

**ANNUAL STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS
WILLIAMSON COUNTY/FRANKLIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
JULY 20, 2010 - 11:30 A.M.**

GOOD AFTERNOON AND THANK YOU FOR JOINING ME ON THIS BEAUTIFUL , BUT ANOTHER HOT, DAY FOR MY 8TH STATE OF THE COUNTY SPEECH. THANK YOU, NANCY, AND TO THE CHAMBER MEMBERS FOR ALLOWING ME TO REFLECT ON SOME HISTORY AND FUTURE EVENTS IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY.

FIRST OFF, THIS YEAR MARKS MY LAST BUDGET YEAR SERVING WITH SOME INDIVIDUALS THAT I HAVE HAD THE PLEASURE OF SERVING WITH FOR NEARLY 25 YEARS. COLLECTIVELY, THREE OF THEM HAVE GIVEN 78 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTY: COMMISSIONER MARY MILLS (WITH 17 YEARS OF SERVICE); COMMISSIONER CLYDE LYNCH (WITH 37 YEARS OF SERVICE); AND, COMMISSIONER HOUSTON NARON, JR., (WITH 24 YEARS OF SERVICE) - EACH OF THEM HAVE SERVED THIS COUNTY WELL! I ALSO WANT TO THANK REBA GREER, OF THE 2ND DISTRICT, AND JASON PARA, OF THE 4TH DISTRICT, FOR THEIR FOUR YEARS OF SERVICE TO WILLIAMSON COUNTY WHICH WILL END AUGUST 31ST.

MY PUBLIC SERVICE HISTORY HAS CONVINCED ME THAT MOST OF THE RESULTS THAT WE HAVE IN THIS WONDERFUL COUNTY IS BECAUSE OF PERSISTENCE AND HARD WORK FROM OUR EMPLOYEES, CITIZENS AND FELLOW

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ELECTED OFFICIALS. AS MAYOR, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT NOTHING IS POSSIBLE WITHOUT HELP FROM OTHER PEOPLE AND THAT ACCOMPLISHING THE DESIRED END RESULT IS BECAUSE WE ALL ARE PULLING TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD.....AND I SINCERELY THANK EACH OF YOU.

SEVERAL HISTORICAL EVENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE I SPOKE WITH YOU AT LAST YEAR'S CHAMBER LUNCHEON. STEERING THROUGH THIS PAST YEAR'S ECONOMICAL CHALLENGES HAS BEEN THOUGHT PROVOKING AND TOUGH. WITHOUT QUESTION, THE FLOODING THAT OCCURRED MAY 1ST AND 2ND WAS AN HISTORICAL EVENT AND ONE OF THE MOST DEMANDING PERIODS THAT THIS COUNTY HAS EVER ENDURED.

NO NATIONAL DISASTER HAS OCCURRED IN MODERN DAY HISTORY LIKE THE RAIN AND FLOODING THAT HIT OUR AREA. WITH OVER \$100 MILLION OF DAMAGE TO HOMES, BUSINESSES AND ROADS, THE LIVES OF NUMEROUS FAMILIES ARE FOREVER CHANGED. IT WAS AN AWFUL EVENT THAT WILL TAKE MONTHS AND YEARS TO FULLY RECOVER. WITHOUT OUR EMPLOYEES, DEPARTMENTS, BUSINESSES, CHURCHES, CIVIC SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AND MOST OF ALL, OUR WILLIAMSON COUNTY INDIVIDUALS, IT COULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE! REGARDLESS OF YOUR FAVORITE IN THE SEC CONFERENCE, THERE WERE A NUMBER OF YOU WHO HELPED DEFINE THE TRUE SPIRIT OF BEING A "VOLUNTEER"!

AS A RESULT OF THIS FLOODING DISASTER, SEVERAL CHANGES WILL BE FORTHCOMING AS WE EXAMINE HOW WE RESPONDED POSITIVELY AND LOOK AT WHAT AREAS NEED TO BE IMPROVED. QUALITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS ARE ALWAYS DESIRED OUTCOMES ON MAJOR EVENTS, SUCH AS THE GREAT FLOOD OF 2010.

