

**BUERGER, MOSELEY & CARSON, PLC**

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November 5, 2020

E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr., Executive Director &  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
**TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
2941 Lebanon Pike  
Nashville, TN 37214

Re: Williamson County, Tennessee  
Petitioner for Waiver

Dear Mr. McIntyre:

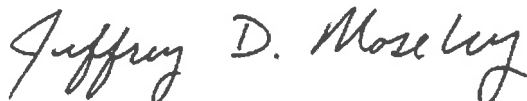
The email from Susan McClamroch to Diane Giddens, dated October 22, 2020, and requesting a waiver request packet has been forwarded to this office. As you are undoubtedly aware, Williamson County Mayor, by letter dated October 12, 2020 had requested a waiver under the Tennessee Heritage Protection Act related to the County Seal of Williamson County, Tennessee. Ms. McClamroch's email was in response to that letter.

Please find enclosed a completed copy of the Petitioner for Waiver Cover Sheet and requested attachments.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

**BUERGER, MOSELEY & CARSON, PLC**



Jeffrey D. Moseley

enclosure



**TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
TENNESSEE HERITAGE PROTECTION ACT OF 2016  
PETITION FOR WAIVER COVER SHEET**



In accordance with T.C.A. § 4-1-412, an initial hearing before the Tennessee Historical Commission on a petition for waiver shall be scheduled at any regular Commission meeting no sooner than 60 calendar days after a petition is filed. Regular meetings of the Tennessee Historical Commission are normally held on the third Friday of February, June, and October. This cover sheet is designed to aid in the review of the petition for waiver. Refer to T.C.A. § 4-1-412 for procedural and term definitions.

**Petition Date:** November 5, 2020

**Petitioning Entity:** Williamson County, TN

**Contact Name:** Rogers Anderson

**Address:** 1320 West Main Street, Suite 125 Franklin, TN 37064

**Phone Number:** (615) 790-5700

**Email Address:** rogers.anderson@williamsoncounty-tn.gov

**Memorial Owner/Managing Entity (if different):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Memorial Name or Description:** Williamson County Seal

**Memorial Type (check all that apply):**

- |   |   |  |                                 |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Artwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Display | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plaque | <input type="checkbox"/> Statue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge             | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial         | <input type="checkbox"/> Preserve          | <input type="checkbox"/> Street |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building           | <input type="checkbox"/> Monument         | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Property     |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bust               | <input type="checkbox"/> Nameplate        | <input type="checkbox"/> Reserve           |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flag               | <input type="checkbox"/> Park             | <input type="checkbox"/> School            |                                 |

**Memorial Subject Category (check all that apply):**

Historic Conflict

Historic Figure

Historic Entity

Historic Organization

Historic Event

**Memorial Subject Description:**

County Seal of Williamson County contains the confederate flag draped over a cannon

**Memorial Location Description:**

Judicial Center, letterhead, county vehicles, miscellaneous locations

**Memorial GPS Coordinates:** \_\_\_\_\_ NA

**Memorial Location City:** \_\_\_\_\_ NA

**Memorial Location County:** \_\_\_\_\_ Williamson

**Waiver Type:**

Alteration

Removal

Rededication

Renaming

Relocation

Other Disturbance or Alteration

**Waiver Type Description:**

Removal of confederate flag

**Basis Upon Which Waiver is Sought:**

See attached report.

**Required Attachments:**

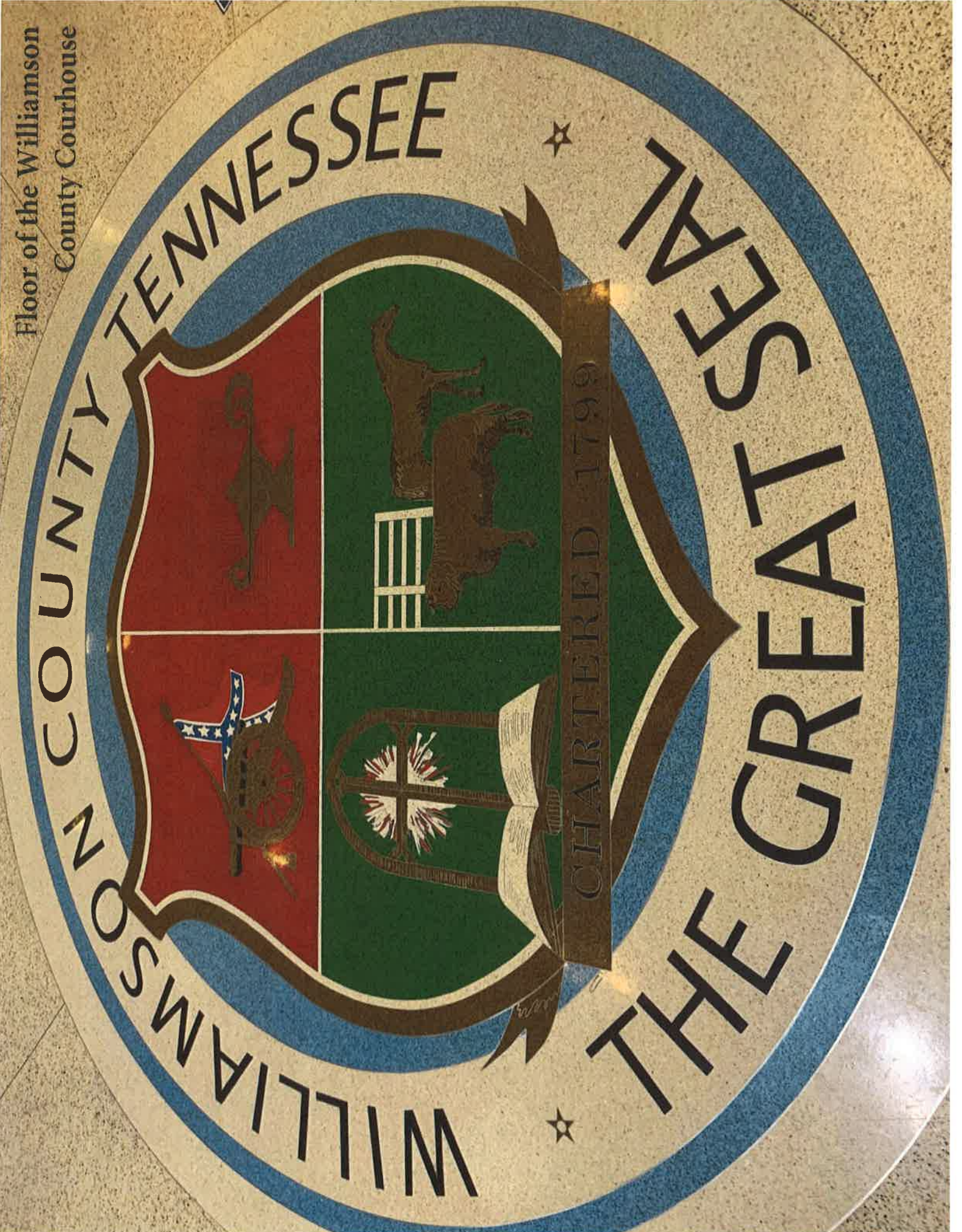
- ✓ Proof that the memorial is or is located on public property
- ✓ Proof that the petitioning entity is a public entity exercising control of the memorial
- ✓ Detailed statement of the request and the basis upon which the waiver is sought
- ✓ Report(s) showing that there is a material or substantial need for a waiver based on historical or other compelling public interest
- ✓ Excel spreadsheet listing the names and addresses of any private entities, groups, or individuals, including, but not limited to, descendants, that may have an interest in receiving notice of the petition
- ✓ Copy of published notice of the petition for waiver stating the basis on which the waiver is sought and that a copy of the petition and all supporting reports will be provided to any interested party at no cost upon written request submitted to the petitioning entity on the website of the petitioning entity
- ✓ Copy of published notice of the petition for waiver stating the basis on which the waiver is sought and that a copy of the petition and all supporting reports will be provided to any interested party at no cost upon written request submitted to the petitioning entity in at least one newspaper of general circulation serving the area of the memorial
- ✓ Copy of published notice of the petition for waiver stating the basis on which the waiver is sought and that a copy of the petition and all supporting reports will be provided to any interested party at no cost upon written request submitted to the petitioning entity in at least one newspaper of general circulation serving Davidson County
- ✓ Photograph(s) of the memorial

**Deliver completed cover sheet and attachments to:**

E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr.  
Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer  
Tennessee Historical Commission  
2941 Lebanon Pike  
Nashville, TN 37214  
Patrick.McIntyre@tn.gov  
615-770-1550



Floor of the Williamson  
County Courthouse



CHARTERED 1799



Williamson  
County Vehicle

ONLY



2500 HD



**BUERGER, MOSELEY & CARSON, PLC**  
Williamson County Attorneys  
306 Public Square  
Franklin, TN 37064  
(615) 794-8850  
(615) 790-8861 Fax



Williamson County  
Letterhead

Minutes, Williamson County Quarterly Court, July 15 Term, 1968 1 2

STATE OF TENNESSEE X  
WILLIAMSON COUNTY X

Be it remembered that a regular session of the Quarterly County Court of Williamson County, Tennessee, was begun and held in the Town of Franklin on the third Monday in July, 1968, the same being the 15th day of said month. Honorable Fulton Greer was present and presiding and the following proceedings were had to wit:

D. L. Jones, Clerk and Earl M. Huff, Sheriff being present Court opened in due form of law, and the Rev. Eugene Crawford gave the invocation.

