

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/20/17	Parkridge Historic Overlay - Interim Demolition Moritorium	<p>I will ask that Council put the following resolution on the agenda tomorrow to consider in connection with the proposed postponement or moratorium of the historic overlay situation in Parkridge. We Certainly don't want to lose any neighborhood gems while any education and debate on the overlay, and/or any changes to it, continues.</p> <p>Hopefully, the draft resolution is attached below in PDF format</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	11/20/17	STR Amendment	<p>Good morning all,</p> <p>When short term rentals come up at tomorrow's meeting, I intend to propose an amendment. The amendment would create a Type 3 permit which would apply to STRs in residential areas. Type 3 permits would be for non-owner occupied STRs in residential areas and a Type 3 permit would only last for one year and cannot be renewed. The intent is to assist people who are operating STRs in residential areas that will otherwise immediately be banned under the presently proposed ordinance.</p> <p>c. Type 3 Operating Permit, Limited Non-Owner Occupied in Residential Districts.</p> <p>i. Generally. A Type 3 Operating Permit is available in Residential Districts to operators who have operated a Short Term Rental Unit prior to March 1, 2017 ("Qualifying Date") upon meeting the criteria in this article. A person or entity can obtain a Type 3 Operating Permit for each Short Term Rental Unit operating prior to the Qualifying Date and meeting the other criteria in this article. Proof of operation shall be required upon application and must demonstrate that the Short Term Rental Unit was both listed on a Hosting Platform and was occupied by a Transient for Consideration at least once prior to the Qualifying Date. A Type 3 Operating Permit is specific to the Short Term Rental Unit for which it issued; it cannot be transferred to another location.</p> <p>Window of Availability. A Type 3 Operating Permit must be obtained within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this ordinance, after which time no Type 3 Operating Permits shall be issued under any circumstances whatsoever.</p> <p>Expiration. All Type 3 Operating Permits shall expire one (1) year from the effective date of this ordinance and shall not be renewed.</p> <p>Owner or Lessee Eligible. A Type 3 Operating Permit can be issued to either an Owner or lessee of the property, who does not need to occupy the Short Term Rental Unit as a principal residence; provided that a lessee must obtain the signature of the Owner on the application for the Operating Permit. A Type 3 Operating Permit is available to a person or an entity.</p> <p>Accessory Structures and Duplexes. If there is an accessory dwelling structure on the property, the Type 3 Operating Permit can be for either the primary dwelling structure or the accessory dwelling structure, but not for both. If a property houses a legal duplex and an Owner owns both sides of the duplex, only one (1) Type 3 Operating can be issued for only one side of the duplex, but not both sides of the duplex.</p> <p>The administration has agreed to this amendment. See you tomorrow. Nick P.</p>

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71	Duane Grieve	11/7/17	STR's	The number for transients is 8 and not 4 in article 4.3
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/7/17	STR's	Duane, typo, also fix item no. 2. B., i.e, it's either a 4 or 6 guest limit. You have both in there now. PS Once the frat or bachelor party starts, there will be 20 additional informal guests show up. Never fear, though, Codes will call you back on Monday when they return to the office.
71	Duane Grieve	11/7/17	STR's	3 b: "the owner shall remain at the Short Term Rental" Thanks Nick
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/7/17	STR's possible amendments	<p>Duane, some interesting proposals. Note that your section 3 b. I. Has a material typo:: I think you are saying in the proposed text that the owner shall be physically present (except for work hours and short intervals), but you left "not"be present in the wording shown. Fix that if that is your meaning.</p> <p>In addition, your listing of neighborhoods to be exempted from the STRs , leaves out the R1 "established neighborhoods"category, like Holston Hills and Westmoreland... these are very traditional and long-established single family residential areas. Because of their historic character, they have allowed the potential for highly-regulated, formal bed and breakfasts, to seek approval, as designed in under Mr. Donaldson's MPC tenure. Those, however, are rare, and few and far between. They are far cry from the loose goosie STR world. People choose to live in an single family area so they can know and interact with their neighbors, and not be exposed to commercial hotels and motels. Those kinds of uses belong in mixed use areas, and in or along commercial corridors, not on residential blocks. Most neighborhoods strive to WATCH what is happening in their area and to REPORT unusual activity. STRs undermine neighborhood cohesiveness and self-protection.</p> <p>The Codes department has thus far shown they are unable or unwilling to enforce basic residential codes and restrictions- where these uses are illegal. More enforcement means more staff and more budgets (including heavy weekend coverage when such rooms tend to be rented), and a firm resolve to enforce that has thus far not been shown.</p> <p>If we truly need more or varied tourist accommodations, like STRs, they should be confined to a geographic tourist district, where such business and mixed uses are permitted. Chattanooga has now done so, using defined mapping boundaries.</p>

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71	Duane Grieve	11/7/17	STR's possible amendments	<p>Below are potential amendments, anticipated to be made at the City Council meeting on November 7, 2017 in regards to Item 12.f.</p> <p>1.Concept: To exclude STRs from R-1 and R-1E.</p> <p>a.Motion: I move to amend 1.2.d., Definitions, to exclude R-1 and R-1E zoning districts as districts where short term rental units are allowed.</p> <p>b.Actual Amendment to Text (Section 1.2.d.): d.Residential District. Any zoning district designated in the City of Knoxville where the principal permitted uses in the district include residential uses, including houses, duplexes, garage apartments accessory to a principal dwelling, and multi-dwelling structures. As of the date of the adoption of this article, Residential Districts shall include: all districts identified in the City of Knoxville Code of Ordinances, Appendix B, Article IV, Section 2.1, except Sections 2.1.1., R-1 Low Density Residential District, and 2.1.3., R1-E, Low Density Exclusive Residential District; all planned residential districts (RP-1, 2, and 3); the traditional neighborhood development district (TND-1); and the Old Sevier and Scottish Pike South Waterfront District (SW-1).</p> <p>2.Concept: To reduce the number of transients from the current maximum of 12.</p> <p>a.Motion: I move to amend Division 4, Operational Requirements, at Section 4.3, Maximum Occupancy, to allow a maximum occupancy of 4 transients.</p> <p>b.Actual Amendment to Text (Section 4.3.): 4.3.Maximum Occupancy. The number of Transients in a Short Term Rental Unit shall not exceed six Transients the sum of two (2) Transients per bedroom plus two (2) additional Transients; provided, however, that the maximum occupancy of the Short Term Rental Unit shall not exceed 12 persons, including Transients and any other individuals residing in or otherwise using the Short Term Rental Unit.</p> <p>3.Concept: To require the owner of a Type 1 Owner Occupied Operating Permit to remain onsite during the stay of the transients.</p> <p>a.Motion: I move to amend Division 2, Permit Types, Applications, and Issuance, at Section 2.3 (a)(i), Type 1 Operating Permit, Owner Occupied, so that the owner is required to remain on the permitted premises during the transients' occupancy.</p> <p>b.Actual Amendment to Text (Section 2.3.a.i.): i.Generally. A Type 1 Operating Permit is available in Residential Districts upon meeting the criteria in this article. A Type 1 Operating Permit can be issued only to an owner of the Short Term Rental Unit. The property where the Short Term Rental Unit is located must be the owner's principal residence, except in the instance of duplexes as further described in this section. A person can only hold one (1) Type 1 Operating Permit in the City of Knoxville. The Type 1 Operating Permit is available only to natural persons. The Owner is not required to shall remain or be present at the Short Term Rental Unit during the Transient Occupancy, except for occasional errands or occupational obligations, none of which shall require the Owner to be away from the Short Term Rental Unit for more than twelve (12) consecutive hours.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/3/17	An STR is a hotel under Tennessee law	<p>The State Attorney General has determined that a STR or airbnb rental is a "hotel" under Tennessee law -- see opinion below.</p> <p>Q. Why should we allow hotels and businesses in a residential neighborhood. They are not permitted uses under our zoning laws. They are illegal uses. Period.</p> <p>https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/attorneygeneral/opinions/op15-78.pdf</p>

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68	George Wallace	7/27/17	Private Property Rights & STRs	I'm including a link to an article about STRs from the perspective of private property rights of a homeowner. http://pepperdinelawreview.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Speier_Final-proof-for-LS.pdf
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/18/17	New Chattanooga Short-term Vacation Rental Ordinance	We need to find out how their MPC drew the lines they chose for the district. This has the potential to start off on the right foot in Knoxville. Baby steps rather than total immersion. Picture a drawn STR district that welcomes such uses in tourist-rich areas like downtown and UT, and includes nearby neighborhood areas that have thus far welcomed STRs, like 4th and Gill, Old North, Parkridge, or Ft Sanders--just for sake of argument here. By contrast, neighborhood's that oppose this activity could be left out (e.g., Sequoyah, West Hills, etc) without relying solely on zoning classifications to make a decision. Obviously, there would need to be periodic review and revamping of the district area (as well as provision for STRs in multi-family areas) but it might provide the kind of fine-tuned starting point to engage in this changing environment. Chattanooga also seems to authorize an appeal process to challenge permits where such use might be undesirable to neighbors. Anyway, it is something to think about in the upcoming workshops.....
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/17/17	New Chattanooga Short-term Vacation Rental Ordinance	Here is the map of the new district. See attachment below.
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/17/17	New Chattanooga Short-term Vacation Rental Ordinance	The Chattanooga Council has just recently passed a new Short-term Vacation Rental Ordinance (11-470 et. Seq., still awaiting formal signature). The approach finally hit upon, after months of negotiation and debate, is to define/map a physical area where such activity is allowed--done by their Planning Commission. Looks like downtown and area around Moccasin Bend of the river and possibly the shopping area off I-24 before you reach downtown. Worth studying this approach further. Note: Map has thus far not uploaded to our user-challenged forum/website
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/14/17	Chattanooga Limits STRs to multi-dwelling zones	Retry attaching referenced news article: http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/politics/local/story/2017/jun/27/live-city-council-votes-whether-establish-special-district-short-term-vacation-rentals/435579/
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/14/17	Chattanooga Limits STRs to multi-dwelling zones -- chang	Chattanooga just passed a new law on June 27th abandoning the earlier zoning approach (R-3 and R-4 only), and instead is setting up a special geographic area where such Short-term Vacation Rentals are allowed. See Chattanooga news article: http://www.chattanooga.gov/city-council-files/OrdinancesAndResolutions/Ordinances/Ordinances%202009/12231%20Amend%20Zoning%20Ord-%20Arts%20II%20&%20V%20-%20to%20include%20Short-term%20vacation%20rental%20in%20R-3%20&%20R-4.pdf

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73	Nick Della Volpe	7/14/17	Chattanooga Limits STRs to multi-dwelling zones	<p>Chattanooga adopted an ordinance allowing vacation rentals only in multi-dwelling zones, like their R-3 and R-4 zones:</p> <p>See http://www.chattanooga.gov/city-council-files/OrdinancesAndResolutions/Ordinances/Ordinances%202009/12231%20Amend%20Zoning%20Ord-%20Arts%20II%20&%20V%20-%20to%20include%20Short-term%20vacation%20rental%20in%20R-3%20&%20R-4.pdf</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/14/17	Pavlis reply STR's -- stop the illegals	<p>Pavlis, the simple answer to your reply is to fire The entire codes department and hire people who will enforce the law. (Council is not a law enforcement body). This is an administration failure, or conspiracy to undermine the existing law to get a "sharing economy" ordinance. People buy homes in single family residential areas in reliance on the character of the neighborhood and the zoning. Why are we so quick to ditch the majority of homeowners in this community?</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	7/14/17	Pavlis reply STR's	<p>Della Volpe reply-let's strangle business even more</p> <p>We did nothing as a city to prohibit STR's while knowing all along they were operating. You and I and all members of council could have stopped this but choose not to enforce the codes. To me the same thing was true of food trucks. They were not operating properly but we found a way to make their investments work didn't we? This is not going to be a huge impact on neighborhoods. I seriously doubt hundreds of folks are going to run to the permit office when we lower the flag. Keep in mind, once the property changes hands the deal is over. I for one would rather help those that have invested and in many cases made their property a better place.</p> <p>You or I have no idea about the 5 complaints to be able to make an educated decision. What i do know is that folks in the 1 st District don't hesitate to let me know when there is a problem in a neighborhood and we get it fixed. So if there is a problem I'd say we would know.</p> <p>So Brother Della Volpe let's not forget about the everyday person that has made this investment and let our codes department do their job when called upon.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/13/17	Pavlis reply STR's -- A Bad Idea	<p>Brother Pavlis -- Why should people who ignore the established zoning law restrictions --operating a business in a purely residential area -- get special treatment, indeed a reward, for defying the law and the sensibilities of their residential neighbors? A person's home is their castle, and, likely, their largest personal investment. They chose to live in a use-restricted residential neighborhood, not a mixed use / commercial and residential zone. Frankly, the administration should be doing its job to clean up these zoning violations, not institutionalize get them. But perhaps that is a separate issue, for another day....</p> <p>I get that young entrepreneurs want to turn a buck by renting out space in their house. But they are doing that on the backs and hard work and investment of their neighbors.</p> <p>I'm sure there are good hosts and bad hosts and guests. But I don't buy the "only 5 complaints" logic. I bet neighbors, offended by such action, typically bite their tongues rather than start a feud with a renting neighbor.</p> <p>I prefer to see these things only in mixed use and commercial areas.</p> <p>Thanks Nick D</p>

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62	Nick Pavlis	7/10/17	Pavlis reply STR's	I am posting about short term rentals. As I said in our workshop, I'm concerned about people who have opened short term rentals in R-1 and R-1E areas and who might otherwise face a total ban. I am considering proposing a fixed time period of 45 days to get permitted. This length of time would help staff facilitate the process in a timely manner and allow those people who have short term rentals in R-1 and R-1E areas to be permitted. It would also be open to people who have not opened one yet in R-1 and R-1E areas, but have been waiting for this process to be completed. After that fixed time period the window would be closed in R-1 and R-1E, the permits would be considered compliant.