DURING THE PAST 12-15 MONTHS, TWO (2) TASK FORCES HAVE ALSO BEEN LOOKING AT LOCAL ISSUES TO HELP BETTER PREPARE US FOR OUR FUTURE.

COMMISSIONER JUDY HAYES HAS BEEN CHAIRING THE **ANIMAL CONTROL TASK FORCE** (slide w/member's names). MEETING ONCE A MONTH WITH APPROXIMATELY 30 INDIVIDUALS, THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS GROUP, AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE, HAVE ALREADY RESULTED IN THE PASSAGE OF NEW RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR BETTER CARE AND OVERSIGHT OF OUR BELOVED DOMESTIC ANIMALS. MY SINCERE THANKS TO EACH OF THE MEMBERS OF THIS TASK FORCE FOR GIVING THEIR TIME, KNOWLEDGE AND ADVICE IN HELPING US TO IMPROVE UPON OUR SERVICES.

VONA WILSON HAS FACILITATED ANOTHER 50 INDIVIDUALS SERVING ON THE **PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE**, (slides w/member's names) CONSISTING OF REPRESENTATION FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRE AND RESCUE, AMBULANCE,

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS, MUNICIPAL, COUNTY AND STATE PERSONNEL AND SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES, REPRESENTING THE PUBLIC AT-LARGE.

THEIR FINISHED PRODUCT WILL TAKE YEARS TO FULLY IMPLEMENT BUT STEPS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY TO TRANSFORM “THE WAY WE’VE ALWAYS DONE BUSINESS” AND MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO PUBLIC SAFETY, AS A WHOLE, IN OUR COUNTY. THEIR FULL REPORT CAN ALSO BE VIEWED ON THE COUNTY’S WEBSITE.

NOT EVERYTHING WE DO IS A “GOOD FIT” FOR A TASK FORCE, BUT WHEN POSSIBLE, I FEEL IT IS ADVANTAGEOUS IN PROVIDING A FINAL PRODUCT OF WHICH WE CAN ALL BE A PART OF AND BE PROUD.

THE HISTORIC COURTHOUSE ON THE PUBLIC SQUARE HAS JUST UNDERGONE SOME MUCH NEEDED RENOVATIONS. THOUGH STILL NOT COMPLETELY FINISHED ON THE INSIDE, THE HISTORIC COURTROOM HAS BEEN PRESERVED FOR USE AND SHERIFF LONG, AS WELL AS SOME OF HIS STAFF, WILL SOON OCCUPY SOME OF THE SPACE THERE.

IN THE COMING MONTHS, OUR PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT WILL IMPLEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF TIMBERLAND PARK, AN 80 ACRE PASSIVE PARK LOCATED OFF THE NATCHEZ TRACE. THIS PARK WILL CONSIST OF WALKING TRAILS ,PICNIC AREAS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY THIS PEACEFUL, TRANQUIL TIMBERLAND AND LEARN OF THE HISTORY OF THE TRACE.

AS WE BEGIN PLANNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD “SPRINGS” PROPERTY, I HAVE SET THE WHEELS IN MOTION TO IDENTIFY VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS TO SERVE ON ANOTHER TASK FORCE TO ASSIST IN THIS PLANNING PROCESS. AS YOU MAY RECALL, THIS PROPERTY CONSISTS OF OVER 300 ACRES IN THE WESTERN PART OF THE COUNTY AND WAS ONCE THE SOURCE OF SPRING WATER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN. AS WE MOVE FORWARD, IT IS OUR PLAN TO INCORPORATE THE HISTORY OF “THE SPRINGS” AND PRESERVE THIS WATER RESOURCE FOR THE FUTURE. THE VISION FOR THIS PROPERTY ALSO INCLUDES WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS, CAMPING FACILITIES, AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CURRENT RESIDENTS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY.

