

The

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School last day, graduation set for May 15



Ag teacher Bonny Cannon and students Elijah Ware and Lawson Hardy attended the board of education meeting April 28. Ware and Hardy were among those who recently participated in the welding competition at Murray State University. Not pictured but also competing were Joshua Garcia and Ayvin Smith. (Photo by Gaye Bencini)

By GAYE BENCINI

The Hickman County Board of Education met in regular session Tuesday, April 28 in the board office behind the high school. Present were Hickman County School Superintendent Heather Spillman, Finance Officer Kim Wilson, Board Members Matt Hicks, Matt Latham, Clint Kimbell, Stephanie Grubbs, and Caleb Deweese; High School Principal Jeff Boaz, Elementary School Principal Tiffany Ray, Middle School Dean Eric Blalock, Shane Bizzle, director of Pupil Personnel, director of Transportation, Safe Schools



Katie Dowdy and Kylie Meshew talked to the board of education about the recent FCCLA competitions. (Photo by Gaye Bencini)

coordinator; Ag teacher Bonny Cannon; ES Cafeteria Manager Rita Dowdy; ag students, FCCLA students, and family members; and Gaye Bencini. New Ag teacher revives program



School Board Member Matt Hicks presents Rita Dowdy with the Super Falcon Award. (Photo by Gaye Bencini)



School Board Member Stephanie Grubbs presents Jeff Boaz with the Super Falcon Award. (Photo by Gaye Bencini)

Bonny Cannon has been a long-term substitute teacher for the high school ag department since Feb. 26 and has hit the ground running. Cannon has been hired for the position effective July 1. She recently took four high school students, Lawson Hardy, Joshua Garcia, Ayvin Smith, and Elijah Ware to the welding competition held in Murray, Ky., where they

Batts withdraws from County Attorney race



Jason Batts

Batts not seeking reelection; to serve as Visiting Scholar at Vanderbilt University Law School while continuing local legal practice

After twelve years serving as Hickman County Attorney, Jason Batts announced that he will not seek reelection this November. Batts will complete his current term through the end of the year before transitioning into a dual role as a Visiting Scholar at Vanderbilt University Law School and continuing his legal practice in Clinton focusing on estate planning, probate work, deeds, and business formations.

"I really love serving as county attorney, so stepping back to take on a different role has required a lot of prayer," Batts said. "However, time after time I witness the repeated failure of the court system to adequately address the needs of the mentally ill. I've seen too many individuals caught in the revolving door of the judicial system. We will send them to a facility for treatment, only to see them released before the paperwork is even finished. The state says 'they're perfectly fine,' but the cops or family members call again because they are clearly a danger to themselves or others. Sometimes, drugs are involved too, which only makes their conditions worse. It's really hard to sit across the desk from a father, mother, or spouse frantically needing help for their loved one, only for law enforcement and

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City passes first reading of ordinance to repeal insurance tax; State says won't take effect until 2027

By GAYE BENCINI

Clinton City Council met in regular session Monday evening, May 4 at Clinton City Hall. Present were Mayor John Kelly, Council Members Wynita Dillard, Betty Morrow, Laura Poole, Tommy Kimbro, Bro. Bill Lickliter, and Jerome Jenkins; Clerk Kaitlin Wilson; and visitors Mary Kimbro, Kenny Wilson, Brent Barclay, Mary Potter, Kimberly Elks, and Gaye Bencini.

The Clinton City Council voted to approve the first reading of an ordinance to repeal the May 2024 city ordinance that enacted a municipal license tax on insurance companies at the rate of 5.74 percent. This originally applied to insurance companies

for the calendar year 2025 with payments to come to the city in 2026.

At last month's Clinton City Council meeting, the council voted to repeal the ordinance with Council Members Morrow, Poole, Kimbro, and Lickliter voting in favor of repealing the tax, and Council Member Jerome Jenkins voting against. At that meeting, Betty Morrow said the city passed a budget for the fiscal year that covered operating expenses, without the insurance tax included, and she said she felt it would be a hardship on the people.

At Monday night's meeting, Council Member Tommy Kimbro said the ordinance drafted by the city attorney referred to the council as "commission," but

Clinton has a council and is not a city commission. He said he didn't want something to come back later on them as a legality. "The only commission you have is where you have a city manager/commission form of government, and we don't. We have mayor/council," Kimbro said he was in favor of repealing the ordinance if that wording was corrected. Clerk Wilson printed out the ordinance revised with wording of council and not commission and presented the revised copies to the council.

Voting in favor of the First Reading of the Ordinance to repeal the insurance tax were Council Members Morrow, Poole, Kimbro, and Lickliter. Council Member Jenkins voted against repealing the tax, and

Council Member Dillard abstained.

Brent Barclay, visitor at the meeting, asked when the ordinance would go into effect as he recently received bills showing increases in costs because of the tax passed on to the customer.

Clerk Kaitlin Wilson said after the second reading is held and publication of the ordinance, it would go into effect, and she was told by the state it would be reflected on customers' bills July 1, 2027.

Gas Company

Council Member Jerome Jenkins asked about the gas company wanting to become a 501c3. City Clerk Kaitlin Wilson, city representative who re-

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