73	Nick Della Volpe	1/3/17	CALPERS -- Reassessing the Asumed Rate of Return on Pens	TYPO: Unfortunately, this system does not allow corrections: The page 63 quote has a numerical typo, should read: The market value of all assets was \$525.7 million...
73	Nick Della Volpe	1/3/17	CALPERS -- Reassessing the Asumed Rate of Return on Pens	Average Return on Investments = 6% according to the pension investment managers, Summit Strategies. See Sept 30, 2016 Letter to Pension Board (included at end of Audited Statement, p 62): "Over trailing 10-year period, the System returned 6.0% on an annualized basis and ranked in the 34 percentile of its public plan peer universe." See also p. 63, which to my lay mind shows we are losing ground on growing the asset pie to pay the pension's growing bills: "The market value of all assets was \$325.7 million on June 30, 2016 compared to \$544 million on June 30, 2015. The decrease is primarily attributable to required plan withdrawals for benefit payments, as the System's investments returned 0.5% for the fiscal year." _____ See page 88 of Audited Statement, which shows benefit payments steadily increasing: 2012 = \$39.2 M 2013 = \$40.5 M 2014 = \$41.5 M 2015 = \$42.6 M 2016 = \$43-9 M
73	Nick Della Volpe	1/2/17	CALPERS -- Reassessing the Asumed Rate of Return on Pens	See Audited Financial Statement for Pension, thru 6/30/16 Executive Director Kristi Paczkowski's December 9, 2016 letter to the Pension Board transmitting (and incorporated into) the audited financial return expressly states "The System's actual investment return of 0.49% for the year ended June 30, 2016 was significantly below the actuarially expected return of 7 3/8%." _____

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73	Nick Della Volpe	1/2/17	CALPERS -- Reassessing the Asumed Rate of Return on Pens	<p>Shrinking assets-- in case you missed it in the last post, pension fund assets have shrunk (or not grown enough) by \$40 Million last fiscal year (I.e., underfunding has grown from \$172M on July 1, 2015 to \$211M on July 1, 2016).</p> <p>Short of prayer for stronger market asset growth this year, to grow the current \$533M in the fund, the taxpayers will be asked for a further bailout at some point. That's why I keep urging us to re-evasluate where we are in terms of further reform.</p> <p>I'd rather see scarce dollars spent on infrastructure than repeated fund bailouts.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	12/27/16	CALPERS -- Reassessing the Asumed Rate of Return on Pens	<p>Payouts-- The current monthly payout is roughly \$3.7 M. (That includes \$3.57M in monthly Benefits, \$130k in Drop payments and \$43k in Refunds. Source-- \$2M contributed by City, \$394k by employees, plus pension fund earnings. What are those actual earnings, is the focal issue.</p> <p>Earnings -- to properly calculate, you must first net out trading/fund fees for the investments plus the cost of plan administration(about \$3M). As one citizen reminds me:</p> <p>"Beyond the investment firm fees, the expenses for operation of the plan are deducted from the earnings. Those run .5 - .75%, so you have to earn that before you begin working toward your earnings target. "</p> <p>We are \$211M underfunded (July 1, 2016 figures, per Jim York). As fiscal stewards, may be time to invite our pension gurus, actuaries and accountants to address us.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	12/23/16	CALPERS -- Reassessing the Asumed Rate of Return on Pensions	<p>The media reports that CALPERS, the nation's largest public pension fund, has determined that 7% is a more realistic rate of annual return for its assumed pension annual earnings target/ performance.</p> <p>The adjustment, while relatively small (down from around 7 1/2% per annum), will mean millions more in California municipal contributions (and related employee paycheck contributions) are needed to reach appropriate pension funding levels.</p> <p>(Aside: they already have at least 4 bankrupt cities which can't pay the freight).</p> <p>CALPERS' action raises the question of whether our 7 3/8% number is likewise unrealistic. If I recall correctly, Alan's last annual report had a chart showing that a 1% drop in actual earnings (I.e., down to 6 1/8%) translates into another \$85 M in shortfall. (Currently \$211M as of July 1, 2016).</p> <p>Perhaps the message from California is that you can run, but cannot hide, from reality.</p>
68	George Wallace	12/22/16	Housing and Zoning	<p>Here's a good read on housing and why we are updating our zoning code.</p> <p>https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/images/Housing_Development_Toolkit%20f.2.pdf</p>

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69	Marshall Stair	12/5/16	Zoning Code Update	<p>Below is an article I wrote last November about the need to update the zoning code and also is a 7 minute PechaKucha presentation I did last summer on the subject. If you have time, please check them out.</p> <p>See you tomorrow! Marshall</p> <p>This is a presentation I did over the summer: http://www.pechakucha.org/cities/knoxville/presentations/why-knoxville-s-zoning-code-prohibits-good-urban-design-and-prevents-walkable-communities Why Knoxville's Zoning Code Prohibits Good Urban Design and Prevents Walkable Communities</p> <p>http://www.pechakucha.org</p> <p>Walkability is key in improving health, the local economy, and the environment. Unfortunately Knoxville's zoning code prohibits mixed use, requires too much parking, and mandates large setbacks, all of which make Knoxville less walkable and transit friendly. In this presentation, Marshall Stair explores Knoxville and discusses what could be done to promote walkability in future developments.</p> <p>This is an op-ed I wrote over a year ago: http://archive.knoxnews.com/opinion/columnists/marshall-stair-commercial-zoning-code-needs-update-for-mixed-use-living-ep-1365973666-353239221.html</p> <p>Marshall Stair: Commercial Zoning Code needs update for ...archive.knoxnews.com</p> <p>You could develop a strip mall on Kingston Pike, but you cannot build apartments above it.</p>
68	George Wallace	12/5/16	walkability article	<p>This issue of "On Common Ground" is a good read as we consider zoning changes for Knoxville. Walk friendly neighborhoods are in demand. Take a look. http://www.oncommonground-digital.org/oncommonground/winter_2017_walkable_neighborhoods?pg=1#pg1</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	11/22/16	Drinking on the Church's Front Steps	<p>SAFETY of CHILDREN in and around the church is a legitimate concern of regular churches, which host community activities. Children often meet there and are engaged in activities at the church, as noted by the note writer below. It behooves Knoxville to keep those safe places safe.</p> <p>The constituent wrote in part: "Tonight you will once again vote on removing the "beer ban" distance from churches. I implore you to keep the ban in place. I understand that removing the ban would impact the economy in a potentially positive way. However, is the increased revenue worth a child or adult's life? I ask this because at some point in time, a child or adult will be attending a function at a church and will cross paths with a violent, intoxicated person. No one wants to think of this happening, but it will. At my church (which is situated in a neighborhood), we have experienced disruptions in services due to intoxicated persons. We have also dealt with stealing and vandalism multiple times over the past year. That does not mean that we are bitter; we are not. We welcome those in the community who have drug and alcohol issues. We want to help those who are hurting. However, we do not want to see an increase of crime. We want to provide a safe place for our children.</p> <p>Children and teens are present in churches all over Knoxville at various times throughout the week. Most churches host youth groups, mother's day out programs, sports practices, home school groups, Girl and Boy Scout groups, schools, etc. on a regular basis, so children would be present more than simply Sunday morning services. If you will not remove this protection from schools and day care centers, why would you remove it from churches, where children are also prevalent?</p> <p>While I understand that approximately 4 churches have requested beer permits and 19 have requested that the ban be lifted, there are approximately 480 churches in Knoxville. To put is statistically, less than 5% of the community is in favor of removing the ban. I understand that not every church has voiced an opinion, but I believe that most churches would favor keeping the ban. Please recognize that favoring the few would lead to unwanted, unanticipated consequences for all, placing the lives of children and adults in unnecessary danger.</p> <p>I would also request that you think of all of the AA and Al-Anon groups that meet at churches. They choose to meet at locations that are away from the influence of alcohol. Lifting the beer ban will remove the safe space that these organizations have found in churches." ----- Q. So ask yourself, what is driving this wholesale dumping of the 300 ft rule? The request of a few storefront churches seeking better rent, or location choices? The strip mall and shopping center lobbyists? A board of realtors? A wave of anti-religious sentiment or progressive fervor (you know, stop them from "clinging to their guns and their bibles")? Or just an over-reaction to a fair request of a few modern church groups?</p> <p>Whatever the origin, I submit that at most, Council could simply add a modest proviso to the existing text of the ordinance, which protects church buildings by imposing the 300 ft distance restriction: [b]"provided however, such 300 ft restriction on church buildings is hereby waived for storefront churches located in commercial malls, strip malls or other commercial buildings located in a commercial zone."[b]</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	11/21/16	Drinking on the Church's Front Steps	<p>Here is the substance of what one Knoxville citizen wrote in reply to a city Council member's position re ditching the time-honored 300-foot church activity protection rule:</p> <p>"Please allow me to offer a few thoughts concerning the stated situations from your email.</p> <p>If applicants can obtain a beer permit for a location within the 300' radius by obtaining a state permit, then why are we as a city not seeking to lobby the state to close this loop hole? As stated in the comment period in the last council meeting most cities in Tennessee have similar distance requirements in place already, why does Knoxville have to be the vanguard in removing these boundaries as opposed to being the leader in strengthening the boundary? I realize that there is a burgeoning alcohol industry, but is this the industry that we want to have as the cornerstone for our city? Are we willing to ignore the numerous problems created by alcohol in favor of a short term economic benefit?</p> <p>There is a trend for some congregations to locate satellite and church plants in former commercial spaces. However, there are approximately 480 churches in Knoxville and I doubt that there are more than a handful that are actively seeking to move into storefront locations. Should we be running after this change for the benefit of a few while placing the many in a bind? As I shared before, there are churches who run daycare centers and schools on their property, have Scout meetings and sports practices that run all through the week. How does the city plan to address this situation? I am also curious as to why this boundary change involves only churches? If this change is so simple and logical, then why not simply remove the boundary from day care centers, funeral homes and schools as well as churches? Why have churches been singled out for the removal of the boundary?</p> <p>Concerning point number three, the solution to this potential legal quagmire created by granting churches beer permits while excluding businesses is simple. Do not allow churches to have beer permits. I am perplexed as to why a beer permit would ever be issued to a church in the first place! I completely agree that it is unfair to issue these permits for churches and not businesses, but instead of removing this thin veil of protection from over 400 local city churches why not simply say no to the two to four churches requesting this permit. Sometimes it is okay to say no and this is one of those times.</p> <p>I was not aware of this particular detail concerning the boundary being from structure corner to structure corner. With this knowledge I would advocate for expanding the boundary or amending the boundary from structure corner to structure corner to property line and property line.</p> <p>I understand the fact that approximately fifteen churches have signed on to support this boundary removal. However, what about the 465 other churches in the city of Knoxville? Should these fifteen churches be allowed to set a shortsighted city wide policy for the other 465 churches in the city of Knoxville? How will this proposed change impact local churches who have had a stable presence in our community for many years? This ordinance attempts to clear the way for temporary churches who move into a storefront location for a few years and then move on when the either outgrow the space or fade away, but it places in harms' way established churches who have invested in our community for generations. I also understand that maybe the council has apparently not heard from these other churches, but what if they have not heard of this proposed change? Personally I have seen only three articles and an opinion piece in two local papers. Again I am left to wonder as to why the sudden urgency to move on this matter involving only churches?</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	11/17/16	Drinking on the Church's Front Steps	<p>Should the 300 ft rule be repealed? Be careful what you wish for.</p> <p>Churches help nourish the healthy side of our contemplative life, and usually reinforce the ethics of a community. They also serve a communal function hosting learning activities, boy scout groups, and other people gathering events like neighborhood meetings, fund raising for disaster relief, or just helping poor families get a Thanksgiving or Christmas basket to help them celebrate together. They often have day care and recreation areas for children. You don't have to be a "believer" to appreciate their contribution to our society.</p> <p>Some say times they are a changin'. The rule is 55 years old and is now dated. The reality they say is there are more modern churches that elect to locate in shopping centers and strip malls. Might be a good place for a start up, you don't have to build an grand edifice. A dozen or so of these modern churches have raised a concern that the 300 ft rule for beer licenses -- i.e., restricting location of on-premise beer sales and consumption to a distance greater 300 ft from a church. They say that restricts access to empty storefronts, with decent rents, where they could start-up a church or provide a lower-cost facility for their services. Landlords might be reluctant to rent to them out of concern that they might other lose beer-serving tenants to rent there. Others say, why fight this, one can beat the local law by getting a less-restrictive State Liquor license. Cities can't overrule the state law.