Roll call showed the following Justices present: J. C. Anderson, William P. Ball, Joe Bellenfant, Joe Bowman, C. C. Brown, Raymond E. Collier, J. P. Covington, Hugh J. Edmondson, ~~Edmund~~ Floyd, Libby Zerfoss Fryer, William R. Gillespie, J. W. Goodman, Richard Hardcastle, Mack Hatcher, Wilson Herbert, Homer Hill, Wallace Jarrett, J. C. Kinnard, J. Paul Kinnie, L. L. Lavender, W. F. Little, R. Turner Mangrum, Herbert McCall, Newt McCord, Jr., Carl McMillan, H. C. Meacham, Charles R. Meek, Alex H. Moran, Robert Moran, T. J. Moran, Charles E. Mosley, Norman Noland, Clyde Pewitt, Harry L. Sanders, A. A. Sanford, I. C. Simpkins, John E. Sloan, Frank Smithson, Loyd E. Tanver, Felix W. Truett, Jr., Vester Turman, Ennis C. Wallace, J. T. Williams and W. H. Williams.

ABSENT: James Walter Bond, Robert Cotton, Robert Finley and John Harold Fox

PRESENT: 44 ABSENT: 4

Minutes of the previous meetings were read and approved with the following corrections: Esq. Sloan stated that the name of Church Street should be Wilson Pike instead of Wilson Circle.

COUNTY SEAL: Mr. James H. Armistead presented to the County a colorful painting showing the four most important elements in the County's development which he had commissioned to be adopted as the official seal of the County. Judge Greer accepted the seal on behalf of the County and expressed his appreciation to Mr. Armistead. Esq. Sloan expressed a warm personal regard for the Review-Appeal and the Armistead Family.

RENDERING SERVICE: Esq. McCord reported that a rendering service from Pulaski had agreed to pick up dead animals provided they were not decomposed, were accessible to the truck and weighed at least one hundred (100) pounds.

REPORTS: The regular reports of the officials were received and ordered filed or spread upon the minutes. The Judge's report is as follows: (See pages \_\_\_\_\_)

The Trustee's is as follows: (See pages \_\_\_\_\_)





# Williamson County Mayor's Request for Waiver

## WILLIAMSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

October 12, 2020

Tennessee Historical Commission  
2941 Lebanon Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37214

RE: Representation of Confederate Flag on Official Williamson County Seal

To the Members of the Commission:

This letter, together with Exhibits A and B, serves as a request for a waiver pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. §4-1-412(c), allowing Williamson County Government to remove a memorial regarding a historic conflict from its official county seal. One quadrant of the Williamson County Seal ("the Seal") contains a depiction of a cannon with the Confederate flag draped across it. This quadrant is reasonably construed to represent the Battle of Franklin that occurred during the War Between the States. As such, this quadrant of the Seal would appear to represent an "historic event" that was part of an "historic conflict" within the meaning of Tenn. Code Ann. §4-1-412. Pursuant to that statute, a waiver must be obtained before a memorial regarding an historic conflict may be removed or altered. Because the definition of "memorial" includes artworks, flags, and historic displays commemorating historic conflicts including the War Between the States, it is Williamson County's understanding that a waiver must be approved before removing the image of the Confederate flag from the Seal.

The Board of County Commissioners of Williamson County passed Resolution No. 9-20-18 on September 14, 2020 (copy of the resolution is attached hereto as Exhibit A). That resolution authorized the County Mayor to formally petition the Tennessee State Historical Commission for permission to remove the representation of the Confederate flag on the Seal. The resolution is accompanied by, and adopts by reference, a report of a Task Force that outlines the reasons that there is a material or substantial need for a waiver based upon compelling public interest. The Task Force Report is attached hereto as Exhibit B and is incorporated herein by reference in support of this request for waiver. Williamson County relies upon the reasons stated by the Task Force in support of its position that a compelling public interest creates a material or substantial need for waiver of the statute.

Entities, groups or descendants that may have an interest in the waiver include: Williamson, Inc., Heritage Foundation of Williamson County, African American Heritage Society of Williamson County, Williamson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Sons of the Confederacy, Daughters of the Confederacy and descendants of Virginia Bowman, Williamson County Historian who was one of the creators of the seal in 1967.



**Tennessee Historic Commission**  
**October 12, 2020 -- Page Two**

Pursuant to T.C.A. 4-1-412(c)(3), Williamson County has published notice of the petition for waiver on the Williamson County Government website, in a newspaper of general circulation in Williamson County, Tennessee and a newspaper of general circulation in Davidson County, Tennessee. The notice provides that any interested party will be provided a copy of the petition and supporting report at no cost upon written request.

Having concluded that removal of the Confederate flag from the Seal is in the best interests of the citizens of Williamson County, Tennessee, the Board of Commissioners of Williamson County, Tennessee do hereby seek waiver of T.C.A. 4-1-412 (b)(1) and (2) to allow removal of the Confederate flag from the Seal.

Sincerely,

WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rogers Anderson", written over a faint, illegible printed name.

Rogers Anderson, Mayor

Enclosures

xc: Jeff Moseley, County Attorney

STATE OF TENNESSEE, WILLIAMSON COUNTY

I, Elaine Anderson, County Clerk of Williamson County, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and perfect copy of: Resolution to Accept and Adopt the Report of the Task Force Established for the Purpose of Evaluating the Official Williamson County Seal.

as the same appears of record in Minute Book No. 30 Page      on file in my office at Franklin.

Witness my hand and seal, at office, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2020

Elaine Anderson Clerk

By \_\_\_\_\_, D.C.

**RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT AND ADOPT THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE  
ESTABLISHED FOR THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATING THE  
OFFICIAL WILLIAMSON COUNTY SEAL**

**WHEREAS**, by Resolution 7-20-7, the Board of Commissioners of Williamson County established a Task Force to evaluate the presence of the Confederate flag and cannon on the official Williamson County Seal, due to recent events and public comment; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the four quadrants of the official seal of Williamson County adopted in 1968 bears the above described cannon and Confederate flag commemorating the local history related to the War Between the States; and

**WHEREAS**, the design on the Williamson County Seal meets the definition of a memorial commemorating an historic conflict under Tenn. Code Ann. §4-1-412; and

**WHEREAS**, due to such status, any change in the Seal would require approval of the Tennessee Historical Commission by 2/3 vote, after request by the relevant public entity, which in this case is Williamson County; and

**WHEREAS**, such request must be accompanied by at least one report showing that there is a material and substantial need for the Seal to be altered based on historical or other compelling interest; and

**WHEREAS**, a Task Force composed of citizen stakeholders, representing a range of community, business and historical perspectives, as contemplated in Resolution 7-20-7 met and considered the issue and has provided such a report to the Board of Commissioners in order that it may consider whether it is appropriate to request approval to alter the Seal;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Williamson County Board of Commissioners, meeting in regular session this 14<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2020, finds that the report addresses the financial, social, public interest, tourism and business impacts of altering the seal, and includes a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners regarding (1) whether there is a material and substantial need for the Seal to be altered and (2) if so, the specific historical or other compelling interest(s) that support such need, as required by state law and requested by this Commission; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Williamson County Board of Commissioners hereby receives, accepts and adopts the report of the Task Force, attached hereto and incorporated by reference; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Williamson County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the County Mayor to submit a request to modify the County Seal of Williamson County to the Tennessee Historical Commission, supported by the report of the Task Force; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Williamson County Board of Commissioners does commend and thank the Task Force members for addressing the issue and the hard work expended to create the submitted report; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution shall take effect from and after the date of its passage by the Williamson County Board of Commissioners, the public welfare requiring it.

