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THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025

Attorneys square off at Williamstown Council meeting

BY BETSY SMITH  
EDITOR

The Williamstown City Council held a special meeting Tuesday, April 1 with a single agenda item: “Closed Session per KRS 61.810(1) Discussion or hearing which might lead to the appointment, discipline, or dismissal of an individual employee or member of public agency.”

After the hour and a half long executive session adjourned, the special meeting reconvened. Mayor Mark Christopher said he could not report his usual “no actions were taken; no votes were made” because he was not in the session. “I have no idea what happened.”

As Christopher was calling for a motion to adjourn, Councilmember John Coleman said, “Mayor, I’d like to make a motion.”

After a long pause, he continued, “A resolution issuing charges of willful neglect”

Coleman was interrupted by City Attorney Frank Wichmann. “There’s nothing on the agenda other than a motion to adjourn. Since this is a special meeting no other business can be conducted or discussed.”

For a few minutes Wichmann and the council’s attorney, Luke Morgan, volleyed the issue back and forth.

“Simply because the mayor moved quickly for adjournment

doesn’t mean that the council can’t make a motion for this resolution ... What I’m saying is that the council went into closed session to discuss matters.” The closed session was over and the council was “acting in public on those matters,” he argued.

Wichmann countered, “But action in public on those matters is not on the agenda. How can you discuss something that’s not on the agenda?”

“This is a special meeting that is set up for discussion in closed session and then acting upon it,” Morgan answered.

Wichmann tried to interject but Morgan continued, “The matter that’s listed on the agenda is for matters pertaining to discipline-possible discipline-of a person. That’s what’s in front of the council right now; that’s what they’re discussing. This is not something new or different than the basis upon which they went into closed session.”

“Is there anything in the agenda about action on the closed session?” Wichmann asked.

Morgan snapped back that the council was “acting appropriately.”

Wichmann replied “You and I are not going to agree, so...”

Jeffrey John Otis, an associate from the law firm representing Mark Christopher, stepped to the podium and advised the issue be put on the next

meeting agenda.

Councilmember Kim Crupper clarified this with Wichmann, who replied it could be on a special or regular meeting agenda.

A moment later, Councilmember Dave Henson said, “I make the motion.”

Crupper asked, “Make the motion we continue to read this?”

“Yeah. Let John make his motion,” Henson said.

“John, please read your motion,” Crupper instructed.

Coleman began haltingly then threw up his hands. “People, I’m just trying to do what’s right. I’m just an average person trying to do what’s right. I don’t know what lawyer to listen to and what not to.”

Mastering his momentary indecision, Coleman plowed ahead. “I make the motion-a resolution-issuing charges of willful neglect and setting a public hearing pursuant to KRS 83A.040(9).”

The statute referred to reads: “Except in cities of the first class, any elected officer, in case of misconduct, incapacity, or willful neglect in the performance of the duties of his or her office, may be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the members of the legislative body exclusive of any member to be removed, who shall not vote in the delibera-

Williamstown City Council members issue statement

BY WILLIAMSTOWN CITY COUNCIL  
April 3, 2025

Dear Williamstown Residents,

The process involving Mayor Christopher is being done fairly and in accordance with the law. The City Council is keeping an open mind in these proceeding and will do what we believe to be in the best interest of our community. If you have questions, please reach out

to your council member and we will do our best to help you understand the nature of this process. We are here to serve our city, and we are grateful for your trust.

Sincerely,  
Your Williamstown Council members  
Kim Crupper  
Jayson Payne  
Ronnie Maines  
Gina Austin Smith  
John Coleman  
David Henson

tion of his or her removal. No elected officer shall be removed without having been given the right to a full public hearing. The officer, if removed, shall have the right to appeal to the Circuit Court of the county and the appeal shall be on the record. No officer so removed shall be eligible to fill the office vacated before the expiration of the term to which originally elected.”

Coleman continued, “Whereas

to afford Mayor Mark Christopher with significant opportunity to prepare for his public hearing, the Williamstown City Council hereby presents Mark Christopher with the following list of charges to be considered at the public hearing for which removal is sought.”

The charges include:  
“1. Mark Christopher acted with willful neglect in the performance of his duties of his

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DID YOU KNOW?

This Saturday, April 12. Grant County Parks and Recreation will be hosting two events at Grant County Park.

There will be Easter egg hunts at 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

There are egg hunts for three age groups at each time: 1-3 years; 4-6 years; and 7-10 years. Participants are asked to choose one hunt.

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the park will also be celebrating opening day for Grant County Little League.

There will be three food trucks (food, coffee and dessert), 40 craft vendors and a kids zone with inflatables.

Absent Dawn will be onstage providing live music.

The Opening Day Parade will take place at noon and will include both the Cincinnati Reds’ and the Florence Y’Alls’ mascots.

The events will take place rain or shine but will be cancelled if the weather is severe. There is no rain out date.

Grant County Park is located at 144 South Main Street in Crittenden.

Grant County boasts four statewide SkillsUSA winners

Grant County students made an excellent showing at the statewide SkillsUSA competition in Louisville on March 24-27. More than 1,000 students vied in 96 areas for the chance to advance to Nationals in June in Atlanta, Georgia.

SkillsUSA is self-described as “the #1 workforce development organization for students. We empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members.”

The following Grant County students competed at SkillsUSA:

- Welding Fab Team A  
Braiden Beach  
Haiden Hughett  
Aren Slaughter
- A Welding Fab Team B  
Wyatt Wehr  
Charlie Sanford  
Jayden Hughes
- A Welding 1  
Nate Regensburger
- A Welding Comp  
Noah Blair
- A Industrial Motor Control  
Dillion Baker
- A Electrical 1  
Tyler Helton
- A Opening and Closing  
Hayley Rigney  
Taylor Whittich

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State SkillsUSA winners Ashley Zephau and Tina Luu will head to Atlanta in June to compete in the National Leadership & Skills Conference.

Grant County Schools

Grant County thespians produce Seussical the Musical

Grant County High School Theatre Troupe members trod the boards as a variety of much-loved Dr. Seuss characters in the play Seussical the Musical on March 28 and 29.

The production was directed by Timothy Gripshover. The play’s cast included:

- Aaliyah Merkel as The Cat in the Hat
- M. Joyce Chernoff as The Grinch
- Karma Ferguson as JoJo
- Chase Eckler Beach as Horton

- Serenity Noonchester as Gertrude
- Peyton Walters as Mayzie Labird
- Abigail Grace as Sour Kangaroo/Young Kangaroo
- Jacqueline Tatum as Mrs. Mayor
- Yoshi Howard as Mr. Mayor/Wickersham
- Charley Mulberry as Wickersham
- Layla Baker as Wickersham
- Irelyn McClure as Bird Girl/Judge Yertle
- Kaylee Muse as Bird Girl
- Cali Cheesman as Bird Girl



Melissa Muse

On the opening night of Seussical the Musical, director Timothy Gripshover poses with Aaliyah Merkel, Cat in the Hat; Layla Baker, Wickersham; Yoshi Howard, Mr. Mayor; Karma Ferguson, JoJo; and Serenity Noonchester, Gertrude.

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