click for more)

Lady Owls' Thompson Fires One-Hitter At Cleveland In 10-1 Win

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