</p> <p>The rule is hardly onerous. 300 feet is a short distance--sort of two doors down in a typical residential neighborhood.</p> <p>Tread softly. There is value in having safe havens for people to gather, and pray or play. If you have to change the rule, keep the intrusion minimal.</p> <p>I have also heard from a number of more traditional churches saying: don't drop the 300 ft. Rule Keep our churches safe community centers. If some on council are swayed by the arguments of storefront churches or shopping center real estate brokers, they should limit any changes, for now, to exempt storefront shopping center churches from the distance rule.</p> <p>Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/11/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>Major Math Correction: My calculated pension shortfall as of July1st should read: \$173M.</p> <p>Somehow I juxtaposed the first two numbers in typing that earlier, third entry.</p> <p>Humble apologies. I did not mean to overstate it. (Measure twice, cut once...)</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	11/11/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>Correction: Cost of COLA 2017 = \$1.25M</p> <p>At the November 10, 2016 Pension Board meeting I learned from director Kristi Paczkowski (an accountant) that a better cost number for the upcoming COLA adjustment is \$1.25 million (rather than my earlier \$1.34M guesstimate). This is due in part because the varied ground rules for the half dozen or so legacy plans, which still have pensioners, and apparently an actuarial aspect to such calculations. \$1.25M is the number.</p> <p>Whatever the prescise amount, actual cost of living should govern the increase. For our purpose, it means EACH big-hearted (or excess) COLA percentage point adds \$417k to the annual pension cost, raises the base, and thereby compounds future cost increases over time.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/8/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>Facts from Annual Report, cont'd</p> <p>Active workers covered original plan = 1472 (recall Inactive or retired workers was 2230) So total participants = 3702</p> <hr/> <p>Active workers under new Plan H (or hybrid plan) = 267 (Their COLA plan looks to actual cost of living adjustments under a formula)</p> <hr/> <p>The Actuary reports net pension liability, as of June 30, 2016, as \$214,007,866 (That net represents total pension liability as \$739,185,050, less fiduciary net positions of \$525,177,184)</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/8/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>PENSION FACTS</p> <p>There is an Annual Report by Actuary Allan Pennington, as of July 1, 2016. It shows, among many things, the following facts pertinent to this discussion of the uncovered cost of the original or legacy pension plan:</p> <p>Retirees (or Inactive plan participants including those under the DROP plan) = 2230 individuals Annual retirement benefits paid = \$44,717,303 That means (by my crude math) that the COLA expense portion = \$1,341,522 (Note: Such COLA adds to the base amount for next years COLA--so any exaggeration is ultimately compounded)</p> <p>City payroll (without benefits like ins, retirement, ...) = \$71,481,768 Employees contribution to pension was \$3,939,178 = i.e., roughly \$4M City's contribution to retirement was \$23,180,275 (lowered in part by the remaining \$2M of the \$10M extra paid in 3 or 4 years ago)</p> <p>Report also shows the following percentage average earnings, in typical 1 yr, 5yr, and 10 year broker disclosure fashion: 1 year = .01% 5 year = 6.73% 10 year = 5.897%</p> <p>None of those return averages equal the assumed 7.375% assumed by the plan as estimated earnings used to meet the pension liability. By definition that understates future/ unfunded liability.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/5/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>The actual Rate of Return that the defined-benefit pension fund experiences in the financial market is significant. It affects the amount of funding needed to pay the pension plan's annual distributions to retirees.</p> <p>Discussion: Did you notice in the actuary's example (see the above post) that a 1% drop in the presently-assumed 7.375% earnings rate or rate of return (i.e., dropping it down to 6.375%) raised the expected pension liability by an additional \$85 million! That's a huge change. One that directly affects the unfunded pension liability.</p> <p>Q. What if the average rate of return actually experienced is lower? Like 5.375%, for example. There would be a resultant larger pension underfunding.*</p> <p>_____</p> <p>* The converse is true, of course. If the defined-benefit pension fund consistently earned more than the presently-assumed 7.375% rate, there would be a lower shortfall that the taxpayers would have to shoulder. In short, the market risk for the original defined-benefit plan falls on you, the taxpayer. Note: For employees under the newer "hybrid plan", there is a sharing of market risk (or reward) by the employee once their annual salary exceeds \$40k.</p> <p>(Additional note: Under a typical 401k plan, the person's savings bear the entire market risk).</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/5/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>Illustration--A Small Change in the Assumed Rate of Return Makes a Big Difference</p> <p>If I can attach it (I am admittedly technologically challenged), see the illustration provided by the Pension Plan Actuary, Allen Pennington, on October 13, 2016 based on July 1, 2016 data (i.e., fiscal year end) below. His projections also show that the city's \$25M to \$30M per year contribution level will drop to a more modest level in 2038 or about 22 years.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/5/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>Pension System Funding Shortfall--A Derived Figure of \$713M</p> <p>Pension Figures are often complex, as they are expressed as a part of an actuary's estimated analysis of the future (considering average age, survival statistics, expected career wage earnings, assumed rate of return, etc).</p> <p>Here is a current snapshot of the city pension fund's financial status, as of the most recent September 30, 2016 accounting report (accumulating such accounting data always lags a bit): Net Assets = \$541,639,480. Liabilities = \$714,658,239.</p> <p>Hence the shortfall in funding is roughly \$713M. See clarifying note below.</p> <hr/> <p>Note: the \$714M liability number shown above was derived mathematically: by dividing the current asset value (a financial market value number) by the plan's disclosed funding percentage of 75.79% (a pension fund assumed number, premised on the adopted average 7.375% rate of return--that latter percent figure is estimated by the pension's actuary and then adopted by city's pension board). It is an estimate. If, in fact, the actual rate of return proved to be lower than the assumed 7.375 %, it would mean that the actual pension funding deficit would be greater than the calculated \$713M shown above (i.e., you would be dividing the reported asset value by a smaller assumed number).</p> <p>Such rate of turn figures are a matter of debate in the pension world. Realistically, a higher assumed rate of return makes the reported fund shortfall look better. So, the unexpressed bias tends to be to err on the high side.</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	11/4/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>Note that the CPI has been below 3% annually in 8 out of the last 10 years.</p> <p>2006≡2.5% 2007≡4.1% 2008≡0.1% 2009≡2.7% 2010≡1.5% 2011≡3.0% 2012≡1.7% 2013≡1.5% 2014≡0.8% 2015≡0.7%</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/4/16	Fixed COLA Rate is NOT Required	<p>Fixed COLA rate is NOT Required--Sixth Circuit Affirms Chattanooga Ruling</p> <p>A fixed COLA rate is not required for the city's pension system.</p> <p>Yesterday, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the trial court's decision in Frazier v Chattanooga--the city was entitled to change its COLA for pensioners, which it did in 2014. COLA is not an accrued or vested benefit nor is there a contractual right to such an annually applied boost to an employee's vested pension benefit. A city legislature (council) is free to change such a provision under both constitutional and Tennessee law. The court specifically said nothing in old/unrelated Blackwell case holds to the contrary.</p> <p>A COLA benefit helps an employee or pensioner to keep up with inflation. So far, so good. But a fixed rate of 3% has not been needed in recent years, rather it significantly exceeds the actual 1.5 to 2% inflation rate experienced in this economy. It is nothing more than unearned and unneeded pay raise to pensioners at the expense of the already over-burdened taxpayers. And unfortunately it increases the ever growing pension deficit this city must fund annually.</p> <p>In case you haven't looked lately, the pension fund earned less than 1/2% last fiscal year, and less than 2% the prior year. Projections of fund growth and the resultant short-fall make-up cost to the city based on a roughly 7 3/8% earnings projection is out of line and unwarranted (regardless of accounting conventions like the so-called smoothing). We haven't hit that percentage growth in three years. The real gap is widening.</p> <p>As stewards of the public fisc, it is time to stop hiding from reality using assumed projections that lack real world facts. Actual COLA up to a cap of 3% should be implemented now. We can respond fairly to inflation without giving away the store.</p> <p>PS. In 2014, Chattanooga cut it annual pension contributions by \$5 million, by taking several bold steps: increasing employee contributions to the plan, reducing COLA from 3% to 1.5%, and not starting COLA for new retirees in the 1st three years.</p>
74	Mark Campen	6/21/16	OLP appeal	<p>I plan on postponing the OLP vs KHFH appeal item on our agenda tonight. There should be more discussion between the two parties regarding infill housing design guidelines.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	4/26/16	Claustrophobic City Streets? Setbacks?	<p>A continuation of the discussion about re-thinking the current approach.</p> <p>Constituent comment: "Please consider requiring a 10-foot set-back for the project in the 1800 block of Cumberland Avenue. I completely support the work being done to the "strip" and am looking forward to having the area look much improved. I believe having buildings set away from the sidewalk edge will make the area more pedestrian friendly and attractive."</p> <p>Reply: ".... I agree with you that the sidewalk plus an added setbacks for plants, gardens, sculptures and sitting areas will make the Cumberland corridor more pedestrian friendly. That extra 10 feet would make a difference.</p> <p>The idea that a concrete chute passing through crowded monolithic tall structures, crowding the sidewalk and casting a dark shadow, is the just the opposite of pedestrian friendly. I fear our planners have been influenced by pretty design articles about the new urbanism, but have not traversed cavernous side streets in places like New York, where people are dwarfed by the tall building environment.</p> <p>Such places are why people move to Knoxville, a green friendly escape from the concrete jungle. I hope we can rethink the current design by providing people-scale respites from otherwise solid walls of concrete, steel and glass."</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	4/25/16	Claustrophobic City Streets?	<p>Have the would-be-planners of Cumberland Avenue gone too far with the form-based code? More specifically, why are we forcing buildings to front right on the edge of the sidewalk, up close to the roadway? They apparently want to achieve that old-timey downtown look, or to slow down traffic, much like a tree-line boulevard often does.</p> <p>They forget that when you build a bunch of 5- and 10-story buildings in that close, you have created a claustrophobic atmosphere that will leave half of the street and sidewalk engulfed in the shadows. That tends to create a sub-conscious, depressive atmosphere. There is no rest for the eye. Once millions of dollars have been invested in new tall close-in structures, it will be virtually impossible to remedy the dark shadows. The "eye" relaxes when presented with a vista rather than a dark tunnel. Ther must at least be a variation in setbacks.</p> <p>Not convinced? Try comparing, fur example, the wide-open boulevards in downtown Charlotte to some cramped New York City streets.</p> <p>I say, wake up Knoxville, before it is too late.</p> <p>Nick Della Volpe, 4th District 5216 Crestwood Drive Knoxville, Tn 37914 525-2880</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	3/24/16	City Council elections and voter turnout	<p>3). Also Cost. The 3rd fix ought to be to reduce the high cost of elections. Why not shorten early voting to 4 or 5 days max? Most of the action happens in the last few days anyway. If you are out of town that week plan, for a paper or absentee ballot.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	3/24/16	City Council elections and voter turnout	<p>Two further election process aspects actually could use further review and possibly change, however.</p> <p>1). Reporting Dates. The financial reporting should be streamlined, as requiring a state disclosure report followed by a separate city report the next week or so is duplicative and time-consuming, and fussy. Some candidates ignore the separate city report-- that sets a bad example for any would-be city leader. We need to ask why do we seek such information? How could it be improved to reach that goal? Let's require each candidate to report sufficient information (I.e., combining requirements for city and state data) each month during the relevant state reporting period, and cut out the duplicative requirements. Voters need to know who gave, date, amount, and the donors' business affiliation (to screen for conflicts of interest) on gifts over the dollar threshold amount. Basically Monthly Reports plus the one just before Election Day to avoid holding donations in a hip pocket till its to late to be meaningful to voters). Most folks these dates submit a computer spreadsheet, so a cumulative report is easy.</p> <p>2). Turf Fairness. A second question concerns effectively having 4 west Knoxville reps = a 2nd district rep + 3 at-larges which so how all seem to be from West Knoxville. Fair? There out to be turf limitations. E.g., 1 from west, 1 from east, 1 from south. Even though I am proud of our at-larges current efforts, that may not hold true in the future. Divide the residential source of the 3 at larges to keep it fair to the citizens being represented.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	3/24/16	City Council elections and voter turnout	<p>Finbarr Saunders has proposed changes to the council member election process for the at-large reps. That was followed by a note from Bill Lyons talking about regrouping the numbered districts (1 thru 6) in one election cycle, with the 3 at-large council seats grouped in another cycle and allowing the primary to be a final election if the at-large candidate got at least 51% of the vote (like now occurs for mayoral races). I challenged Lyon's and Saunder's suggestion:</p> <p>"Thanks for the note. You ignore, however, that : 1) the staggered terms are designed to keep a reasonable skill level on council after elections, i.e. 4 one year, 5 another ; and 2) that treating at-larges differently gives an unfair advantage to the incumbent seeking a second term. It takes awhile for a new candidate to get the word out, while the incumbent can trade on name recognition in a low turn out primary before the challenger gets up a head of steam. The voters rights trump any inconvenience of old men running for a second term."</p>