  
County Commissioner



Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_ (continued)

**COMMITTEES REFERRED TO & ACTION TAKEN:**

Property Committee For 3 Against 2 Pass \_\_\_\_\_

Budget Committee For 3 Against 2 Pass \_\_\_\_\_

Commission Action Taken For 16\* Against 7 Pass \_\_\_\_\_ Out \_\_\_\_\_ \*As amended

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elaine Anderson, County Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tommy Little, Commission Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rogers Anderson, County Mayor

9/22/2020  
Date

\*As amended - Use the Final Report of the Task Force instead of the "Draft" that was mailed as an attachment in error



EXHIBIT "B"

# COUNTY SEAL TASK FORCE REPORT

WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SEPTEMBER, 2020

# I. Williamson County Seal Task Force Executive Summary

On July 13, 2020, the Williamson County Board of Commissioners created a task force with resolution 7-20-7 for the purpose of “evaluating revision of the official Williamson County seal.” The task force was authorized by the County Commission after a number of citizens requested that the Commission consider seeking state approval for a change to the top left quadrant of the current Williamson County seal, which contains a Confederate battle flag draped over a cannon. The task force met weekly beginning July 28, 2020 and then three times in the final week, ending August 28, 2020, invited public input through [williamsonchamber.com/countyseal](http://williamsonchamber.com/countyseal), held a citizen testimonial session open to the media, and assigned task force members to research and author the different sections of the report. The minutes of the task force meeting were published on the web site [williamsonchamber.com/countyseal](http://williamsonchamber.com/countyseal) and are included in the appendix. At the first meeting the task force decided unanimously to focus the discussion and report to the quadrant of the county seal that currently contains a Confederate flag, based on three different passages explicitly referencing the quadrant containing the Confederate flag in the resolution that established the task force. In addition, the task force determined the possible outcomes were:

1. Alter the quadrant containing the Confederate flag (i.e., replace the flag with another flag or eliminate the flag entirely)
2. Redesign the entire quadrant containing the Confederate flag
3. Recommend the retirement of the Williamson County seal

We find it necessary to state that no subject created more discussion and consternation among the task force than the meaning of the flag. As a task force, we spent a tremendous amount of time in our meetings discussing the Social and Public Interest Evaluation of our report. After rounds of discussion and several edits, we are proud to say that we remained unified in our recommendation because we made sure not to divide over our diverse personal attachments and various historical interpretations over the meaning and evolution of the Confederate flag. The recommendation of the task force to the Williamson County Commission is to request removal of the Confederate flag from the upper left quadrant of the Williamson County Seal.

The resolution that created the task force required a report to include “an evaluation of the financial, social, public interest, tourism, and business impacts of altering, or not altering the seal.” The following sections detail the reasons why the task force determined there is a “material and substantial need for the Seal to be altered.”

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## II. Business Impact Evaluation

The continued use of Confederate symbols could have a lasting effect on any number of the critical layers that make up the fabric of a thriving community, but there are few more important to examine than the impact on the local economy and the businesses that comprise it. It is imperative that business leaders can count on our community to create an environment that fosters a welcoming culture of inclusion- a culture that ultimately affords the company the opportunity to attract and retain the best talent. Local businesses should be able to rely on the county to create an atmosphere that continues to attract the most competitive talent in Williamson County and Middle Tennessee.

In working to create the kind of community where a talented workforce wants to live and work, it is important to ensure that anything that suggests that a community is not welcoming or inclusive is addressed. One needs to look no further than the state of Mississippi to see how embracing a symbol like the Confederate battle flag can have a negative impact on talent retention and recruitment, and subsequently business and economic prospects of the future. From 1894 to 2020 the Mississippi's state flag featured the Confederate battle flag. While our economies are very different, the task force determined Mississippi is a relevant example to examine because it is in the south, is a border state to Tennessee, and, after struggling with the issue of their state flag and how it impacts their ability to recruit and grow companies for decades, recently removed the Confederate battle flag from their state flag.

For many years, the negative perceptions of Confederate symbols have been exemplified through the actions of corporate employers. Following the Charleston church shooting in 2015, Amazon, Target, Etsy, Walmart, and others announced their decision to pull Confederate items from their stores and websites. In the same month, South Carolina's governor, Nikki Haley, also took decisive action by removing the Confederate battle flag from statehouse grounds. Fast forward to December of 2015, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) took a public position that displaying the Confederate battle flag in the workplace constitutes evidence of a "racially hostile work environment". More recently, NASCAR banned the Confederate flag from its events and properties. Additionally, Secretary of the Defense Mark Esper effectively banned the display of the Confederate battle flag at US military installations when, in a July 2020 memo, the Secretary rejected 'divisive symbols' when outlining which flags could be flown on site.

Through the majority of these historic events and the changing political and social climates, the state flag of Mississippi retained the symbol of the Confederate battle flag. While several organizations had made efforts to remove the symbol during this period, it wasn't until 2020 - following the death of George Floyd, that the issue was reignited and businesses began to apply pressure on the state to replace the flag. The NCAA publicly expanded their Confederate flag policy, making Mississippi the only state in the country prohibited from hosting the championship events. Walmart announced it would stop displaying the state flag in its stores, and the Mississippi Baptist Convention called for its immediate removal calling the flag "a relic of racism and a symbol of hatred". Even with a declining economy and years of social pressures, it was not until this tidal wave of response from private, public, and non-profit sectors that brought the issue to a close. Reflecting on the past and hopeful for the future, Scott Waller, President and CEO of Mississippi Economic Council said,

“It is vitally important your brand represents the future. In Mississippi, the state flag that was recently removed was not representative of all of our citizens, and it created a negative image of our state across the country and the world. We can now focus on the opportunities in front of us in a way we never have before.”

Companies choose their location to build and grow based upon a number of factors but none are more important to the process than having a large pool of highly skilled employees. Corporate leadership wants to know that they can count on a community to create a place where employees want to live, work and play. Building that welcoming environment helps ensure that companies will have qualified candidates to fill their positions. As seen in Mississippi, when a community fails to create and cultivate an inclusive environment, citizens begin to relocate because they do not feel welcome. That exodus of talent creates major challenges for businesses and local economies. Lack of qualified, local talent can make retaining a community’s employers exponentially more difficult.

Corporate leaders who have led their organizations through the process of ultimately selecting Williamson County as the home of their office relocation have cited our community’s long history of government stability and pro-business practices as reasons for their move. In February 2020 Thnks, a technology company originally based in Manhattan, New York, announced plans to relocate their headquarters to Franklin. When asked about what attracted them to Williamson County, Brendan Kamm, co-founder and CEO of Thnks said,

“Williamson County’s hard-working and gracious culture is a perfect fit with Thnks’ mission of growing business with gratitude. The combination of talent and the business-friendly environment means we couldn’t have found a better location for our headquarters.”

While government stability and a pro-business posture is important, it is not enough. Had Thnks (or any of the other world-class companies that have chosen to relocate to Williamson County) not felt as though our community was a welcoming place, they would have likely made a different decision and taken their company, along with its millions in capital expenditures and high paying jobs that lead to increased tax revenue, elsewhere. Make no mistake, attracting companies from across the globe creates career opportunities for Williamson County residents and leads to an increase in revenue for our county. Strife within a community, especially when the discord revolves around the use of something as polarizing as a Confederate symbol, can have major ripple effects when it comes to corporate relocation decisions, and ultimately, economic, future tax revenue, and job growth prospects for the county. Past success in retaining and attracting companies to Williamson County does not guarantee future success. Now that the presence of the Confederate flag is a public issue in our community, keeping the flag on the county seal puts our ability to attract top talent, and to compete for existing company expansion and new company relocation, at risk. In fact, while being interviewed for the position of Chief Executive Officer of a major Williamson County business a candidate asked specifically and unprompted about the Confederate battle flag on the county seal and about the conversation our community is currently having about its removal. The issue has already garnered the attention of some of Williamson County’s largest employers. A number of Williamson County employers, like Jackson National and Nissan, have signed a letter expressing their desire to have the flag removed from the Williamson County seal

(see Appendix). Promptly removing the Confederate battle flag from the seal would ensure this issue does not become a national story and that future candidates for great jobs in Williamson County feel authentically welcomed and embraced.

For years Williamson County has been viewed as a leader not only in the region but in the state. With over 20% of Tennessee's management jobs being located in Williamson County, and almost 28% of Tennessee's *Inc. 5000* businesses calling our community home, people pay attention to what we do and the decisions that we make. Let us not miss this opportunity to lead by example and to take this important step in working to ensure that all of our current and future residents (and their employers) feel welcome in our community.