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LATELY, YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE PLANS TO UTILIZE THE FORMER BGA CAMPUS BY ESTABLISHING A NEW HOME FOR THE J. L. CLAY SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER AND INCLUDE A NEW COMMUNITY THEATER. AGAIN, WE ARE INCLUDING VARIOUS CITIZENS, THE “STAKEHOLDERS”, INCLUDING BGA ALUMNI, J. L. CLAY CENTER REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, INVOLVED IN THIS PLANNING PROCESS AS WE MOVE THROUGH THE STAGES OF THIS PROJECT.

CONSERVATIVE FISCAL MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN, AND CONTINUES TO BE, AT THE FOREFRONT OF WILLIAMSON COUNTY’S CULTURE. ONCE AGAIN, OUR BUDGET DIRECTOR, DAVID COLEMAN, HAS PROVIDED AN EAGLE EYE AND MUCH DATA IN RESPONSE TO THE 24 COUNTY COMMISSIONERS’ INTENT NOT TO RAISE PROPERTY TAXES. THE 2010-11 TAX RATE REMAINS THE SAME AS LAST YEAR WITH NO INCREASE, AT \$2.31!

WORKING THROUGH THIS YEAR’S BUDGET PROCESS AND THE MANY VARIABLES WE FACED WAS KIND OF LIKE “RUNNING WITH THE BULLS” IN POMPLONA, SPAIN! WE FACED CHALLENGES “HEAD ON”, SET SPENDING PRIORITIES, ASKED TOUGH QUESTIONS, MANAGED OUR RESOURCES WISELY AND MOVED THE TAX RATE PENNIES AROUND TO WORK WITHIN THE AVAILABLE

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REVENUE SOURCES TO ARRIVE AT THIS YEAR'S \$363 MILLION BUDGET AND MET THE "NO TAX INCREASE" CHALLENGE.

THIS PROCESS WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH THE OVERSIGHT OF THE 2009-10 BUDGET COMMITTEE, COMPRISED OF COMMISSIONERS BETSY HESTER, TOMMY LITTLE, JACK WALTON AND CHAIRED BY RUSSELL LITTLE.

HISTORICALLY, YOU WILL SEE THAT AS THE STUDENT POPULATION INCREASES, SO INCREASES THE DEMANDS FOR ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL, ADDITIONAL FACILITIES AND EXPENSES.

WITH A PROJECTED GROWTH OF 643 NEW STUDENTS THIS FALL AND THE ADDITION OF THREE (3) NEW SCHOOLS, 64% OF THE OVERALL OPERATING BUDGET JUST APPROVED IS DEDICATED TO THE OPERATIONS OF OUR GREAT SCHOOL SYSTEM. WHEN YOU INCLUDE THE DEBT REQUIRED FOR THE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION, THEN THE AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURES ALLOCATED SOLELY FOR SCHOOLS HOVERS AROUND 72%.

COUNTY OFFICIALS HAVE CONSISTENTLY INCREASED THE AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURES DEDICATED TO OUR #1 RESOURCE IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY - OUR CHILDREN AND THEIR EDUCATION.

WITH THAT BEING SAID, YOU WILL NOTE THAT EVERYTHING ELSE IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT - YOUR LAW ENFORCEMENT, COURT SYSTEM, PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES, HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT, SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT AND ALL OTHER GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES OPERATE ON THE REMAINING 28% OF THE TOTAL BUDGET EXPENDITURES.

LET'S LOOK AT SOME CHARTS WHICH DEMONSTRATE THE REVENUES AND EXPENSES FOR YOUR COUNTY BUDGET, BASED ON THE 2010-11 FISCAL YEAR:

- 1) REVENUE CHART
- 2) EXPENSE CHART
- 3) PROPERTY TAX DISTRIBUTION CHART
- 4) BUILDING PERMITS ACTIVITY CHARTS (x4)
- 5) 2010 CENSUS

THE DECISIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS AND THE CONSERVATIVE APPROACH TO OUR BUDGET PRACTICES HAS PROVIDED SUFFICIENT FUND BALANCES TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR EXPENDITURE NEEDS.