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70	Finbarr Saunders	1/5/16	City Council elections and voter turnout	<p>I would like to discuss the possibility of changing the process to allow at-large candidates to be elected in the primary (just as the Mayor and City Judge are now) with 50% plus 1. This may result in moving the 5th District to the election cycle with the other district contests (and would result in the extension of the 5th district representative for 2 years).</p> <p>Also, I would like to discuss ideas to help encourage better voter involvement in City elections. City Council several years ago approved a process to allow the "early Voting" process to simply be extended thru Election Day without opening all of the precincts - in other words streamlining the process. That was denied by the Election Commission.</p> <p>We might consider asking the Election Commission to mail ballots to all registered voters, which certainly would increase participation but not necessarily informed participation.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	12/2/15	Pensions Update	<p>District Court Upholds Chattanooga Ordinance Changing COLA Adjustment in Pension Plan</p> <p>In March 2014 the Chattanooga City Council passed an ordinance reducing the COLA formula for the Fire and Police Pension Plan from a fixed 3% rate to essentially one following the Consumer Price Index (CPI) up to a maximum increase of 3%. (Aside: There were interim tighter restrictions on COLA until the plan reached 80% funding, but those details are not pertinent here.) They acted to address shortfalls in pension funding resulting from the 2008 national economic turndown, longer life expectancies, and poorer returns on investment in order to make their plan more sustainable. The changes were challenged in Court.</p> <p>In November 2015, Federal District Judge Collier granted summary judgment in favor of the City, finding that the employees had no vested contract right or property interest in the COLA. The Court ruled that COLA "is an adjustment to the pensioners' benefits rather than the benefit itself," intended to "ameliorate the effects of inflation,"and, thus, that the legislative body retained the right to change the law establishing it. The Court notes that the presumption is that a law is a declaration of policy to be pursued, and that absent a clear indication in the statutory language itself, is not intended to create private contractual or vested rights. There was therefore no violation of the Contracts Clause of the federal and state constitution (nor of the Takings Clause or Due Process Clause) which were relied upon by the plaintiffs.</p> <p>The plain language of the Chattanooga City Code shows that "the COLA is not a vested financial benefit." The pension benefit was based on years of service times a percentage of salary. The Court rejected the plaintiffs' heavy reliance on the Blackwell case since it dealt with changes in the calculation for monthly benefits under a pension plan; "it did not involve COLA, and is thus not particularly illuminating to the dispute before the Court." Additionally, in looking at the March 2014 law the Court observed that it "makes sense that the City would preserve its ability to adjust the COLA to respond to shifts in inflation rather than locking itself in to a 3% COLA for all time."</p> <p>Bottom line: a COLA adjustment provision does not create a vested right. The City retains the right to make adjustments to changed circumstances to keep its pension plan financially sound. For the past several years the CPI has been closer to 1 1/2% than a 3%.</p> <p>Knoxville's pension plan has \$716M in liabilities and only \$530M in assets as of the end of October 2015.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/10/15	Knoxville Botanical Garden	<p>See map of roadway or path described above.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/9/15	Knoxville Botanical Garden	<p>We are on the cusp of improving the Magnolia Corridor (or at least beginning that task). One of the opportunities for upgrading that corridor is provided by the Knoxville Botanical Garden. I consider it a hidden tourist and business attraction. We need to help folks find it.</p> <p>I have requested the Mayor at budget time to prepare a second pathway to the Gardens--this time from I -40. The Botanical Gardens are 1.6 miles from I-40 at the Cherry Street exit. A combination of an interstate logo sign announcing this "special attraction" (one of the 4 legitimate categories for such signs), along with street light banners or those green metal signs would take you down Cherry, right on Magnolia for a block to Chestnut and left up to the road by the admin building.(Wimpole Ave.).</p> <p>Target: the 100,000 plus cars a day that go past this hidden gem. Opportunity for folks to stop and spend a day in Knoxville....</p> <p>Simple existing department budget use: I.e., Clean up any remaining blighted houses (much already done on Chestnut), fix sidewalks, get more boulevard like tree cover, ...</p> <p>Result: more visits to Botanical Garden, more business for restaurants, hotels, and exploration of our town.</p> <p>Nick D</p>
71	Duane Grieve	8/4/15	New Sign Ordinance Letter	<p>Council,</p> <p>See attached letter that was mailed to each of you.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Duane Grieve</p>
72	Brenda Palmer	8/3/15	3rd District Major Arterials	<p>Below is listed the major arterials in the third district. Currently, these are restricted to 10' signs. Only one federal highway goes through a small portion of the3rd district, all the other arterials and connectors are limited to 10'. This restriction places a burden on economic developement for this portion of the city in which 25,000+ people live, shop, work, invest, and play.</p> <p>Major Arterial Roadways - 3rd City Council District</p> <p>Amherst Road McKamey to Middlebrook Pike</p> <p>Clinton Highway Federal Highway less than 2 miles on one side of the road in 3rd district</p> <p>Ed Shouse Drive Western to Middlebrook Pike</p> <p>Middlebrook Pike East of Weisgarber is not a designated scenic highway</p> <p>Western Avenue Hinton Road to Schaad Road</p> <p>Minor Arterial Roadway - 3rd City Council District</p> <p>Callahan Drive to Central Avenue Pike - part in 3rd district and part in 5th district</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/24/15	Signs--Other Commercial Oriented Roads Being Evaluated	<p>Second attempt to attach file in PDF</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/23/15	Signs--Other Commercial Oriented Roads Being Evaluated	<p>Council, in adopting the sign ordinance on Tuesday evening, left open the possibilty of further study of additional roads that might warrant larger signs--e.g, roads with substantial commercial activity that warrant consideration beyond the lowest 10 ft level--for example a fifth category having a 15 ft limit. This issue is being studied by Mr Grieve and possibly others on the sign task, with the help of legal, to fashion a list to be presented at a future date. In the interest of disclosure, I am posting my draft submission for further evaluation. (Note: this city system ate my formatting done on Pages)</p> <p>COMMERCIAL ROADS TO BE EVALUATED FOR 15 ft SIGNS by Nick D</p> <p>Note: some of these roads bear different designations for part of their length, and further sub designations are needed (some sub lengths are listed in the Master Road Plan) Some roads are also Federal Highways and are already covered in 20 ft category.</p> <p>NAME TYPE ROAD. US Hwy Designation</p> <p>Asheville Hwy. Major ArterialX</p> <p>Callahan Drive. Minor Arterial</p> <p>Cedar Bluff Rd. Major Arterial</p> <p>Cherry Street□ "</p> <p>Clinton Hwy□ "□ □ X</p> <p>Cumberland Ave"□ ?</p> <p>Emory Rd□ "</p> <p>Gov John Sevier Hwy"□</p> <p>Henley Street"□ X</p> <p>Kingston Pike"□ X</p> <p>James White Pkwy□ Expressway□ ?</p> <p>Lovell Rd□ Minor Collector</p> <p>Magnolia Ave□ Major CollectorX</p> <p>Mall Rd North□ "</p> <p>Mall Rd South□ "</p> <p>Martin Mill Pike□ Min Arterial</p> <p>Maryville Pike□ □ "</p> <p>Maynardville Hwy□ Major Arterial</p> <p>Merchant Drive□ Min Arterial</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	4/5/15	Sign-Special Call meeting	<p>Duane this is not what each side agreed to and I am hesitant to change things now. Both you and George agreed to this and I then proceeeded to the Chamber and Scenic Knoxville folks they bothed agreed. They have planned for this and to change the format now would not serve any well. Again, over three years of meetings, public meetings, workshops, and 4 more meetings with room for public comment at each of them are to come. Let's move this to MPC and if in future meetings we need more time for public input then let's deal with that then. This will be the hardest meeting so let's do our work as council and take the first giant step, otherwise we open it up and could be there countless hours and not get our work done.</p> <p>Nick</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
68	George Wallace	4/3/15	Sign Ordinance	<p>The special called City Council meeting on April 9, 2015 at 5:30 PM has all the makings to be the most significant meeting during my short tenure on Council. The meeting will have only 1 topic -- the newly proposed sign ordinance. A simple task on the surface but the single most complicated ordinance there is on the books. The sign ordinance is intertwined with zoning regulations and certain rights granted by state law. Fueled by passions of many people in the community that want to see change we are cooking up for an intense meeting that its outcome will have a long lasting effect on Knoxville. We have taken our time to get to this point. We've held 30+ public meetings with numerous opportunities to receive public input, legal input, constructive criticism and positive feedback. The work and the time that many people have invested is much appreciated and greatly valued. But there is more to do. Its time to vote on the sign ordinance section by section and hammer the best sign ordinance possible. We haven't come this far to just accept "good enough". The sign ordinance is about vision. The vision we as council members want for our great city. We must think long range and have the courage to hammer out the best ordinance for the future of Knoxville.</p> <p>One section of high interest and high importance is sign height and sign area. MPC proposed to City Council in 2011 that sign height and sign area be determined by road classification. MPC listed 4 road classifications as : 1. Within 500' of interstate exchange. 2. Within 100' interstate ROW. 3. Collector and Arterial Roads. 4. Local Roads. Road classifications are described in "Major Road Plan for The City of Knoxville and Knox County" dated May 2011. That document can be found here: http://archive.knoxmpc.org/zoning/Major_Road_Plan.pdf. Simply stated, streets with heavy and fast moving traffic require larger signs vs. streets with minimum speed limits and light traffic. Our land use has zoning for all types of commercial property adjoining and adjacent to residential developments. Drive the streets and take notice of the zoning maps and you will see a mix of everything. For instance Deane Hill Drive has I-2 and C-3 adjacent to R-1. There are countless number of examples just like this scattered all over the city. Same street serving both commercial and residential traffic. Determining sign height based solely on a property's zoning does not protect our neighborhoods enough. There are better options to consider to determine sign height and sign area. Lets have the courage to seek the best solution and not accept "good enough".</p> <p>George C. Wallace</p>
71	Duane Grieve	4/3/15	Sign-Special Call meeting	Nick, in regard to our meeting on the Sign Ordinance, as we review each section, if there is public discussion, let's have a time limit for the responses. 2 minutes?? Duane
71	Duane Grieve	4/2/15	Sign-Special Call meeting	Thanks Nick, looking forward to the completion of this task! Duane
71	Duane Grieve	4/2/15	Sign ordinance	The section files were to large to post on the Forum. Please go to the following link: http://www.cityofknoxville.org/citycouncil/sign/ordinance_mar2015.pdf This link will take you to the complete sign ordinance (all Sections). Please review and add your comments to the Forum under the "Sign ordinance" topic.

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62	Nick Pavlis	4/2/15	Sign-Special Call meeting	<p>Good afternoon all,</p> <p>I am looking forward to tackling the sign issue next Thursday. We all know this has been a long, arduous journey, and I'd like to extend a special thanks to Councilman Grieve and Wallace for their leadership.</p> <p>There has been discussion regarding the format of the meeting. Just so you know, I have spoken to Scenic Knoxville and the Chamber, and they agree that the best format is to have 3 speakers on each side with five minutes each as usual. The only difference is that we will do this on the front end of the meeting and then commence our work. This, of course, does not preclude Council members from asking specific questions to individuals in the audience.</p> <p>I hope you agree we are well versed on both sides of the issue. Individuals and special interest groups have had plenty of opportunities over the past three years to be heard. This is one of 4 meetings that will be held so that interested parties can voice their varying opinion(s); April 9th meeting, MPC, and then two readings at Council meetings. This format will help us get through a potentially long evening and move the issue on to MPC.</p> <p>Thank you, Nick Pavlis</p>
71	Duane Grieve	4/2/15	Sign Ordinance	Section 1_General Provisions.pdf The 15 individual sections are posted! Please review and comment if you wish.
62	Nick Pavlis	2/27/15	Pet ordinance	<p>I plan to mirror, if possible, the pet ordinance Commissioner Ownby is preparing for the County. The City and County law departments will work together to find common ground that can be enforced County wide. I feel this is a good way for consistent enforcement. More to come as we move forward.</p> <p>Nick P.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	1/24/15	Cure from email	Nick, Thanks for posting that. Even though there is nothing before council to deliberate upon, and the Charter only allows council to act on the salary of future councils, I agree the info should be available to the public. To keep it meaningful, let's add the 1997 ordinance for anyone interested in this. (Hopefully the PDF will upload here).