### **Works Cited**

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### III. Tourism Impact Evaluation

In 2019 Williamson County welcomed 1.81 million visitors. Travelers are choosing to visit Williamson County for a myriad of reasons including leisure (vacation), business (meetings, conventions, corporate meetings) and sports tournaments.

Based on research conducted by Destination Analysts in December 2019, following were the most common leisure traveler activities while visiting Williamson County (% represents percentage of survey respondents):

- Dining (80.4%)
- Shopping (75.6%)
- Scenic drive (61.4%)
- Visit a historic site/attraction (46.2%)
- See live music (33.7%)

The most popular attractions include:

- Main Street (60.8%)
- The Factory at Franklin (48.5%)
- Natchez Trace Bridge (22.4%)
- Carter House (20%)
- Leiper's Fork Distillery (17.2%)

The most liked aspects of Franklin & Williamson County include:

- Charming/small town feel (18.9%)
- Friendly people (11.2%)
- Ambiance/atmosphere (9.1%)
- Historic sites (8%)
- Beautiful scenery (7.6%)

Williamson County's visitors are interested in learning about the Battle of Franklin and the effect the battle had on all of our citizens and community. The research shows that visitors are learning about and exploring Williamson County's history by visiting historic sites and parks, Civil War Trail markers, the African American Heritage Driving Tour and Franklin Walking Tours. In addition, The Fuller Story has played an important role in recent visitation.

The research shows Williamson County's visitors are learning about the history of the county through experiences, exploration and online. Williamson County visitors feel the community is a welcoming and inviting destination. In the research that has been conducted, the Williamson County Seal was not given as a reason for visiting and/or learning about the history of the county.

The concern from a tourism perspective would be if the County Seal conversation is picked up by regional and national media, portraying Williamson County in a negative light. This could lead to a loss of potential business, both on the leisure and group side. From a sports tournament perspective, in Mississippi during the recent state flag conversations, the Southeastern Conference (SEC), Conference USA (C-USA) and NCAA made statements about precluding hosting events in the State of Mississippi if the state flag was to stay the same.



Below are a couple of media excerpts portraying this example:

“It’s past time for change to be made to the flag of the state of Mississippi,” Greg Sankey, SEC Commissioner, said in a statement. “Our students deserve an opportunity to learn and compete in environments that are inclusive and welcoming to all. In the event there is no change, there will be consideration precluding Southeastern Conference championship events from being conducted in the State of Mississippi until the flag is changed.” ESPN June 18, 2020

“Competing in an NCAA championship is a special experience for college athletes who compete at the highest level and we are grateful for the college athlete voice leading to this decision,” said Mark Emmert, NCAA president. “We must do all we can to ensure that NCAA actions reflect our commitment to inclusion and support all our student-athletes. There can be no place within college sports where any student-athlete is demeaned or unwelcome.” Sports Illustrated, June 19, 2020

“Conference USA announcing that no C-USA championship event will be held in Mississippi until there is a change.” Mississippi Today, June 22, 2020

The County Seal discussion also has the possibility to be tied into a larger media discussion of how we interpret and honor history in Franklin, inadvertently involving Franklin’s Confederate monument. These discussions about the monument in particular would lead to additional negative media coverage, resulting in a loss of potential visitor business.

In summary, the County Seal doesn’t presently have an effect on whether or not a visitor chooses to visit Williamson County, although the discussion has the potential to affect short and long term efforts to attract leisure travelers, sports tournaments and group business to Williamson County.

## **IV. Social and Public Interest Evaluation**

### **A. A General History of the Confederate Flag**

When the thirteen states officially seceded from the Union to form the Confederate States of America, these states operated under three different flags during the Civil War, which occurred from 1861 to 1865.<sup>1</sup> The first flag was called “The Stars and Bars,” the second was called “The Stainless Banner,” and the third flag was called “The Blood Stained Banner.” Featured inside of both the Stainless Banner and the Blood Stained Banner flags was a rejected national battle flag design that was used in the state of Virginia.<sup>2</sup> This “Confederate cross” emblem would eventually become the best known representation of the Confederate battle flag.

Alexander Stephens, the Vice-President of the Confederate States of America, said in his Cornerstone Speech on March 21, 1861, “The new Constitution has put at rest forever all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution—African slavery as it exists among us—the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution... Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition.” The flag has been used by the Klu Klux Klan, which intimidated, threatened, and lynched black men, women, and children in the south for decades, while burning down their homes, churches, and businesses.<sup>3</sup> Since 1968, this controversial flag has been pictured in the upper left-hand quadrant of the Williamson County Seal.

### **B. Contemporary View of the County Seal from Community Input**

As referenced in the Wall Street Journal in recent years, “Many Southerners take legitimate pride in the heroism and sacrifice their ancestors displayed under that banner, but to millions of Americans today, black and white, it means not heritage but hate.”<sup>4</sup>

On the web site [WilliamsonChamber.com/CountySeal](http://WilliamsonChamber.com/CountySeal) created by the task force, respondents were given 250 words or less to share their opinion about the presence of the Confederate flag on the county seal. The survey received 1,225 responses over a period of 21 days. The survey found 52% (638) of those respondents were in favor of removing the Confederate flag from the county seal, while 43% (521) of the respondents opposed removing the flag. The survey also revealed 5% (66) of the respondents either mentioned adding a flag but keeping the Confederate flag, using funding for other things, asking why we were doing this, unclear answers and things of this nature. It must be stated that this survey was not designed or intended to be a scientific poll, simply a way for Williamson County residents to provide input, per the task force resolution.

To some in our community, the Confederate flag is seen as a symbol of treason, white supremacy, racial terror, exclusion, and the inhumane enslavement and debasement of Africans in America. These views are expressed in the following quotes from the public input forum:

- *“Regardless of what the flag was intended to be, it has become a symbol of racism; a signal to those of color that they’re not welcome, accepted, or equal. It is divisive and does not unite us as a community.”*
- *“I believe the flag should represent all people in Williamson County.”*
- *“As a veteran I have agreed to defend this country from all foes, foreign and domestic. The Confederate flag has no business adorning an official seal. This is AMERICA, not the confederacy! Remove the flag immediately, if you want a flag on the seal use the flag of the United States.”*
- *“I try to imagine myself as a person of color looking at the symbol on our county flag. This county represents all residents of the county. These images seem to glorify a time of history that would be very dark for a person of color and their heritage. That glorification and reminder would be something that would make me feel unwelcome and create division or misunderstanding on a constant basis. With all of the changes happening in our country addressing mistreatment, this change seems just.”*
- *“It’s time, we need to change the seal. I’ve lived here 20 years, and I am a native middle Tennessean. A bi-racial friend opened my ideas that to a black person, the Confederate flag hurts their heart in the same way a Nazi logo hurts a Jewish person’s heart. Once I saw that viewpoint, I get it like never before.”*
- *“I feel very proud and included as an African American woman living in Williamson County however looking at the flag and seeing the Confederate flag on the Williamson county flag does not welcome or show inclusion as the County has grown and changed. It references a time that was degrading and belittling to many African Americans. It hurts my heart.”*
- *“I believe the message the flag sends is negative, hurtful, and extremely racist and it does not align with Williamson County as it welcomes everyone regardless of race. By definition: a “seal” confirms, ratifies, guarantees, assures, an impression, makes secure, authenticates... I don’t believe this is the impression we want to make. I don’t believe this ratifies what WC stands for. I don’t believe this confirms what we believe of our black brothers and sisters. Thank you.”*
- *“I would like to see the seal of Williamson county redesigned to reflect a more current diversity of heritage. Today’s Wilco is a vibrant, diverse community, with modern business and industry, leading educators, and a variety of religious belief. The confederacy is a blemish on our past that should not be revered, but rather viewed with regret and remorse. It’s place of honor on our seal, & in our county seat and town square is an offense that should be repositioned as a reminder of past mistake.”*

For others in our county, the Confederate flag is a symbol of southern heritage, rich antebellum history, and the idealism of states’ rights. These views are expressed in the following quotes from the public input forum:

- *“The County Seal should not be changed, As I understand it “the upper left hand is a cannon with a Confederate flag draped over it, to signify the community’s civil war losses. Thousands died defending their homes. They deserve to be respected and*

*remembered. If the seal must be changed to appease those who wish to erase our history, add an American flag to honor all who fought and died for their beliefs.”*

