

Southern

Standard

City to open administrator job

BY **LISA HOBBS**
*Reporter for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)*

A push to name Bill Brock permanent McMinnville city administrator failed Tuesday night.

The Board of Mayor and Aldermen voted 4-3 not to consider giving the position to Brock without benefit of a hiring process

to consider other applicants.

Said Alderman Mike Neal, “Before we go through the process of searching for and seeking a new administrator and the possible expense that is involved in that when you start bringing people in for interviews, we need to make sure we don’t already have the right person here.”

Brock has been interim city

administrator for four years.

Neal requested an evaluation.

“In my knowledge of the situation, Mr. Brock has not been evaluated since 2016. He was evaluated in 2016 and 2015. He was given high marks both times. I



BROCK

would like for all of us to be on the record tonight whether we support him in this position. Since we did change the rules, allowing a person without a college degree to be city administrator, let’s take a vote and see where everybody stands with it. Mr. Brock, in my

opinion, has done a good job.”

Mayor Jimmy Haley, Vice Mayor Ben Newman and Aldermen Ryle Chastain and Steve Harvey voted against a motion to consider hiring Brock as city administrator. Aldermen Everett Brock, Kate Alsbrook and Neal voted in favor of it.

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Blaze of glory



Flames leap skyward during the annual Flag Retirement Ceremony while American Legion members David Grissom and John Davis add more tattered flags to the barrel.

Lacy Garrison photos

American Legion holds Flag Retirement Ceremony

BY **LACY GARRISON**
*Reporter for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)*

*So we raise her up every morning,
Take her down every night.
We don’t let her touch the ground
And we fold her up right.
On second thought I DO like to brag,
‘Cause I’m mighty proud
of that Ragged Old Flag.*

These words sung by Johnny Cash rang true as American flags were burned during the American Legion Flag Retirement Ceremony.

On Tuesday evening, retired veterans and their families congregated at Rock Island State Park picnic area for a potluck before the ceremony began. Around 3,000 flags were collected from

drop boxes in town and were placed respectfully on a tarp on the ground for inspection.

This annual event is held each August and serves to retire worn, damaged or tattered U.S. flags. According to American Legion Post 173 Commander Kevin Killea, this ceremony creates a particularly dignified and solemn occasion for the disposal of unserviceable flags.

Killea said, “It’s the honorable disposal of the symbol of our nation.”

Before the ceremony began, David Grissom, 75, who served in Vietnam and stayed in the military for 22.5 years, explained how the flag is special to him. He recalled the pride he felt even as a young soldier as he passed the U.S. flag.



American Legion members lay out flags for inspection before the ceremony Tuesday evening.

Continued on **2A**

Clothes thief given orange suit

Higgins sentenced to one year in jail

BY **JAMES CLARK**
*Editor for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)*

A man who gained entry to Factory Connection through the ceiling and stole thousands of dollars in merchandise has been fitted with a year in jail.

Thomas Jerel Higgins Jr., 55, was ordered to serve 364 days of an eight-year sentence by Judge Bart Stanley. He was also ordered to make \$2,498 restitution to Factory Connection in a ruling issued last Wednesday.

His partner in crime, Tammy Yvonne Foutch, was given a two-year judicial diversion for her role. It is not alleged she entered the store illegally through the ceiling, but she was caught on camera returning stolen items to the Factory Connection in Manchester. She was ordered to share in paying the \$2,498 restitution.

The incident was discovered the day after Christmas on Dec. 26, 2017 when employees reported to work at the Northgate Center store. They noticed several ceiling tiles had been broken and were scattered around the floor. The missing merchandise was not obvious.

“On the video, he was very methodical about how he went about doing this,” said McMinnville Police detective Stuart Whitman. “He crawled around the store the whole time and if he took something like a hat, he pushed the other hats forward so you couldn’t tell one was missing. He spent a lot of time in the store. If he hadn’t broken those ceiling tiles, they wouldn’t have suspected anything and known to look at the video. It probably would have been weeks before they realized everything that was stolen.”

According to detective Whitman, Higgins and Foutch were living in the back of a hair studio located next to Factory Connection which is how Higgins gained access to the ceiling area. He said Higgins has a history of burglaries.

Higgins and Foutch were indicted by the Warren County grand jury in April for burglary and theft of property between \$1,000 and \$2,500. They entered pleas to their charges last week. Higgins will be eligible to go to inpatient rehab after serving 180 days.



HIGGINS

Stop in the name of safety

BY **LACY GARRISON**
*Reporter for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)*

A message from Warren County School District was sent recently via Skylert notification service to remind all drivers including students, parents and visitors that they are required to stop at the guard booth as they enter either Warren County High School or Hickory Creek campuses.

With school safety being a top priority, Director of Schools Bobby Cox said they are trying

to improve security.

“There are front and rear cameras that provide facial recognition and license plate information,” explained Cox. “We are not trying to cause any issues or be intrusive. We simply want to create the safest environment possible for our students and staff.”

The guard shack is manned by Shelia Bishop, who greets visitors, logs in visitor names, and radios both offices to let them know who is approaching. Shelia has been working the guard shack for five years and has a

few reminders to share as well.

“I log an average of five pages a day with over 100 visitors, not counting school faculty members,” said Shelia. “I want to remind everyone to slow down because the speed limit is 15 mph and 5 mph on campus. Also, parents always need to report to the front office and not drive to the back of the building.”

If you have any questions concerning school safety, contact Warren County Schools at 668-4022 or visit its website, www.warrenschools.com.



Lacy Garrison photo

Everyone visiting either WCHS or Hickory Creek campuses is required to stop at the guard shack. Shelia Bishop sits inside and tediously logs visitor names and radios both offices to let them know who is approaching.

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