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62	Nick Pavlis	1/23/15	Cure from email	<p>This email needs full disclosure to the public because it could possibly come before us to vote up or down.</p> <p>From: Nick Della Volpe <ndellavolpe@bellsouth.net> Date: January 23, 2015 at 12:58:13 PM EST To: Rob Frost <rfrost@adhknox.com>, NickPavlis <npavlis@comcast.net> Cc: Mark Campen <MCampen@cityofknoxville.org>, Daniel Brown <dt.brown@comcast.net>, George Wallace <GWallace@cityofknoxville.org>, Brenda Palmer <bpalmer@cityofknoxville.org>, Duane Grieve <ldgfaia@grievearchitects.com>, Finbarr Saunders <finbarrsaunders@bellsouth.net>, Marshall Stair <marshallstair@hotmail.com> Subject: Re: Council's Salary Ordinance</p> <p>Thanks for the salary info Rob.</p> <p>If I understood it correctly, it has been 18 years since Council compensation has been adjusted. 18 years ago in 1997. Gosh that's almost as long as the 9 years for the office of mayor discussed on Tuesday. And they used to have a vehicle and other expense payment of \$200 a month. Why not restore that expense coverage? Who travels more than council members? Indeed, several years ago the free parking in the garage was dropped, lowering the effective compensation received.</p> <p>Should not the "lets not fall further behind" logic, and attracting talent argument apply here?</p> <p>Nick Della Volpe, 4th District 5216 Crestwood Drive Knoxville, Tn 37914 525-2880</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
62	Nick Pavlis	1/12/15	Mayor salary	<p>Mayoral Pay Increase</p> <p>This is the proper time to do it because due to the charter this is when it can be voted on and take effect. Charter section 302 says "The salary of the mayor shall be fixed by council at not less than forty-two thousand five hundred [dollars] (\$42,500.00) per year, and any change shall become effective on the first day of the year following the next councilmanic election. So that means, if it isn't done now, the next possible time it can be done is 2 more years away, December 2017 and we would fall further behind.</p> <p>March is the time you can pick up qualifying papers and if anyone is on the fence I think it's fair to let everyone know what to expect from a compensation stand point if approved.</p> <p>It has been since 06 since the last increase in salary. We should not wait that long to visit the salary and avoid "catch up".</p> <p>This amount would bring the seat into parity with like cities. Chattanooga is 150k, Memphis is low 160's. Nashville is 90k. Let me further explain my rational of \$12,500. This is a modest increase, but one could argue for a greater amount particularly knowing the duties of this office. If you do the math, this would equate to an annual increase of 1,350.00 since 2006. This would be roughly a 1% annual increase. Also since it has been so long since a increase I feel that it needs to be a increase of this size to have an impact ,and again, not always be playing catch up. Just as a reference point, the mayor's salary in 2001 was raised to \$130,000, which reflected a \$20,000.00 increase over a 4 year period.</p> <p>Though the current mayor is unique, in that, she will be eligible for a pension, if someone from the private sector would consider running and becoming mayor they would probably be giving up a salary, a retirement program of some type, potentially annual stock options, etc. etc. . If you compare the seat of the Mayor with private sector with comparable employee headcount, operating budget etc. the current salary could very likely be an annual bonus. My concern here is it would then be very hard for someone to run for the office of mayor under these circumstances unless it was someone of considerable wealth and then it becomes an exclusive club.</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	9/12/14	12 C Day Care	<p>On the agenda for the upcoming Council meeting there will be an item from MPC(12 C) concerning day cares in residential areas. I am planning to move to table this matter because of the pending litigation and it being uncertain when the matter will be concluded. The matter is supposed to be heard in court in November, but Rob let me know that things have been delayed in the past on other matters and that even when they get heard on the date planned, that the judges may not decide that same day (and might not decide for some time). While Council was not the party that asked MPC to look at this issue, there's a possibility that what is learned from the court hearing may better guide Council in the future on this topic.</p> <p>Thanks, Nick Pavlis</p>
68	George Wallace	8/13/14	Possible Amendment to Pension Board Ordinance	<p>I think your proposal has merit and is worth discussing.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/13/14	Possible Amendment to Pension Board Ordinance	<p>Well said, Marshall.</p> <p>In addition:</p> <p>1. If the employees control this, the net result, or at least perception, is likely to be illusory, as viewed by the citizenry. Independent voices are needed to provide a balanced picture to the members and to the voters. The financial expertise these 2 persons would bring to the table can only help improve the dialogue and decision-making. The Mayor should be free to solicit the best persons for the job. And she must do it in public view.</p> <p>2. Objective credibility of the process. As a practical matter, every single member of that Pension Board, including the Mayor and Chief Financial Officer -- all of whom are doubtless good people with good intentions, nonetheless they have an inherent conflict of interest in that they have a direct financial interest in the outcome. The plan pays them and their beneficiaries. Yet the taxpayers have only an indirect voice. Those taxpayers are currently paying a huge annual sum into this plan (\$24M this year, on the way to \$30M, compared to some \$3.8M by employees) and, as currently structured, must shoulder any market or actuarial shortfall realized by the plan. (Note: Taxpayers are paying those costs at a 6 to 1 ratio compared to employees).</p> <p>3. Everyone has a interest in sound decision making.</p> <p>Thank you for beginning the dialogue.</p> <p>Nick D</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
69	Marshall Stair	8/13/14	Possible Amendment to Pension Board Ordinance	<p>Fellow Council Members,</p> <p>I am considering making an amendment to the proposal to add two new members to the pension board. If I make the amendment, it simply reverts the proposal back to its original form where the Mayor appoints and Council confirms the two new members rather than the new members being selected by the Pension Board. I am considering doing this for the following reasons:</p> <p>1) These two members are being added to bring an independent citizen perspective to the Pension Board. This is evidenced by the fact the new members must be city residents and cannot be city employees or pension member participants. They are also being added for their financial expertise, which is the other important requirement. That being the case, the two new representatives should be selected by the Mayor and Council and not the Pension Board, the majority of whose members are selected by city employees. The original proposal provides a check and balance system that may be of more benefit to everyone one, including the taxpayer. The Mayor and Council do not select the employee representatives on the Pension Board, so the employee controlled Pension Board should not select the two new citizen representatives. Having the Pension Board rather than the Mayor select these new representatives will defeat, in the opinion of most citizens, the very purpose of the proposal, which is to give city residents who do not participate in the pension an independent voice on the Board.</p> <p>2) I also believe that qualified individuals with the type of financial expertise we are seeking will be much more likely to serve on the Pension Board if the Mayor asks them to serve than if their nomination is subject to Pension Board approval. As we all know, service on the Pension Board is voluntary and it is difficult work, with long meetings that regularly deal with tough, complicated and often controversial issues. I fear that many well qualified individuals will not be willing to go through what could be a politically-charged approval process with no guarantee that their nomination will be approved, if the Pension Board selects these new representatives. I believe those same individuals will likely be much more willing to serve out of an obligation of civic duty if they are asked by the Mayor to serve their city.</p> <p>The Mayor represents the citizens of Knoxville and she should select the citizen representatives, subject to Council confirmation, and thus help give taxpayer/citizens a voice on the Pension Board. In my opinion, leaving it as proposed does not fully achieve the goal of adding an independent citizen perspective and in my opinion would not be a step forward.</p> <p>I would appreciate any feedback via the forum as I consider making this amendment.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Marshall Stair</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	5/29/14	PENSIONS -- Need Repair	<p>PENSIONS. It's a sticky mess to get into, but the city's financial future depends on addressing key features and legacy problems of existing pension plans for city workers. At the end of the day, These plans only work if we can afford to fund them.</p> <p>Some items we need to address include:</p> <p>1) The annual COLA for the 3000+ persons that remain in the closed plans (plans G and C, covering general government, police and fire) should be limited to changes in the actual CPI with a max adjustment of 1 to 2% per year. No more automatic 3%. (Nor another 1% should the CPI exceed that). Actual CPI for the past several years has actually been closer to 1 ½%.</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	5/27/14	BUDGET PROPOSAL -- Cut \$6.2M	<p>Spread Sheet--unfortunately, this site does not fairly replicate the excel spreadsheet columns.</p> <p>REVENUE</p> <table><tr><td>Proposed</td><td>3/24 Proposal</td><td>Adjustments</td><td>Revised</td></tr><tr><td>5100</td><td>Local Taxes</td><td>\$172,041,700 (\$6,226,170)</td><td>\$165,815,530</td></tr><tr><td>5200</td><td>Licenses and Permits</td><td>331,150</td><td>331,150</td></tr><tr><td>5300</td><td>Intergovernmental Revenue</td><td>21,637,370</td><td>21,637,370</td></tr><tr><td>5400</td><td>Charges for Services</td><td>1,312,490</td><td>1,312,490</td></tr><tr><td>5500</td><td>Fines and Forfeits</td><td>586,620</td><td>586,620</td></tr><tr><td>5600</td><td>Other Revenues</td><td>427,280</td><td>427,280</td></tr><tr><td>5900</td><td>Transfers In</td><td>2,161,350</td><td>2,161,350</td></tr><tr><td>5998</td><td>Fund Balance</td><td>2,004,600</td><td>1,942,150</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>\$200,502,560</td><td>\$194,213,940</td></tr></table> <p>APPROPRIATION</p> <p></p> <table><tr><td>11100</td><td>Administration</td><td>\$3,934,110</td><td>\$3,934,110</td></tr><tr><td>21200</td><td>Finance</td><td>4,108,960</td><td>4,108,960</td></tr><tr><td>21400</td><td>Information Systems</td><td>4,496,830</td><td>4,496,830</td></tr><tr><td>23700</td><td>Community Development</td><td>2,034,790</td><td>2,034,790</td></tr><tr><td>41100</td><td>Public Works</td><td>179,170</td><td>(179,170)0</td></tr><tr><td>43100</td><td>Public Services</td><td>23,376,000</td><td>23,376,000</td></tr><tr><td>43300</td><td>Engineering</td><td>6,013,300</td><td>6,013,300</td></tr><tr><td>44300</td><td>Parks and Recreation</td><td>6,957,090</td><td>6,957,090</td></tr><tr><td>46100</td><td>Knoxville Area Transit (KAT)</td><td>717,960</td><td>717,960</td></tr><tr><td>51300</td><td>Law</td><td>1,930,000</td><td>1,930,000</td></tr><tr><td>52300</td><td>Police</td><td>56,322,240</td><td>56,322,240</td></tr><tr><td>52700</td><td>Emergency Management</td><td>364,930</td><td>364,930</td></tr><tr><td>72500</td><td>Fire</td><td>39,976,440</td><td>39,976,440</td></tr><tr><td>81500</td><td>Legislative</td><td>955,200</td><td>955,200</td></tr><tr><td>81700</td><td>Civil Service</td><td>1,081,380</td><td>1,081,380</td></tr><tr><td>91900</td><td>City Elections</td><td>10,000</td><td>10,000</td></tr><tr><td>93900</td><td>Knoxville Partnership</td><td>800,080</td><td>800,080</td></tr><tr><td>95100</td><td>MPC</td><td>905,000</td><td>905,000</td></tr></table>	Proposed	3/24 Proposal	Adjustments	Revised	5100	Local Taxes	\$172,041,700 (\$6,226,170)	\$165,815,530	5200	Licenses and Permits	331,150	331,150	5300	Intergovernmental Revenue	21,637,370	21,637,370	5400	Charges for Services	1,312,490	1,312,490	5500	Fines and Forfeits	586,620	586,620	5600	Other Revenues	427,280	427,280	5900	Transfers In	2,161,350	2,161,350	5998	Fund Balance	2,004,600	1,942,150			\$200,502,560	\$194,213,940	11100	Administration	\$3,934,110	\$3,934,110	21200	Finance	4,108,960	4,108,960	21400	Information Systems	4,496,830	4,496,830	23700	Community Development	2,034,790	2,034,790	41100	Public Works	179,170	(179,170)0	43100	Public Services	23,376,000	23,376,000	43300	Engineering	6,013,300	6,013,300	44300	Parks and Recreation	6,957,090	6,957,090	46100	Knoxville Area Transit (KAT)	717,960	717,960	51300	Law	1,930,000	1,930,000	52300	Police	56,322,240	56,322,240	52700	Emergency Management	364,930	364,930	72500	Fire	39,976,440	39,976,440	81500	Legislative	955,200	955,200	81700	Civil Service	1,081,380	1,081,380	91900	City Elections	10,000	10,000	93900	Knoxville Partnership	800,080	800,080	95100	MPC	905,000	905,000
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POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	5/27/14	BUDGET PROPOSAL -- Cut \$6.2M	<p>Proposed Budget Amendment Cost Savings Measures</p> <p>PREFACE: In a perfect world, Council would be able to analyze the proposed budget, and recommend changes at the dollar or percent level, and leave the distributive changes to the executive team, who are in the best position to allocate their efforts and the funds needed to achieve them.</p> <p>CHARTER REQUIREMENT: That said, the City Charter (section 901) specifically calls for the Council to come up with the actual operating budget, and set out "estimated revenues in detail by source" and "appropriations according to fund and by organizational unit, purpose or activity" as set out in the budget document that comes to Council in the form of an ordinance each May.</p> <p>POTENTIAL CUTS SUPPORTING BUDGET REVISION: Here are several suggested areas that could be cut without hurting essential governmental services, or affecting the Mayor's request to continue the 2 1/2% across-the-board pay increase. Some of these are mere suggestions for council to consider in deciding on the total category awards recognizing we cannot directly affect individual, budget category line items. We have to start somewhere. Of course, a workshop with Finance could provide a better handle on the numbers.</p> <p>1). Agency Grants: Why did Agency Grants nearly double, increasing from \$712k in the current year, to some \$1.255M for next fiscal year? Do we need to raise taxes in order to give away taxpayer money to charities, even though they are good ones? Included among those increased amounts are such items as: -- Boys and Girls Club capital grant = \$250k -- Helen Ross McNabb Center = \$45k -- Knoxville Botanical Garden capital grant = \$250k -- East TN Civil War Alliance =\$4500 -- Connect Ministries capital grant =\$15k</p> <p>We should reduce Agency Grants by some \$500k, and let the Administration resort how the remaining \$755k, which is still an increase over last year, should be distributed. Some of these initiatives could be funded more gradually over 2 or 3 years.</p> <p>2). New Budget initiatives include the following items (among others that occur periodically). Reductions in some or all of these, or deferral to later years may be warranted. -- Historic Preservation fund = \$500k -- spread over 2 or 3 years? -- Public Art = \$250k -- Downtown Restrooms = \$250k -- Chamber Partnership/Innovation Valley/Dev. Corp = \$800,000 -- reduce by \$100k? -- Lakeshore Park = \$2M (some is committed demolition by contract) -- spread balance over 2 years? -- Commercial Facade Grants (was raised \$300k to \$500k) --Zoo Improvements = \$10M (part of new debt issue) -- spread over 2 or 3 years?</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