- *“I find it counter-productive to abandon our history, warts and all. It is our past and we learn from it that makes us what we are today. To alter and forget our history would doom us to repeat any mistakes from which we would have the opportunity to learn. Therefore, I oppose the removal of the Confederate flag from our county seal.”*
- *“Leave it alone. It is history and heritage, not hate. I grew up in Franklin I attended the Franklin high School Rebels. I also noticed in the last decade Williamson county has been an incredible amount of money obtaining property that the battle was fought on. I thought the idea behind this was to teach the lessons we should learn from our civil war. Please leave the seal alone!”*
- *“My 4th great grandfather, John Richard Austin, 4th Inf Co G, CSA served and fought for state’s rights, not slavery. Poor, honorable men in the south stood up for state’s rights and gave their lives in many cases. Never owning a slave, in fact, they scratched a living out of the soil in direct competition with the plantations. Those that do not understand history can be fooled into repeating it. Do not destroy my heritage, instead, learn history.”*
- *“Keep the seal! I moved to Williamson County in 1973 and graduated from Franklin High School in 1978. The “heritage” of our community and Williamson County has attributed to the substantial growth during my lifetime as a resident of Franklin. The seal still reflects this heritage for the people that have lived in this community for decades. The Williamson County Seal has not been a deterrent for newcomers nor has it slowed the growth of tourism in Historic Downtown Franklin.”*
- *“My view is to leave the Williamson County Seal as it is. The Civil War was real and we lost a lot of lives, white and black. We are not promoting slavery. The flag stands for “heritage, not hate.” It honors our ancestors who fought in the Civil War, and that it is a symbol of pride in the distinctive region of the country & its culture. The flag represents freedom from excessive government, not racism. Our ancestors fought for individual states to have the right to govern themselves.”*
- *“I like the Seal as is, particularly the imagery of the Confederate flag. My ancestors fought under that flag valiantly, and I appreciate their service to the ideals and principles they were trying to uphold. Having been born in Tennessee, it’s important to me we preserve our heritage in all aspects.”*
- *“I urge the taskforce to recommend that the county leave the seal as is. As a direct descendant of Confederate soldiers who fought and died with the TN army, I firmly believe that our county has an obligation to honor the history of the battles that took place here and that claimed the lives of thousands. Confederate veterans have been recognized as US veterans for decades. We deserve the right to honor their memories, our unique southern heritage and our history without shame and “re-branding.”*



In addition, the following quotes from the public input forum are included in this report because they reflect the feeling of multiple responses and/or they brought a new perspective to the same main point.

- *“Concerns about county debt should outweigh this as a priority.”*
- *“Williamson County is home to diverse residents and international corporations. A seal sends a message about the values of the organization it represents. We also should not include a cross and Bible on our seal -- a government entity should not promote a particular religion to the exclusion of others. Create an entirely new, vibrant, modern logo.”*
- *“The county may want to provide to the state museum copies of the old seal and the new with an explanation of why the county decided to update the seal. The old seal is only fit for a museum with proper contextualization. The new seal, however, should be developed through transparent processes that include participation from as many residents and parts of the county who want to participate. The county may want to have facilitated community conversations about the seal to inform this work.”*
- *“As a retired employee of Williamson County, I know changing the seal would be a GREAT expense. Vehicles decals, clothing, stationery and envelopes, just to mention a few.”*
- *“It’s a simple fix. Replace it with the American flag.”*

### **C. Highlights of the Testimonies of Mr. Dustin Koctar and Mr. Mike Plumley**

On August 11, 2020, the task force held a virtual, citizens meeting with two opposing perspectives on the flag. Dustin Koctar and Mike Plumley, both residents of Williamson County, presented their perspectives to the taskforce in the presence of the media.

Mr. Koctar, who garnered over 11,000 on-line signatures from across the globe through a change.org petition in agreement to remove the flag, and whose wife was born and raised in Williamson County, shared about the time they went to the Williamson County courthouse to finalize the adoption of their oldest son of three Ugandan children. Dustin said, “As you enter the rotunda, you can’t miss it – the county seal practically takes up the whole floor – and there you find that flag. It struck me how hypocritical it was to have a symbol of racism like that honored in a building that was dedicated to justice.”<sup>5</sup>

The second perspective was offered by Mr. Mike Plumley, a Vietnam Veteran, member of several veterans’ organizations including the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Mr. Plumley shared that he believes the county seal portrays the county’s history and ought to remain; “The Civil War was a very ugly and horrific part of that history, but regardless of this ugliness, a significant battle was fought here. The cannon and flag should remain as reminders of our past, of the struggles, and the blood that was shed here.”<sup>6</sup>

## D. Local and National Changes with the Confederate Flag and Iconography

Franklin High School of Williamson County is the only school in the district whose mascot today is different than its original, and has changed again. The most recently retired mascot, the Rebel, is a common name for the Confederate army. The original mascot was the Pioneers until 1937 during the Jim Crow era when it was changed. In a Williamson Herald article from December, 2010 and updated April, 2014, then Principal Willie Dickerson, in going through the school annuals, found that the original mascot was a Pioneer. "At the beginning of the school year in 1937 the Rebel was designated as the school mascot," she said. The senior class and student body voted for the name change and stated, "May this name (the one adopted for the school by a vote of the student body, and thereafter, by the Senior Class as the title of our annual) always suggest, not animosities of the past, but a determination to fight ever to uphold those ideals we believe to be right." Franklin High School yearbook staff, 1937

The summer of 2020 saw a nationwide effort to address racial injustice after the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. A Franklin High School alumna started an online petition in favor of removing the Rebel mascot that received almost 3,000 signatures. In July, 2020, a committee of Franklin High School administrators, parents and students was formed to recommend that the Rebel mascot be changed. The committee decided that the mascot should be changed and Superintendent Jason Golden stated, "I have reviewed the details of their recommendation and concluded that it's time for this change." In the August 18, 2020 edition of the school district's newsletter, In Focus, Principal Shane Pantall announced that the new mascot is the Admirals. "The Admirals was chosen because Franklin High is touted by the students, faculty and alumni as "The Flagship" school of Williamson County and is the oldest high school in the district. While new changes are on the horizon, Franklin High will remain anchored in tradition."

Although this issue pertains to Williamson County, examples across our nation are appropriate to consider as we look to other communities and organizations, especially those in the south, for examples of how they have moved forward through this controversial issue. In June of this year, numerous media outlets reported that NASCAR banned the Confederate Flag from all of its events and properties sites. NASCAR stated, "The presence of the Confederate flag at NASCAR events runs contrary to our commitment to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for all fans, our competitors and our industry. Bringing people together around a love for racing and the community that it creates is what makes our fans and sport special. The display of the Confederate flag will be prohibited from all NASCAR events and properties."<sup>7</sup>

Also, Mississippi Governor, Tate Reeves, signed a historic bill in June of 2020 withdrawing the state's 126-year-old state flag. He stated, "This is not a political moment to me but a solemn occasion to lead our Mississippi family to come together, to be reconciled, and to move on," the Governor said in a statement. "We are a resilient people defined by our hospitality. We are a people of great faith. Now, more than ever, we must lean on that faith, put our divisions behind us, and unite for a greater good."<sup>8</sup> The Republican Speaker Pro Tempore, Jason White, said, "By changing our flag, we don't abandon our founding principles. We embrace them more fully by doing what is right. We're not moving further away from our Founding Fathers' visions. We're moving closer to them. We're not destroying our heritage; we're fulfilling it."<sup>9</sup>

The United States Marine Corps also decided in June of 2020 to issue a directive to remove all public displays of the Confederate battle flag from their installations. The directive's reasons are, "In order to support our core values, ensure unit cohesion and security and preserve good order and discipline." They also noted, that the flag has "all too often been co-opted by violent extremist and racist groups whose divisive beliefs have no place in our Corps." <sup>10</sup>

In June, 2015, after the massacre at the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, governors from Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee, asked their state legislatures to remove the Confederate emblem from license plates. Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe stated, "It's the right thing to do. Let us come together. Let us work together. ... We just don't need divisive symbols out there." <sup>11</sup>

## Works Cited

<sup>1</sup> PBS, 8 Things You Didn't Know About the Confederate Flag, June 21, 2015

<sup>2</sup> Loewen, James, W. *The Confederate and Neo Confederate Reader: The Great Truth About the Lost Cause*. Jackson, Mississippi. University Press. p. 13

<sup>3</sup> The New Republic. *The Confederate Flag is a Racist Symbol. Just Ask the KKK*. July 1, 2015

<sup>4</sup> Davis, William C., "The Right Way to Remember the Confederacy," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 10, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Testimony of Dustin Koctar from the task force Zoom Meeting, August 11, 2020

<sup>6</sup> Testimony of Mike Plumley from the task force Zoom Meeting, August 11, 2020

<sup>7</sup> CNBC, June 2010

<sup>8</sup> Business Insider, June 30, 2020

<sup>9</sup> NPR, June 27, 2020

<sup>10</sup> CBS News, June 5, 2020

<sup>11</sup> *Governing*, June 24, 2015

## V. Financial Impact Evaluation

Nena Graham, Budget Director for Williamson County, assisted the task force by preparing the following cost projections for removal and replacement of the seal from various County properties and equipment. According to Nena in an email sent August 26, 2020, "This is our best estimate at this time. However, this is not meant to be an all-inclusive listing of every cost associated with removal and/or replacement of the county seal throughout the county facilities. There are too many unknowns to be able to give that exact figure. This listing is a point of reference to get an idea of or current cost associated with the use of the county seal on county facilities, equipment and supplies."

