

Also
inside
this
Week:



Montgomery
County
students head
back to
school, page
A2.



Carroll
statewide swim
champ in his
age division,
page B1.

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Section A

Emily Settle appointed to school board

By Tom Marshall
Senior Advocate Writer

After interviewing four applicants over the course of two hours Tuesday, the Montgomery County Board of Education deliberated for a little over a half hour before selecting Dr. Emily Settle, a dentistry professor, as an interim member of the board for the District 2 seat.

The board vote was three to one in favor of Settle.

The three other candidates for the interim seat were former board member Bill Morgan, Robert Wilson and Nick Cline.

Settle, Morgan, Wilson and Jessica A. Maynard are all candidates for the permanent seat that will be decided in the Nov. 5 General Election.

For the interim seat, the votes in favor of Settle were board chair Sharon Smith Breiner, Daniel Freeman and Carmela Fletcher Green. The lone vote opposed to Settle came from board member Alice Anderson.

Smith Breiner made the motion to appoint Settle for the seat. Her motion states that Settle will serve until after the Nov. 5 vote is officially certified by the Board of Elections.

Anderson told the Advocate that Settle did well in her interview, but she preferred to appoint someone on an interim basis who is not running for the seat.

Anderson said she felt a vote for someone seeking the elected seat might be perceived as tipping the scales in favor of one candidate over another.

Settle and her husband, Stan, have three children, Kali, Addison and Reese. Two of them are students in Montgomery County Schools, the other is a student at Georgetown College.

Settle is currently a professor of dentistry at the University of Kentucky. She previously served in a Morehead dental practice with her father, Charlie Tingle, and has volunteered at the Post Clinic in Mt. Sterling.

She said she has lived in Montgomery County for the past 20 years.

The most recent person to hold the District 2 seat was Lisa Walker, who was elected in a special election this past May. The board accepted her resignation at a meeting in July.

Walker handily defeated Morgan for the seat by a



Emily Settle



Nearly 40 people were on hand last week for a public hearing regarding proposed tax rates for the fire and ambulance districts. Fire Chief Mike Mosbey provided a presentation outlining the fire dept.'s position. After hearing from the public, the Emergency Services Board approved proposed increases for both districts. Photo by Tom Marshall.

More than 30 attend fire, ambulance tax hearing

By Tom Marshall
Senior Advocate Writer

About 35 people attended a public hearing Aug. 16 at Station 2 regarding proposed tax rates for the fire and ambulance districts. The Emergency Services Board ultimately approved the increases during a special meeting following the public hearing.

Board members Dan Whitaker, Ed Razor and Shane Back voted in favor. Board member Ralph Kern was absent.

On the ambulance side, the tax levied last year was 0.83 and produced revenues of \$1,237,160.

The compensating rate this year would have been 0.81 and would have produced revenue of \$1,248,661.

The ESB approved the maximum tax rate of .100, which is expected to produce \$1,541,557.

On the fire side, the tax rate levied last year was

.096 and produced \$938,154 in revenue. This year's compensating rate would have been .093 and would have produced \$946,679 in revenue.

The ESB approved a maximum tax rate for the fire district of .100, which is expected to produce \$1,017,934.

Fire Chief Mike Mosbey opened the meeting with a presentation explaining the staffing and equipment needs of the dept. to maintain current services.

Mosbey noted that the dept. employed 50 people as of 2018, but to save money the number has been reduced to 46, though the dept. is currently six people short of being fully staffed. All are cross trained to serve as firefighters and either as an EMT or paramedic.

There is currently a national shortage of paramedics, a problem the dept. faces as well, according to Mosbey.

Mosbey said the dept. needs part of the additional money from the tax increases to stay competitive with other dept.'s, some of which pay better and offer better benefits.

He said the dept. often trains people only to lose them to other dept.'s.

One of the dept.'s biggest drawbacks, according to Mosbey, is that it is the only full-time dept. in Kentucky that doesn't offer hazardous duty pensions.

He said doing so has been cost prohibitive because it would be between \$250,000 and \$500,000 to make the switch, money the dept. simply does not have currently.

Mosbey fielded a question from the public about what it would take to get the benefit for the dept.

The chief said the dept. is limited in what it can do financially by caps to property tax rates as com-

pared to other dept.'s that are either funded by city or county governments, or a combination of both.

According to Mosbey, when the tax code was originally created it was meant mostly to fund volunteer fire dept.'s and has become outdated with time.

Shannon Denniston, founder of an organization called Citizens for Fair Taxation, asked what the difference in hazardous and non-hazardous means.

Mosbey explained that one of the differences is the number of years a fire-EMS worker has to serve until reaching retirement age.

Mosbey said a hazardous employee must serve 25 years before reaching retirement while for a non-hazardous employee reaching retirement age it takes 35 years.

Where this comes into play, Mosbey said, is that

See TAXES, Page A3



Pictured, from left, are Jason Walton of Momentum Construction; state Rep. David Hale; Craig Shockley, with Congressman Andy Barr's Office; Mark Carter, with the Kentucky Dept. of Aviation; Mt. Sterling Mayor Al Botts; Judge-Executive Chris Haddix, Zach Hill, of Kentucky Airmotive, the fixed-based operator at the airport; and Catesby Woodford, chairman of the Mt. Sterling-Montgomery County Regional Airport Board. The group are pictured breaking ground on a \$4 million project to build a new terminal for the airport. The new terminal will be more than twice the size of the current terminal. Photo by Tom Marshall.

Groundbreaking held for airport terminal project

By Tom Marshall
Senior Advocate Writer

Local, state and federal officials gathered Aug. 14 at the Mt. Sterling-Montgomery Regional Airport to celebrate an upcoming project to construct a new terminal.

A groundbreaking was held at the site. About 30 people attended the event.

The new terminal will be more than twice the size of the existing terminal. The existing terminal is 3,058 square feet. The new terminal will be 8,121 square feet.

The project will cost an estimated \$4 million. About \$3 million will come from the state with the remainder from the Federal Aviation Administration.

Simultaneous to the terminal project will be another to construct a box hangar to store more airplanes. A third project will involve strengthening of the runway to accommodate increased jet traffic.

The terminal project is expected to take 18 to 24 months to complete.

The existing terminal will be utilized by Air Methods, a local air ambulance provider.

Mt. Sterling Mayor Al Botts led off the last week's

See AIRPORT, Page A5