62	Nick Pavlis	5/27/14	Pensions -- Concerns Remain and Need Attention	<p>This is an excellent summation of the pension situation by the Mayor to a concerned citizen.</p> <p>1. I urge city council and the Mayor's office to immediately freeze this option and, if necessary, put on the next possible ballot, language that would delete this option. Given the recent publicity in the Knoxville News Sentinel I would anticipate a wave of city employees deciding to choose this option given its clear benefits to them. This should not be allowed.</p> <p>It is my understanding that because beneficiary options are included in the charter, we are not able to immediately freeze the option. As you have read in the News Sentinel, the City of Knoxville Pension Board is actively pursuing a charter amendment to be placed on the ballot in November of this year that would remove this option of designating children, grandchildren, etc. I am supporting this amendment and I hope to have the majority support of Pension Board members. This recommendation will then be sent to Council for their support to place it on the November ballot.</p> <p>Re. your concern that a wave of city employees will choose this option in the meantime: This option has been in place, apparently, since 1/1/1963 when the pension plan was first begun. As of the July 1, 2013 Actuarial Valuation Report, there were 2,163 retired participants. At this time, 18 of the 2,163 (less than 1% - actually .8%) chose a non-spouse as their beneficiary. The option can only be chosen at retirement, so the only employees who can choose that option between now and when the amendment would be in place (if passed by the voters), would be those who are retiring (including those who sign up for the DROP) between now and January 2015. I don't have an estimate at this time on how many employees might retire during this timeframe.</p> <p>However, by analyzing the number of retirees who have currently chosen this option (.8%) and talking to employee reps, this does not appear to be a viable option for most employees. Most employees choose either the full amount of the pension which they have earned, or they select a spouse (which means the employee takes a lower monthly payment in order for the spouse to get an even lower monthly payment should the employee die first.) Unlike the example of Mayor Ashe who has chosen a child beneficiary, most employees require their pensions to carry them and their spouses through their later years and simply cannot afford to take that lower monthly payment in order to benefit a non-spouse. The two other examples in the newspaper are of a single employee with a 10 year old child, and an employee with a disabled brother to care for.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	5/26/14	BUDGET, FY 2014/15 -- Large tax Increase Looming	<p>PROPOSED BUDGET AMENDMENT -- Some Modest Cost Savings Measures</p> <p>1). Why did Agency Grants nearly double, increasing from \$712k in the current year, to some \$1.23M for next fiscal year? Do we need to raise taxes in order to give away your money to charities, even though they are good ones? Included among those increased amounts are such items as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-- Boys and Girls Club capital grant = \$250k-- HelenRoss McNabb Center = \$45k-- Knoxville Botanical Garden capital grant = \$250k-- East Tn Civil War Alliance =\$4500-- Connect Ministries capital grant =\$1500 <p>We should reduce Agency Grants by at least \$500k, and let the Administration resort how the remaining \$770k, which is still an increase over last year.</p> <p>2). New budget initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-- Historic Preservation fund = \$500k-- Public Art = \$250k-- Downtown Restrooms = \$250k-- The Chambers Innovation Valley (doubled) =\$400k-- Lakeshore Park = \$2M (some is for demolition required by contract)-- Commercial Facade Grants raised \$300k to \$500k-- Zoo Improvements = \$10M (part of new debt issue)-- Parking Meter Upgrade = \$500k-- Greenway Corridors = \$1M <p>Those might all be neat projects, but all in one year? When revenues are tight? At least \$3.7M of those expenditures could be cut or moved to the following year.</p> <p>3). Other savings could be garnered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-- reducing the amount of the proposed \$31M to 32M in new general obligation bonds to be issued. Annual debt service will rise by some \$2M per year. What if we only borrowed say \$20M? That could save some \$650k in annual debt service costs.-- giving this year's 2 1/2 % pay increase as a bonus, instead of base pay? It still shows up in the employees pay check. That one-time action would save an estimated \$300k in collateral costs computed on base pay. <p>4). City Council has already discussed sacrificing their 202 discretionary funds for next year. Those \$90k in funds do a lot of good in neighborhoods, but again we are spending your money. If Council were bolder, we could also ask each Department to shave just 1% or 2% of their total costs. A good manager could sit down with key staff and do that, and improve overall efficiency. That would save over \$1M of taxpayer monies.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	5/24/14	BUDGET, FY 2014/15 -- Large tax Increase Looming	<p>THE PROPOSED BUDGET</p> <p>The Mayor has proposed a \$17M budget increase for the new fiscal year 2014/15, which starts July 1, 2014. Over \$7M of that is to address the ever-growing pension costs. That proposed increased budget raises the General Fund (or city operating funds) from \$183M to \$200.5M. That increase translates into a \$0.34 tax increase per \$100 property valuation.</p> <p>A significant portion of that new money is not needed for the upcoming fiscal year needs, but fall into the categories of discretionary (new) spending and/or failure or refusal to make cuts or changes in existing departmental budgets. The mayor argues this increased approach will keep the positive "buzz" or momentum going about our downtown transformation. The bigger-than-needed increase arguably also provides political cover from having to address rising pension costs next year, when the mayor will presumably run for re-election -- so why not collect a little extra tax now to avoid sticky issues during an election year?</p> <p>WHAT CAN BE DONE?</p> <p>The Mayor's budget, while possessing many attractive features, fails to address the need to live within our means. Tax revenues are basically flat. We need to trim the sails a bit, or at least minimize any tax increase. The government, after all, is spending your money. We need to cut costs where we can, and certainly limit ambitious new initiatives until funds available.</p> <p>We just held the City Council's charter-mandated budget hearings last Thursday, May 22nd. The first opportunity for Council to act on the budget is Tuesday, at May 27th Council meeting. It could have a second chance to act two week's later in the June 10th meeting.</p> <p>I intend to ask my colleagues to consider to reduce the proposed budget by at least \$6M. This would still leave essential services untouched. It would respect the Mayor's desire to give 2 1/2% automatic pay increases and her decision not to make departmental cost cuts-- even though she briefly explored across-the-board budget cuts back in February. It would however reduce or at least defer certain discretionary expenditures, the near doubling of Agency Grants, and the total amount of her proposed tax increase on city residents and businesses. I believe we have a duty to live within our means. Especially since we are spending your hard-earned money.</p> <p>Greater cuts could be made, of course, if there was the political will to do so. Presumably all options will be discussed at next Tuesday's Council meeting.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	5/23/14	Pensions -- Concerns Remain and Need Attention	<p>LESSONS FROM MEMPHIS</p> <p>THE 5/23/14 News Sentinel (page 18a) has an interesting article today about shrinking size of Memphis (lost over 1000 residents last year), and is soon to be eclipsed by Nashville in size. Two points worth noting:</p> <p>-- Memphis Chamber CEO, Phil Trenary, said: the city needs to get control of its budget, particularly where it involves the looming employee pension and retiree health care obligations. "If we don't get our financial house in order, we will not be able to be competitive."</p> <p>-- A sociology prof at University of Memphis, Elena Delavega, who studies demographic trends, advised that it wasn't so much how many people were leaving, but who was. "Generally people with more money are moving to the suburbs and abandoning the core city".</p> <p>THE POINT: If you think about, running off the jobs from business and the people who pay more in taxes, is a modern day version of old fable about killing the golden goose to get one more egg out of her...</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	5/22/14	Pensions -- Concerns Remain and Need Attention	<p>I just replied to an email expressing citizen concern about the recent pension flare up over the leave-it-to-your kid legacy revealed in the press. To be sure those views are fairly disclosed, they are set out below.</p> <p>Nick D</p> <p>Note to Jim Wansley, Thanks for sharing your thoughts (and even unspoken outrage) on this flawed loophole. I would hope that this not be the only change that will be considered for inclusion on the ballot.</p> <p>The reality is that we remain at risk to 1) market fluctuation risk, 2) artificial COLA (not tied to CPI or a rational limit), and 3) grossly uneven dollar contributions by the employee beneficiaries vs the city employer.</p> <p>No. 1) is the toughest. My current thought is that We should offer monetary incentives to employees to move over to the Hybrid Plan. If you reject that, then you should be charged more to keep the more expensive plan for yourself (No. 3).</p> <p>No. 2) is simple, adopt actual CPI subject to a 1 1/2 or 2% max.</p> <p>No. 3) See option in No. 1. If you want to stay in a more expensive plan, okay, then pay some 10 to 12% of pay. (The city is currently paying three or 4 times the amount of the employees-- \$3.8M for employees vs \$24.3M).</p> <p>I hope we workshop these issues soon.</p> <p>Regards Nick D</p> <p>Nick Della Volpe, 4th District 5216 Crestwood Drive Knoxville, Tn 37914 525-2880</p> <p>On May 22, 2014, at 9:01 AM, "Wansley, James W" <jwansley@utk.edu> wrote:</p> <p>To Members of the Knoxville city council,</p> <p>I am writing to express my concern (might use stronger language here) at most of the entire situation surrounding the city's pension plans, and especially the recent revelations that city employees are choosing minor dependents as eligible beneficiaries on their pension plans.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	3/17/14	THE BUDGET CRUNCH: A SIMPLE FIRST STEP --Facts	<p>INFLATION IS NOT CONSTANT.</p> <p>It is important to recognize that back in 1981, when this wage adjustment statute was adopted, that our economy was experiencing terrible inflation from the after-effects of the Arab oral embargo. Interest rates went through the roof. Inflation averaged 9.16% per year in the 7 years leading up to the 2.5 % per year increase that was passed in 1981 (inflation actually reached 13.5% in 1980). Pay scale issues were also being reviewed as being out of whack with the marketplace at the time.</p> <p>By contrast, the city is doing better now in terms of periodically reviewing competitive pay scales. Inflation is much more modest today, averaging less than 2% a year in the 6 years since 2008. It was actually negative in 2009, and averaged 1.5% in 2013.</p> <p>By making the pay increase process more flexible, council can provide the administration with more flexibility, so it can better match fiscal needs with actual economic conditions.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	3/5/14	THE BUDGET CRUNCH: A SIMPLE FIRST STEP	<p>In order to initiate a reasoned debate on this issue, I have asked our attorney to draft a repeater of the automatic approach. I'd like to think that an informed process that evaluates all the facts, the economic and fiscal climate, and takes a look at areas where wage inadequacy exists would better serve the city and the taxpayers whom we represent.</p> <p>Let's take a look under the hood.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	3/2/14	6% Budget cuts	<p>Thanks. We all have to do our part to make the tight budget work.</p> <p>You might also consider cutting those other-city-news type subscriptions. They mostly end up on the floor of gerbil cages...</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	3/1/14	THE BUDGET CRUNCH: A SIMPLE FIRST STEP	<p>City Revenues are essentially flat, especially the two dominant elements of real property and sales taxes. As usual, our governmental costs are rising from year to year. The City has to pare back expenses, and make conscious decisions about spending scarce dollars, if we are to avoid tax increases. Many residents are already hard pressed to meet their own bills in the slower economy.</p> <p>Council needs to consider repealing City Ordinance, Section 2-454 which provides for an automatic 2 1/2% annual pay increase for city employees. Increases don't need to be automatic. That provision costs the city roughly \$2M each year in direct costs and additional monies downstream in indirect costs, as the automatic bump increases the "base wage" upon which annual fringe benefits (easily 35% of wages) and future pension benefits are calculated. Such an automatic pay increase is unheard of in private industry. There is no automatic anything in the real world.</p> <p>The repeal of section 2-454 would not prohibit a wage increase. It would simply enable the administration to affirmatively evaluate the facts, including inflation, budget priorities, and the other costs, and consider what funds are available to pay for one. Our city needs to be able to make conscious, thoughtful and transparent decisions when it spends scarce tax dollars, not simply set the budget on auto-pilot, without regard to the consequences.</p> <p>Please consider this simple budget liberating step as we move forward.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	2/28/14	Pension Focus 201	<div>Comparative Contribution Figures</div> <div>Here is a rough look at the growing numbers (note--2nd try at formatting in this odd type format; also attaching the Word file)</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>YearCityEmployeeContributionsContributions</div> <div>2005/06\$4.44M\$3.03M</div> <div>2006/07\$5.63M\$3.13M</div> <div>2007/08\$10.29M\$3.27M</div> <div>2008/09\$7.16M\$3.40M</div> <div>2009/10\$7.62M\$3.55M</div> <div>2010/11\$9.76M\$3.72M</div> <div>2011/12\$21.81\$3.85M</div> <div>2012/13\$13.76M\$3.88M (City adds \$10M lump sum reserve to fund)</div> <div>2013/14≈ \$16M ≈\$3.8M (City applies \$6M from \$10M = \$19.76M)</div> <div>2014/15≈ \$23M ≈\$3.8M (City applies \$4M from the \$10M = \$20M)</div> <div>TOTAL≈ \$119.47M ≈\$35.43M</div>