Estimates were derived based on current costs. These costs were accumulated from data provided by County elected officials, administrative staff, and department heads. There are some ancillary labor and/or possibly material costs that are unknown at this time. Another unknown factor at this time is the cost for design, setup, and reproduction of a new or revised seal.

**The total estimated cost that can currently be identified is \$125,000. This is a current best estimate and is not intended to be an all-inclusive listing of cost associated with the removal and/or replacement of the county seal. The cost calculations of this report are designed to determine the general cost of removal and/or replacement of the seal, but were not designed to try to capture every minor cost that may be associated with such an action.**

The following two categories have details listed for estimated removal cost and replacement costs:

### **Details associated with REMOVAL COSTS are listed below – Approximately \$27,333**

#### **A) Seal removal from County properties – Total \$16, 990.00**

##### **Judicial Center** – Terrazzo Tile Floor, Removal of County Seal @ \$15,000.00

This is removal and cover up only and excludes any signage/barricades/pedestrian re-routing/security, re-polish and seal of existing flooring, and/or final clean up. This estimate also excludes additional Property Management time for supervision and clean up.

##### **Podiums**

4 Podiums with County Seals on them would require personnel for removal, re-sanding and staining. County staff labor costs projected @ \$480

##### **Downs Boulevard County Building**

Removal of seal and County staff labor costs, equipment rental, and associated costs @ \$800.00 This building contains the prior owner logo under the existing County seal which may need associated removal costs if there is not a new county seal available to layer over it.

##### **Academy Park**

Two signs to be removed @ \$335.00 each = \$670.00

**Animal Care Center**

Removal of Seal and Two Signs

County staff labor costs projected @ \$40

**B) Decal removal - County Vehicles - Total \$10,343.00**

There are approximately 436 county vehicles on which the county seal is affixed. Current cost to remove county stickers from vehicles is \$8,720.00 for labor and \$1,623.00 for equipment. Total \$10,343.00

**Details associated with REPLACEMENT COSTS are listed below – Approximately \$95,995.45**

Replacement of the county seal on uniforms, business cards, letterhead and envelopes, brochures and miscellaneous advertisements - Total = \$81,948.75

Uniforms \$39,091.50

Business Cards \$11,886.60

Letterhead and Envelopes \$7,688.00

Brochures and Miscellaneous Advertising \$23,282.65

Replacement of County Flags:

Flags bearing the county seal are flown daily at various locations. County Seal flags currently cost 106.14 each. Though there is no associated removal cost to no longer fly these flags, if replacement flags are ordered to be flown at county facilities currently flying the County flag – 5 currently identified facilities @ \$106.14 would total \$530.70

County Vehicles Decal Replacement:

Current cost for vehicles decals are \$8.25 (each) for the 11.75" seal and \$15.50 (each) for the 8" reflective seal. There are typically 2 seals per vehicle (x436 current vehicles). For purposes of this projection, we will use the higher cost for an estimate - Total \$13,516.00

Judicial Center Floor Replacement:

Replacement material and associated labor costs for this project is not able to be determined at this time.

Signage Replacement:

Replacement material and labor cost associated with signage replacement on podiums, Downs Blvd. Facility, Academy Park, and Animal Care facility are unknown at this time.

## Williamson County Seal Task Force Members

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Matt Lergen, Chair	Williamson, Inc.
Ellie Westman Chin, Vice Chair	Williamson County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Emily Bowman, Secretary	Multi-Generation Family Member
Lisa Campbell	Williamson County Business Community
Inetta Gaines	African American Heritage Society of Williamson County
Paula Harris	Heritage Foundation of Williamson County
Hewitt Sawyers	Multi-Generation Family Member
Rick Warwick	Williamson County Historian
Dr. Chris Williamson	African-American Religious/Community Leader

## Williamson County Seal Task Force

August 4, 8:00 a.m.

### Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m. via Zoom

Members Present: Ellie Westman Chin, Hewitt Sawyers, Paula Harris, Inetta Gaines, Lisa Campbell, Chris Williamson, Rick Warwick, Matt Largen, Emily Bowman

Others in Attendance: Mayor Rogers Anderson, Diane Giddens, Jeff Moseley

Williamson Chamber provided a summary of the County Seal Survey. Task force discussed the summary and responses. The survey will remain open until August 14.

Ellie Chin reminded task force of suggestion to incorporate field hospital flag into County seal, to memorialize incredible death toll from Civil War, and also to honor those in the medical field. Union was the first to use the red flag to indicate a field hospital, and Confederacy also began to fly the red flags. Task force agreed probably best not to use a flag that reflects Union or Confederacy.

Matt Largen advised task force of a letter from the Jewish Federation of Nashville requesting removal of the cross from the County seal. Task force concurred that addressing the quadrant of the seal representing history of the County is the sole task assigned to the task force by the Williamson County Commissioners and that task force was not commissioned to study any other aspect of the County seal.

Task force discussed inviting community members to task force meeting on August 11 to provide personal testimony.

Task force engaged in planning discussion for a live Q&A session with the public.

- The Q&A session will be a panel discussion with a moderator.
- Members of the task force will not participate in the session.
- FB Live will have a broad reach to the public.
- Discussed composition of panel and need to provide (i) historical context/educational perspective on the Confederate flag and (ii) emotional reaction from County residents.
- Session to be held in the evening.

Financial, Tourism and Business Updates

August 24 deadline to complete a draft of the task force report.



12:00 p.m., August 31 deadline to submit the final task force report and resolution for the County Commissioners.

7 p.m., September 14 meeting of County Commissioners – presentation and vote on task force report and resolution.

Hewitt Sawyers moved to approve the minutes of the July 28 task force meeting. Emily Bowman seconded the motion, and the task force unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

**Williamson County Seal Task Force**  
**August 11, 2020, 8:00 a.m.**

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m. via Zoom

Members Present: Ellie Westman Chin, Hewitt Sawyers, Paula Harris, Inetta Gaines, Lisa Campbell, Chris Williamson, Rick Warwick, Matt Largen, Emily Bowman

Others in Attendance: Mayor Rogers Anderson, Diane Giddens, Jeff Moseley

Task force discussed live panel Q&A session with the public. Invitations to participate in the panel have been extended to historians and County residents. Only one invitation has been accepted by a County resident in favor of keeping the County seal in place as is. Task force questioned whether the Q&A session is necessary for the work of the task force.

- Task force acknowledged the challenge in finding participants and the deadline by which the task force has to complete a report and resolution for the County Commission.
- If task force cannot get the right combination of panelists, should not host the Q&A.
- Objectives of task force include public visibility and public input.
- Public is invited to complete the County seal survey published on the Williamson Chamber website. With over 800 responses to date, the public participation has been strong.
- Mayor Rogers Anderson noted that the question of whether to retain the Confederate flag on the seal is a divisive issue that must be addressed quickly. If Commission does not receive report and resolution by noon on August 31, the Commission cannot act on the resolution at the September meeting and that the presentation of the report could be delayed as long as the January 2021 meeting.

Task force agreed that time and logistical constraint would not allow the task force to hold the public Q&A session. Task force discussed other ways task force can provide information to the public.

- Make another push for public participation in the County seal survey published at [www.williamsonchamber.org/countyseal](http://www.williamsonchamber.org/countyseal).
- Suggestion to record and publish testimonies from County residents Dustin Koctar and Mike Plumley at today's meeting, and Mr. Koctar and Mr. Plumley agreed.
- Media will attend and listen to today's testimonies.

Task force meetings on August 18 and August 25 will focus on reports from the following task force committees: (i) financial, (ii) social and public interest, (iii) business and (iv) tourism. Once finalized, these reports will be combined into the final report and recommendation to be

presented to the County Commission. The final report should be approved by consensus of the task force.