EVEN THOUGH WE HAD TO DIP IN TO OUR FUND BALANCES TO BALANCE THE 2010-11 BUDGET, WE STILL HAVE A SOLID FUND BALANCE MOVING FORWARD INTO THE NEW FISCAL YEAR AND WE HAVE KEPT AT THE FOREFRONT THE NEED TO ENSURE WE RETAINING OUR MOODY'S Aaa BOND RATING.

AS WE MOVE INTO THIS NEW BUDGET CYCLE, WE WILL NEED TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A WATCHFUL EYE AS WE ALREADY HAVE TWO (2) ADDITIONAL SCHOOLS APPROVED FOR OPENING IN THE FALL OF 2011 - ONE ADDITIONAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO ALLEVIATE THE TRINITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OVERCROWDING AND A NEW HIGH SCHOOL IN THE THOMPSON'S STATION/SPRING HILL AREA OF THE COUNTY.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY OFFICIALS MUST CONTINUE TO WORK HARD TO FIND WAYS TO INCREASE REVENUES AND EXPAND OUR JOB GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTINUE TO BE THE BEST PLACE TO WORK, LIVE, PLAY AND WORSHIP IN THE STATE OF TENNESSEE.

ALONG THOSE LINES, I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME JACKSON NATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY, OUR NEWEST CORPORATE CITIZEN, TO OUR COUNTY. THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF MATT LARGEN, THE COUNTY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR AND THE COUNTY COMMISSION, WORKING WITH THE STATE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM AND MAYOR JOHN SCHROER AND THE FRANKLIN BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMAN, WE WILL BE INCREASING OUR WORKFORCE BY APPROXIMATELY 750 NEW JOBS OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS AND YEARS IN OUR COUNTY.

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EVEN DURING THIS TOUGH, TICKLISH ECONOMY, WITH THE FEDS IN WASHINGTON BORROWING OR SPENDING AT RECORDS PACES, AND THE STATE OF TENNESSEE FALLING SHORT IN THEIR REVENUE PROJECTIONS, WILLIAMSON COUNTY MUST REMAIN FOCUSED AND WORK WITH OUR REGIONAL PARTNERS TO ENSURE CONTINUED NEW JOB GROWTH FOR OUR AREA.

DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR, WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE GOOD STEWARDS OF YOUR TAX DOLLARS. INSTEAD OF HIRING OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS, IT IS MY DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO ESTABLISH TASK FORCES, COMPRISED OF OUR OWN CITIZENS AND UTILIZE THEIR SKILLS, TALENTS AND KNOWLEDGE, TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR VARIOUS ON-GOING COUNTY PROJECTS AND NEEDS.

IN CLOSING, I KNOW THAT YOU WILL AGREE WITH ME IN THAT WE HAVE SO MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY! THIS INCLUDES THE NUMEROUS MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN AND BUSINESSES WHO DEDICATE SO MUCH OF THEIR TIME, ENERGY AND RESOURCES TO GIVE BACK TO THIS COMMUNITY IN VARIOUS WAYS.

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I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW **THANKFUL** I AM TO BE THE MAYOR OF SUCH A GREAT COUNTY!! I AM INDEED HONORED AND HUMBLLED THAT I AM ABLE TO CONTINUE TO SERVE IN THIS CAPACITY AND I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO WORK WITH EACH OF YOU DURING THE NEXT FOUR (4) YEARS AND BEYOND.

FINALLY, I'D LIKE TO ENCOURAGE EACH OF YOU, TO JOIN ME IN 16 DAYS AT THE WILLIAMSON COUNTY FAIR, AUGUST 6TH - 14TH AT THE AG EXPO PARK,..... WHERE YOU, TOO, CAN **"COME BE A KID AGAIN!"**