73	Nick Della Volpe	2/28/14	Pension Focus 201	<div>Comparative Contributions to Pension Plan</div> <div>Here is a rough look at the growing numbers</div> <div>YEAR.CITYEMPLOYEES</div> <div>2005/06\$4.44M\$3.03M</div> <div>2006/07\$5.63M.\$3.13M</div> <div>2007/08.\$10.29M.\$3.27M</div> <div>2008/09\$7.16M.\$3.40M</div> <div>2009/10\$7.62M.\$3.55M</div> <div>2010/11\$9.76M.\$3.72M</div> <div>2011/12\$9.76M.\$3.72M</div> <div>2012/13.\$21.81M.\$3.85M (City Includes &10M lump sum reserve)</div> <div>2013/14.\$13.76M.\$3.88M (City to apply \$6M from the 10M =19.76M)</div> <div>2014/15.\$16M.\$3.8M (City to apply \$4M from the \$10M =20M)</div>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	2/25/14	Pension Focus 201	<p>SOME SIMPLE MATH: COLA accounts for approximately \$1.1M per year in added costs. It also increases the base under several of the plans, compounding increases in future years. (Moreover, we have been paying more than the actual CPI changes by making increases automatic.)</p> <p>EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS: changing from e.g., the current 6% of pay to say 8% of pay would raise about \$1.4M per year.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	2/24/14	Pension Focus 201	<p>The Chattanooga Times reported on Feb 4th that the proposed pension changes in the Chattanooga plan would result in savings of \$4M to \$5M per year.</p> <p>Knoxville's contributions to the employee plan here were at the \$4M per year level back in 2005. They have grown rapidly to some \$22M per year last year (drawing partly from the extra \$10M paid in 2012). We are headed to some \$35M per year by 2017. Meanwhile the employee beneficiaries are still paying in at around a \$4M level. They need to carry a fair share of this burden.</p> <p>How can we devote over 20% of our \$183M budget for one fringe benefit? We are the city's fiscal stewards. Somethin's gotta give.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	2/24/14	Pension Focus 201	<p>Let's peek at the existing/closed pensions G and C , for general government and the uniformed bodies -- they cover some 1491 workers as of fiscal year end. There are some 2255 inactive / retired workers. Or, with other misc retirees and active groups take us to a total of roughly 3746 people covered at fiscal year end.</p> <p>The new plan H covered some 27 workers by fiscal year end, and now has approximately 90 new hires who will vest in 10 years and possibly retire in 20 years from now. Plan H is a good start on the overall pension problem.</p> <p>We have not addressed the growing costs of those older pensions-- soon to cost us another \$ 26M for the new fiscal year. The annual costs are growing by large leaps due to the large underfunded balance (\$200 M at fiscal year end last June 30th). After a good market year that gross total has shrunk some, but the market remains volatile. Witness the down January, only now recovering.</p> <p>Chattanooga has taken several steps to address their own pension shortfall of about \$150M. The mutually agreed proposal goes to their city council this week. Among the cost cutters to help make their plan sustainable, police and fire employees have said through their reps, that they are willing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Cut COLA from 3% to 1.5%Postpone COLA for 2 years when you first retireIncrease employee contributions from 7 or 8% of pay to 11% of payMake a few other concessions re age etc. <p>The Blackwell case does not address COLA. It is concerned with changing an existing formula for computing benefits earned by the last years of service. Chattanooga's Pension Plan Legal Counsel (Bill Robinson from Baker Donelson) has opined that they can adjust COLA. Recently Colorado has done so. Chattanooga union counsel from Nashville told workers they didn't have a sound basis to challenge a COLA change. More importantly, the workers decided, after some handwringing that adjustments were needed for the plan to work going forward.</p> <p>In a world of a constricting budgets, and An underfunded pension plan, workers and council and the administration should do the prudent thing and agree upon some prudent changes, like: raising some of the funds by increasing the employee contribution rate and reducing the COLA costs of the large 3700 person pension plan.</p> <p>THINK ABOUT IT: A plan pretty on paper, that can't be reasonably funded, is no plan at all.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
62	Nick Pavlis	2/21/14	6% Budget cuts	<p>Just so you know beforehand, I have eliminated the 202 fund from the 6% budget the Mayor requested. The funds remain in the continuing budget. We have few moving parts in our budget and this is an expense that is discretionary and thus disposable. Eliminating it is well above the level requested, but we should do over and above in my opinion.</p> <p>Secondly, we will have a tremendous burden on our budget with extra manpower in the office next year as the transition of the current employees occurs. The 90k will certainly help offset the additional expense.</p> <p>I know this will not be popular but perhaps when our financial picture is better we can reinstate.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Nick Pavlis</p>
68	George Wallace	1/31/14	Homeless Plan	<p>In preparation for the City Council workshop scheduled for February 27 on the Mayor's homelessness plan, I encourage everyone to read a recent article written by Victoria South in Tennessee Town & City. Here's the link. You may have to copy & paste into a browser. http://www.tml1.org/pdf/up/2014_Jan._20.pdf In addition, here is another article from USA Today with a broader prospective on homelessness. http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2014/01/16/homeless-problem-obama-america-recession-column/4539917/ I look forward to the forthcoming discussions.</p>
68	George Wallace	1/6/14	Corridor Overlay	<p>4 recommendations to the Corridor Overlay that I will be making at the January 7, 2014 meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. current sign standards can not be diminished. 2. create a minimum area or a minimum number of businesses to create a zone. Start with 30 businesses to form a group. 3. The voting percentage should be at least 60% (possibly 75%) instead of 51%. The overlay is intended to create community not tear it apart. 51% can divisive. 4. Some public committee should have the oversight instead of MPC and/or City Council. <p>Generally speaking the Corridor Overlay can and should be a tool to create better community. I like the intent of the overlay but with these 4 recommendations.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	10/3/13	Tennova re-Appraisal Concerns Cause Delay at Council	<p>The 8 Waterhouse property heirs expressed concern to Tennova that the 107 acre tract might get re-appraised once the tract is rezoned from A-1 to O-1, as has been requested. Those heirs are scattered to the winds and individual contact effort plus time for lawyer draft exchanges is said to necessitate the agenda delay. Escrowing funds would seem to cover their out of pocket concerns...once the paperwork is handled.</p> <p>Interesting Facts: the 100+ tract (tax rolls says 103 acres, tract no. 106 KC 017) receives an agricultural "green belt" tax rating and, therefore currently pays only \$1535 in County property tax and \$1578 in City property tax. (Only 15 acres need be in Ag use to qualify). The property is appraised at \$838k and assessed at (\$66k)-- note: assessment is not the normal 1/4 of appraisal approach, because the Ag green belt use lowers the "Use Value" to \$225k. The Tennova purchase option effectively revalues the land at \$11M, ie, the option price would seem to be reasonable evidence of the fair market value.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/29/13	Tennova O-1 Rezoning Request --Huh?	<p>Knoxville's Zoning Ordinance currently allows a hospital to be built in the A-1 Agricultural zone, already in place for the proposed Dowell Springs west Knoxville parcel, under a Use on Review process. So why all the current agony over changing to an O-1 zone?</p> <p>--Are they interested in raising the marketable value of the tract if they don't get a Certificate of Need?</p> <p>--Urging the zone approval process as an- indirect "affirmation" of the community support for the hospital's move?</p> <p>--Or just being fastidious about zoning?</p> <p>A most curious situation.</p> <p>See Ordinance Section 2.4.1. C.1. below</p> <p>...</p> <p>A. General description. This district is intended to provide space for agricultural uses which together comprise an important part of the economy of Knox County and the City of Knoxville. The intent here is to permit lands best suited for agriculture to be used for agriculture purposes, and also to prevent the encroachment of urban and other incompatible land uses on farm lands and thereby protect the physical and economic well-being of agricultural operations.</p> <p>Further, this district is intended to provide suitable locations on the fringes of the urban area for urbanization which will occur in the foreseeable future. It is not intended that this district provide a location for a lower standard of residential, commercial or industrial development than is authorized in other districts. Rather, this district should promote an organized, efficient pattern of urban development by providing conditions conducive to continued use of land for agricultural purposes in appropriate locations, thereby reducing economic pressures which would otherwise lead to a scattered, inefficient, inconvenient pattern of urban activities. The types of uses, area and intensity of use of land authorized in this district are designed to encourage and protect any agriculture uses until urbanization is warranted and the appropriate changes in districts can be made.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>C. Uses permitted on review. The following uses may be permitted on review by the planning commission in accordance with provisions in article VII, section 5:</p> <p>1. A cemetery, airport, camp, hospital, sanitarium, correctional institution or institution for the insane</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/28/13	I-640, Exit 8 - Interchange Modification Study	<p>UPDATE:</p> <p>TDOT's Amanda Snowden called me back on August 27th. She said after talking to TDOT's Planning Office in Nashville, there is a <u>change in terminology</u> they use, and in the way they are reviewing things:</p> <p>1)The current term for new ramps and major changes to interstate access is generally covered by an "Interstate Access Report." Those IARs usually require a change in the TPO long range plan, with the "first horizon year"now being 2014 .</p> <p>2)There is also a more local review of an interchange within a city that can be triggered by a City directly, without TPO priority blessings. It is called a "Modification & Review of Existing Interchange" and if a city wants that review they may asked for it directly, and submit it to TDOT District 1 for review (although I gather most plans decisions end up before The TDOT Planning Office in Nashville).</p> <p>3)Amanda says she also learned that "slip ramps,"like those at Walker Springs exit example I used , are no longer in favor. (NOTE: The CDM Smith sketch, which I left with Christi's secretary today, is different-it seems to show a circular style exit ramp, constructed parallel to the existing entrance ramp design.)</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/26/13	I-640, Exit 8 - Interchange Modification Study	<p>I decided to post the text of this memo to the administration because a copy was also sent to a Council member, who serves as our authorized representative on the TPO. It arises out of the East Towne area businesses meeting which was held at the Cracker Barrel on Millertown Pike on Aug 19th.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The East Towne area merchants and businessmen surrounding the I-640 exit 8 met with City and State officials on Monday August 19, 2013 to discuss removing impediments to this important business destination exit. The main topics included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-vegetative and underbrush clearing on the interstate embankments; that overgrowth hides the visibility of the 100+ businesses at that exit,-possible additional exit signage describing this as a shopping destination for the 60,000+/day motorists passing through this hidden valley (businesses are hidden behind the earthen berms supporting the elevated frontage roads), and-other physical improvements to the interstate and frontage roads desired along the adjoining, roughly 1 ¼ mile of interstate <p>The City was represented at the meeting by David Brace Director of Public Service, along with Deputy to the Mayor Christi Branscom and Urban Forester Kasey Krouse. The City reps focus was on the more immediate plans for vegetative clearing that could be done by city crews with possible assistance from inmate laborers. Mr. Krouse was available to answer questions about the city's ability to protect important trees during clearing.</p> <p>TDOT was represented by Region 1 Director Steve Borden and his assistant Amanda Snowden who provided information about the clearing permission process, signage restrictions, and addressed the roadway issues which are the focal point of this memo. Steve also talked about "Branding" this location as a shopping destination that could be supported through advertising (much like Hamilton Place in Chattanooga), as well as renaming of streets as being more descriptive of the area.</p> <p>The City reps spoke about our ability to clear key "windows"of obscuring vegetation that has grown up along the roadway over the last 40 years. Steve Borden had also mentioned, in an earlier telephone conversation I had with him, the possibility of moving the interstate fences to facilitate routine mowing/ setback along the frontage roads. Mr. Brace had initially raised this issue, emphasizing that facilitating long term maintenance is as important as the initial clearing. The fence relocation issue is not, as yet, resolved.