- Financial committee will work on a list of places where County seal appears, in addition to budget for cost related to any change of the County seal.
- Social and public interest committee will incorporate the summary and some direct quotes from the County seal survey into its report.
- Tourism committee is working with Visit Franklin on its report, and plans to incorporate results of a leisure travel research survey.
- Business committee is engaged in the following discussions: (i) economic development groups in Mississippi, as Mississippi recently removed the Confederate flag from its State seal and (ii) human resources managers across the County regarding possible effects of the Confederate flag on recruitment and retention.

Paula Harris moved to approve the minutes of the August 4 task force meeting. Lisa Campbell seconded the motion, and the task force unanimously approved.

Meeting recessed at 8:50 a.m.

Meeting reconvened at 9:25 a.m. to hear testimony from Dustin Koctar and Mike Plumley, with media guests in attendance. Matt Largen welcomed the media and provided a reminder that the County seal survey will remain open until August 14. Dustin Koctar spoke in favor of removing the Confederate flag from the County seal. Mike Plumley spoke in favor of retaining the Confederate flag on the County seal. Recordings of the testimony can be found at [www.williamsonchamber.org/countyseal](http://www.williamsonchamber.org/countyseal).

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

**Williamson County Seal Task Force**  
**August 18, 2020, 8:07 a.m.**

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:07 a.m. via Zoom

Members Present: Ellie Westman Chin, Hewitt Sawyers, Paula Harris, Inetta Gaines, Lisa Campbell, Chris Williamson, Rick Warwick, Matt Largen, Emily Bowman

Others in Attendance: Mayor Rogers Anderson, Diane Giddens, Jeff Moseley

Minutes:

Paula Harris moved to accept the minutes from the August 11 meeting. Hewitt Sawyers seconded, and the task force unanimously approved.

Financial Report:

- Nena Graham, Williamson County Budget Director, provided cost projections to remove the seal from County property, with detail about all of the instances in which the County seal appears.
- The total projected cost for replacement of the County seal cannot be ascertained at this time.

Public and Social Interest Report:

- Task force reflections from citizen testimony.
  - Both brought great perspective and rationale.
  - Excellent presentation that was intellectual in addition to having an emotional component.
  - Received positive comments from the community about the testimony.
  - Both made comments some of the task force members did not know previously.
  - County attorney stated that the Confederate flag and the cannon represent a battle in the Civil War and is thus under the purview of the Tennessee Historical Commission, making removal conditioned on approval of the Tennessee Historical Commission. This is pursuant to State statute adopted in 2013.
- Survey closed at midnight on August 14. Task force has not received numbers.
- Report has been completed, and waiting to add comments from survey results. Includes history of Confederate flag and how it was used.

Business Report:

- Conversations with broader business community – concern about attracting and retaining talent and creating a welcoming environment.

**Tourism Report:**

- Flag on seal should not impact whether tourists visit Williamson County.
- Focus on research:
  - What are common visitor activities?
    - Main Street
    - Scenic drive
    - Historic sites
  - How does a visitor learn about Franklin?
    - Experiences
    - Exploration
    - Online
- Tourism is at an all-time low, due to COVID-19.

Task force reviewed its Charter and discussed possible recommendations.

Task force discussed its next steps, including assembling the final report for review prior to final task force meeting, in which report will be discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m.

**Williamson County Seal Task Force**  
**August 25, 2020 , 8:00 a.m.**

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m. via Zoom

Members Present: Ellie Westman Chin, Hewitt Sawyers, Paula Harris, Inetta Gaines, Lisa Campbell, Chris Williamson, Rick Warwick, Matt Largen, Emily Bowman

Others in Attendance: Mayor Rogers Anderson, Diane Giddens, Jeff Moseley

Minutes:

Lisa Campbell moved to accept the minutes from the August 18 meeting. Ellie Westman Chin seconded, and the task force unanimously approved.

The task force was provided with a draft report prior to the meeting. Task force discussed the following sections of the report during the meeting:

- Executive Summary
- Financial Impact Evaluation
- Social and Public Interest Evaluation
- Business Case

The section of the report on tourism will be distributed following the meeting.

Due to extensive conversation, it was agreed to adjourn the meeting and schedule an additional meeting of the task force, to be held August 27, 2020, at 7:30 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

**Williamson County Seal Task Force**  
**August 27, 2020, 7:30 a.m.**

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:30 a.m. via Zoom

Members Present: Ellie Westman Chin, Hewitt Sawyers, Paula Harris, Inetta Gaines, Lisa Campbell, Chris Williamson, Rick Warwick, Matt Largen, Emily Bowman

Others in Attendance: Mayor Rogers Anderson, Diane Giddens, Jeff Moseley

The task force was provided with a first draft of the tourism report and a revised draft of the remainder of the report prior to the meeting. Task force discussed the following sections of the report during the meeting:

- Executive Summary
- Financial Impact Evaluation
- Social and Public Interest Evaluation
- Business Case
- Impact on Tourism

The task force asked Mayor Anderson and Jeff Mosely to describe the process for presenting the final report and draft resolution to the County Commission.

Due to extensive conversation related to the revised draft of the report, and in particular the social and public interest evaluation and executive summary, it was agreed to adjourn the meeting and schedule an additional meeting of the task force, to be held August 28, 2020, at 11:30 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.



**Williamson County Seal Task Force**  
**August 28, 2020, 11:30 a.m.**

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 11:30 a.m. via Zoom

Members Present: Ellie Westman Chin, Hewitt Sawyers, Paula Harris, Inetta Gaines, Lisa Campbell, Chris Williamson, Rick Warwick, Matt Largen, Emily Bowman

Others in Attendance: Mayor Rogers Anderson, Diane Giddens, Jeff Moseley

Hewitt Sawyers moved to accept the minutes from the August 25 and August 27 meetings. Paula Harris seconded, and the task force unanimously approved.

The task force was provided with a further revised and compiled draft of report prior to the meeting. Task force discussed the following during the meeting, to finalize the report:

- General comments to the further revised draft
- Executive Summary, and in particular the final recommendation of the task force and the wording thereof

Lisa Campbell moved to remove the Confederate flag from the County seal and leave the method of removal to the County Commission. Inetta Gaines seconded, and the task force unanimously approved.

Hewitt Sawyers suggested, and the task force agreed that Matt Largen will be the spokesperson for the task force, in response to media inquiries.

Meeting adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

Resolution No. 7-20-27  
Requested by: County Mayor

**RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
EVALUATING REVISION OF THE OFFICIAL WILLIAMSON COUNTY SEAL**

**WHEREAS**, one of the four quadrants of the official seal of Williamson County adopted in 1968 bears a cannon and Confederate flag commemorating the local history related to the War Between the States; and

**WHEREAS**, in the wake of recent events, a number of citizens have raised questions regarding changing the Seal to remove the Confederate flag; and

**WHEREAS**, other citizens have expressed opposition to such removal; and

**WHEREAS**, the design on the Williamson County Seal meets the definition of a memorial commemorating an historic conflict under Tenn. Code Ann. §4-1-412; and

**WHEREAS**, due to such status, any change in the Seal would require approval of the Tennessee Historical Commission by 2/3 vote, after request by the relevant public entity, which in this case is Williamson County; and

**WHEREAS**, such request must be accompanied by at least one report showing that there is a material and substantial need for the Seal to be altered based on historical or other compelling interest; and

**WHEREAS**, the Williamson County Board of Commissioners has determined that a Task Force composed of citizen stakeholders, representing a range of community, business and historical perspectives, should be commissioned to review the issue and provide such a report to the Board of Commissioners in order that it may consider whether it is appropriate to request approval to alter the Seal;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Williamson County Board of Commissioners, meeting in regular session this 13<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2020, hereby authorizes the County Mayor to appoint a Task Force, consisting of citizens representative of specifically defined constituencies as outlined below, to conduct a study and provide a report to the Board of Commissioners prior to its September 14, 2020 meeting; and


**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the constituencies to be represented on the nine-member Task Force shall be as follows:

- One representative of Williamson, Inc., who shall serve as Chair;
- Representatives of two families who have lived in Williamson County for at least three generations (at least one of which should be an African-American family);
- One representative of the Heritage Foundation;
- One representative of the African-American Heritage Society;
- One African-American business owner or manager, or educational professional;
- One African-American religious or community leader; and
- One representative of the Williamson County Convention and Visitors' Bureau; and,  
The County Historian

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that such Task Force shall implement a process for receiving input from citizens and other stakeholders, and shall consider such input in developing its recommendations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that such study and report shall be in writing and shall include an evaluation of the financial, social, public interest, tourism and business impacts of altering, or not altering the seal, and shall include a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners regarding (1) whether there is a material and substantial need for the Seal to be altered and (2) if so, the specific historical or other compelling interest(s) that support such need, as required by state law.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution shall take effect from and after the date of its passage by the Williamson County Board of Commissioners, the public welfare requiring it.

  
County Commissioner-Brian Beathard

  
County Commissioner-Chas Morton

  
County Commissioner

  
County Commissioner

  
County Commissioner

**COMMITTEES REFERRED TO & ACTION TAKEN:**

Property Committee For 3 Against 1 Pass       
Budget Committee For 3 Against 2 Pass       
Commission Action Taken For 18 Against 5 Pass      Out     

  
Elaine Anderson, County Clerk

  
Tommy Little, Commission Chairman

  
Rogers Anderson, Williamson County Mayor

Date 7-23-2020

August 31, 2020

Office of the Mayor  
1320 W Main St #125  
Franklin, TN 37064

To Mayor Anderson and the Williamson County Commission:

As companies proudly operating and creating employment in Williamson County for many years, we are highly supportive of updating the county seal and removing the Confederate flag. We do not believe this seal, created in 1968, represents who we are as a community today. This is a significant issue for our companies and employees who call Williamson County home.

Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment is a top priority for our businesses. For many, the Confederate flag represents the exact opposite as a symbol of racial prejudice and inequality and, it has no place as an official government insignia that is intended to represent all.

We believe the seal is long overdue for an update and now is the time to take swift action to redesign the seal and remove the flag. This change will send a clear signal that Williamson County shares our joint vision of openness and inclusion. We are committed to providing support and any input or assistance you may need as the county moves through this important process. Williamson County is a wonderful place to live and work, and we must collectively push to ensure we better represent our community so people from all walks of life feel welcome.



**Private Entities,  
Groups, Individuals  
Contact Information**

**Tennessee Historical Commission  
Tennessee Heritage Protection Act of 2016  
Petition for Waiver  
Williamson County**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>
African American Heritage Society of Williamson County	446 11th Avenue North	Franklin	TN	37064
Bowman, Virginia - Descendants of / Williamson County Historian, one of the creators of seal in 1967 (mailed to Jody Bowman, son of Virginia Bowman)	1149 Lewisburg Avenue	Franklin	TN	37064
Heritage Foundation of Williamson County	112 Bridge Street	Franklin	TN	37064
Sons of the Confederate Veterans, TN Division	1202 Ballantrance Boulevard	Lebanon	TN	37087
The United Daughters of the Confederacy	4489 Parkwood	Memphis	TN	38128
The United Daughters of the Confederacy	c/o Douglas Jones & John Harris 501 Union Street, 7th Floor P.O. Box 190676	Nashville	TN	37219-0676
Williamson, Inc.	5005 Meridian Boulevard #150	Franklin	TN	37064
Williamson County Convention & Visitors Bureau	400 Main Street	Franklin	TN	37604

PUBLICATION COST

\$66.50

STATE OF  
TENNESSEE  
County of Williamson  
Newspaper

Williamson  
**Herald**  
THE VOICE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST COUNTY

CMD Publishing, LLC  
Derby Jones, Publisher

*Derby Jones*  
Authorized Representative  
State under Oath that  
the attached publication has  
run the stated dates below in  
Williamson County.

RUN DATES  
10/1/00  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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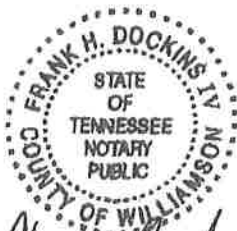
**PUBLIC NOTICE  
WILLIAMSON COUNTY WILL FILE A PETITION  
FOR ALTERATION OF THE COUNTY SEAL OF WILLIAMSON  
COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

Notice is hereby given that Williamson County, pursuant to T.C.A. 4-1-412, intends to file a petition with the Tennessee Historical Commission seeking a waiver of T.C.A. 4-1-412 (b)(1) and (b)(2) to allow change of the Williamson County seal.

The basis for the petition is the negative impact on economic and business prospects and potential impact on tax revenues to the County that might result from continued inclusion of the Confederate flag on the county seal.

A copy of the petition and the report supporting the petition will be provided, at no cost, upon written request. Such requests may be mailed to County Mayor, 1320 West Main Street, Franklin, Tennessee, 37064.

Rogers C. Anderson  
County Mayor



*Frank H. Dockins IV*

Expires: 2-21-22

# Published Notice

## TEARSHEET

0004398265  
Newspaper The Tennessean - Williamson zone  
State of Tennessee  
Account Number NAS-525593  
Advertiser WILLIAMSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

WILLIAMSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
1320 W MAIN ST STE 130  
FRANKLIN, TN  
37064

TEAR SHEET  
ATTACHED

Total Tearsheets: 1

Hello,

Included in this envelope you will find the tearsheet from your public notice.  
If we can assist with anything else, please contact us at  
[publicnotice@tnmedia.com](mailto:publicnotice@tnmedia.com) or call 615-664-2300.

Thank you,  
TN Media Public Notice Team

Publish Dates: 10/07/20



T.C.A. § 30-2-306  
**CHANCERY COURT FOR  
 WILLIAMSON COUNTY,  
 TENNESSEE**  
 P.O. BOX 1666  
 FRANKLIN, TN 37065

0004398265

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 ty Mayor, 1320 West Main  
 Street, Franklin, Tennessee,  
 37064.

Rogers C. Anderson  
 County Mayor

with the Clerk of the above-  
 named Court on or before the  
 earlier of the dates prescribed  
 in (1) or (2) otherwise their  
 claims will be forever barred:  
 (1) (A) Four (4) months  
 from the date of the first publi-  
 cation (or the posting, as the  
 case may be) of this notice if  
 the creditor received an actual  
 copy of this notice to creditors  
 at least sixty (60) days before  
 the date that is four (4) months  
 from the date of the first publi-  
 cation (or posting);  
 or

(B) Sixty (60) days from the  
 date the creditor received an  
 actual copy of the notice to  
 creditors If the creditor re-  
 ceived the copy of the notice  
 less than sixty (60) days prior  
 to the date that is four (4)  
 months from the date of first  
 publication (or posting) as de-  
 scribed in (1) or  
 (2) Twelve (12) months from  
 the decedent's date of death.

This 28th day of  
 September, 2020

Estate of Homer  
 Roger Hill, Sr.  
 Elaine B. Beeler, Clerk  
 and Master Homer  
 Roger Hill, Jr., Co-Executor  
 Randall Wray Hill,  
 Co-Executor  
 Charles E. Morton, IV,  
 Attorney for the Estate

Publication Dates:  
 10/7 + 10/14/2020

0004403677

**MALLORY VALLEY UTILITY  
 DISTRICT**  
 Report of the Director of the  
 Division of local Government  
 Finance

We have reviewed the budget  
 submitted to our office by the  
 Mallory Valley utility district  
 for the fiscal year ending Sep-  
 tember 30, 2021, and it appears  
 that it's budgeted revenues will  
 be sufficient to meet anticipat-  
 ed cash expenditures for the  
 fiscal year.

Betsy Knotts, Director  
 Comptroller of the treasury  
 Division of local  
 government audit  
 September 30, 2020



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 BE WORK.**

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**Estate of  
 Randall Eugene Whidby**  
 Docket No. 20PR-11229  
 office is hereby given that on  
 the 21 day of Sept., 2020, Let-  
 ter's Testamentary in respect of  
 the Estate of Randall Eugene  
 Whidby deceased, who died on  
 August 3, 2020, were issued to  
 the undersigned by the Chan-  
 cery Court of Williamson Coun-  
 ty, Tennessee. All persons, res-  
 ident and non-resident, having  
 claims, matured or unmatured,  
 against the Estate are required  
 to file the same with the Clerk  
 of the above-named Court on or  
 before the earlier of the dates  
 prescribed in (1) or (2) other-  
 wise their claims will be forev-  
 er barred:  
 1) (A) Four (4) months from  
 the date of the first publication  
 or the posting, as the case  
 may be) of this notice if the  
 creditor received an actual  
 copy of this notice to creditors  
 at least sixty (60) days before  
 the date that is four (4) months  
 from the date of the first publi-  
 cation (or posting); or  
 B) Sixty (60) days from the

Continued to next column

Auctions

Auctions

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 Carport with Storage**

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- Laundry Hookups
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**Real Property Online Auction**  
**Furniture • Glassware • Collectibles**  
**Estate of Irene Frost Locke**  
**Until Sunday, Oct. 11th @ 8:00 PM**  
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 a day of sale take precedence over any previous advertising. See website for full online terms  
 and conditions. Make arrangements to pick-up your items. See website for full online terms. Selling for the Locke Estate.

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