</p> <p>Roadway Improvements: A major question remains: What could be done longer term to address the roadway impediments to healthier business activity at this location? There are well over 100 businesses located at this exit, representing some 2000 jobs and substantial tax revenue (Some \$2.6 M in city/ county property taxes, tens of thousands \$ in state sales taxes, including an estimated \$1.5 to \$2M in annual city sales tax revenue).</p> <p>TDOT's Steve Borden said the best way to initiate /address some of longer-term road fixes at exit 8of I-640, might be to have the City of Knoxville formally request an Interchange Modification Study. Such a study would likely take approximately 12 to 18 months to complete. I understand such studies are often done by road engineering consultants.</p> <p>The formal request for such an interchange study would apparently trigger or at least facilitate TDOT budgeting and study of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-the existing interchange configuration, including the design of the existing north and south exits,-the possibility of adding two-way traffic along each side of the frontage roads North Mall Road and South Mall Road), and-the possibility of adding an additional exit ramp or second-chance exit in each direction along I-640 -- especially for the southbound approach coming through the hidden valley from Broadway. <p>Such second chance exits could be, for example, like the merge onto frontage road at the Walker Springs Rd exit in west Knoxville -- with the interstate traffic easing at an angle onto the frontage road before reaching the Millertown Pike light (south bound side) or Washington Pike light (north bound side). Ms. Snowden pointed out that such an exit ramp must, under federal guidelines, allow sufficient time to decelerate and to queue safely out of fast-moving interstate traffic. This and the other engineering and technical issues could be examined in the formal interchange study.</p> <p>Mr. Borden also suggested that such an Interchange Modification Request, which I assume could come directly by Resolution adopted by City Council, might be better coordinated first with the Knox MPC based TPO, because of its role in examining traffic flow issues in the area, as well as MPC's knowledge of land uses.</p> <p>I have this memorandum. Please email this Interchange Modification Study request to our TPO Board Member. Please let me know if you need any information.</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	8/4/13	Corridor Overlay Workshop -- followup observations	<p>The workshop on the Corridor Overlay did a good job of explaining its purpose and general operation. It showed a corridor overlay can be a useful tool, when used in conjunction with sound sector planning and review and adjustments to the underlying zone to control the type of development desired uses and commercial and other activity permitted in an area.</p> <p>Three comments by one of my constituents, Carlene Malone (not able to attend due to recent surgery), warrant our continued evaluation and probably some adjustment to the corridor requirements (note: some edits done for flow):</p> <p>*****</p> <p>1. The corridor overlay is the only overlay that does not have a board, including citizen members, to issue the Certificate of Appropriateness. With the corridor overlay the Director of MPC does that.</p> <p>2. As written ONLY the APPLICANT can appeal to MPC. So, there is no way for a non-applicant citizen to get to City Council with an appeal since he can't get to the MPC to challenge the original decision.</p> <p>3. At the implementation stage, the public is out of the picture -they may not even know when a Certificate of Appropriateness is being considered, since it is a private deal between the Applicant and MPC Director.</p> <p>Discussion: A comparison with Historic and Neighborhood Conservation District appeals to court, instead of City Council doesn't work-they are different situations...not to be compared with other overlays, and controlled by state law. There is a Historic Zoning Commission to deal with. In short, an Authority or Commission established by the State is quite different from a "board" or "committee" set up locally for the Infill or Downtown Overlay.</p> <p>Regarding Technology Park Overlay, there is a Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority. These authorities and their makeup are clearly set out in the zoning ordinance itself.</p> <p>There are NO similar public authorities regarding other overlays, such as IH_1 (Infill Housing) or DOWTOWN Design Overlay. These overlays are appropriate to compare to Corridor Overlay. And, both of these have Design Review boards or Committees.</p> <p>The note goes on to discuss the third point in more detail: the significance of public input at the Certificate issuance stage: Why is it important for the public to be involved in the issuance of the Certificate of appropriateness and the right to appeal to MPC? It is at the point of issuance or denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness that the adopted guidelines of the corridor are interpreted. That is where the rubber hits the road. The adopted "guidelines" are going to cover "Building and related development characteristics;" among other things. If the citizens who participated in the public process which resulted in City Council adopting a specific Overlay district and its guidelines, do not feel the guidelines are met</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	6/25/13	TENNOVA HOSPITAL PLANS UPDATE June 24th	<p>numerical typo: Should read "250 to 300 beds" planned for new facility (not 20 to 300, 3rd par in Broader Observations section)</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	6/25/13	TENNOVA HOSPITAL PLANS UPDATE June 24th	<p>Tennova reps met with folks from North Knoxville on June 24th to share information on what's happening at both locations (proposed west site and Physicians Regional Health aka St Mary's). Here are my summary notes:</p> <p>TENNOVA HOSPITAL PLAN UPDATE -- NDV Notes 6/24/2013 Meeting</p> <p>INTRODUCTION: On June 24th, Tennova representatives, Melanie Robinson, Jerry Askew, and Area CEO Mike Garland, spoke to the inner city neighborhoods that will be affected by their plans to move the old St. Mary's acute care hospital to the proposed 107 acre Middlebrook Pike campus under option in the Dowell Springs area of west Knoxville. While there were no major changes in the approach discussed at the St. James Episcopal church meeting hall (from the earlier March meeting), there was a bit more flesh regarding the status of their plans and the issues driving their decision making. Their focus westward is no longer in doubt, and is moving forward as fast as they can, with decisions and construction completion slated within a 4 year horizon. Site rezoning is expected by October, but obtaining a Certificate of Need is a much longer process. The project has a 4 year horizon.</p> <p>BACKGROUND: It was again emphasized this is not the poorly-handled Baptist hospital abrupt-closure situation of several years ago. St Mary's has a 80 year history of serving the area and Tennova says they are committed to keeping some level of health care service at the existing downtown site (more on that later).</p> <p>The basic status discussion has now been "codified" into a PowerPoint presentation. They emphasized that they have a huge investment here (although much is in an antiquated, difficult to navigate, structure that has grown by various additions since the 1930s, and which is served by a very old central power, heating and support system that would cost some \$80M to replace if they stayed there for ongoing acute care.) Tennova has committed to the Sisters of Mercy to continue care there. Jerry Askew emphasized that their expenditure of some \$18M for the new lobby area evidences their commitment to the site.</p> <p>Melanie Robinson spoke of the St Mary's recognition for its top level of service for: joint replacement, child birthing, chest pain center, and having the busiest ER in the city (caution: that latter point, indigent care, is likely a huge cost loser and may well explain part of their haste to move west). Once again, Melanie explained how the difficulty in navigating the antiquated building, with less than ideal additions over the decades, and the new emphasis on patient satisfaction re such things argues against tackling a re-work of the existing structure in the present medical reimbursement environment. As discussed previously, shorter patient stays and the need to satisfy demands of their doctor base help dictate the push westward. (No discussion this time re better insurance coverage out there, or folks who can actually afford to pay the growing medical co-pays and deductibles of the shrinking insurance world.)</p> <p>The four options considered in deciding their present course of action include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Status Quo -- but the present location is not acceptable to the physicians who bring patients there (physicians' control where patients end up. (They are the "distribution" arm of the service business that deals with customers/ patients). Drs. have already started moving out with a consequent decline in hospital business.2. Status Quo Plus -- efforts to fix the existing infrastructure would disrupt patient care excessively3. Build Out the Emory Rd site-- it has 60 acres. Some doctors won't go north to the Powell site.4. Replacement Hospital, west-- a new acute care facility centered in the middle of the 11 county area population they draw customers from makes the most sense, and pleases their doctor core. Sub-acute care would remain at St. Mary's site (aka Physicians regional Medical Center).

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73	Nick Della Volpe	6/12/13	Tennova Meeting - Future of St. Mary's	<p>Here are the second meeting details:</p> <p>WHAT: Meeting with Tennova Reps WHEN: June 24, 6 to 7 pm WHERE: St James Episcopal Church Meeting Hall (back of church, main address = 1101 N. Broadway). WHY: Future of health care in North Knoxville. What will happen here, as well as on proposed Middlebrook Pike facility? Plus impact on 2000 jobs currently at St Mary's, your housing stock, and local business dependence on daily activity? WHO: You should plan to attend. Zoning and other steps on moving ahead on the Dowell Springs site. MAP: http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&q=1101%20North%20Broadway,%20Knoxville,%20TN%2037917</p> <p>I look forward to seeing reps from 4th & Gill, Old North Knoxville, Oakwood-Lincoln Park, North Hills, ABSHNA, THE, Fountain City</p> <p>Thanks Nick D</p> <p>Be. It is an understatement to say they have a major presence and impact on these communities (jobs, business, patronage, housing needs) and on the</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	6/12/13	Tennova Meeting - Future of St. Mary's	<p>The neighborhoods in the 4th District are planning their second meeting on June 24th with Tennova reps to discuss Tennova plans to move their flagship St Mary's acute care hospital facility out west to their Dowell Springs site on Middlebrook Pike, and to obtain an update on what will happen the the old St Mary's off Broadway.</p> <p>Here are my background notes from our first meeting in March 2013:</p> <p>ST MARY'S/ TENNOVA WEST-KNOX PLANS -- NDV Summary</p> <p>This is a brief summary of the Tennova Middlebrook Pike potential hospital site meeting, held in Old North Knoxville last Monday night, March 18th. Melanie Robinson and Jerry Askew shared the current Tennova information with the group. Reportedly, no final decision has been made by Tennova.</p> <p>BASIC PROPOSAL: Tennova, a for-profit hospital company that manages St. Mary's on Oak Hill Rd, has optioned 107 acres in the Dowell Springs area of Middlebrook Pike. [Note: Tennova is a subsidiary of Health Management Associates, HMA, headquartered in Pelican Bay, FL. HMA operates 74 hospitals and 460 clinics in 15 states.]</p> <p>The discussion was prefaced with a discussion of the changing face of medical care, which includes shorter acute care stays (2 to 3 days vs 4 or 5 before), too many beds in the Knoxville market (St. Mary's alone has 444 beds), a capital intensive business with a changing healthcare reimbursement model, a hemmed-in site with an 80 year old power plant system that serves the complex which is difficult to navigate because of how it was expanded over the years. Among other things, patient satisfaction now partially controls their reimbursement rights (not just health outcomes) and frustration of patients and visitors in parking, difficulty getting around to different services within St. Mary's, quality of meals, etc., play an increasing role re hospital profitability.</p> <p>Askew said they spent their initial effort trying to find a way to expand and improve the current 1.3 million sq ft building but found it difficult and expensive. They have an \$80 million investment in north Knoxville. They employ 2000 people-- yes 2000 people. Their doctor base lives out west and Knoxville's population is growing in that direction. The doctors don't want to practice here, and they don't to lose their client base. The rule in this business is: "Patients follow the doctors."</p> <p>Unspoken: the higher income patients out there also have higher-payment private insurance and can afford to pay their co-pays. New investment can be depreciated for income tax purposes.</p> <p>ISSUE: Tennova is more interested in re-purposing the St Mary's site than staying there. The relocation to Middlebrook will take 3 to 5 years (Considering engineering evaluations, zoning changes, getting state Certificate of Need (about 1 1/2 years) and doing the construction (approx 15 to 18 months).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- what are the potential repurposing uses? (clinic, non-acute care, senior care, assisted living on the health care side; office or other corporate uses)- what happens to neighborhood businesses and housing market if we lose 2000 jobs?

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73	Nick Della Volpe	5/28/13	Walkable business centers -- Closure of Ben Atchley St.	<p>What was the incoming that prompted my response to her, you might ask? In the interest of completeness, here is a copy of Terry's "position paper" transmitted by her email:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REASONS FOR BEARDEN COUNCIL POSITION ON BEN ATCHLEY ROAD CLOSURE KNOXVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MAY 28 ,2013</p> <p>Beginning in 1989, before the concepts of "green communities"and "new urbanism"became popular, Bearden community leaders and local merchants were beginning the work of creating a new â€œurbanist, environmentally sustainable village"by improving upon the physical aspects available in Bearden at that time. The primary goal of both these concepts is the use of alternative modes of transportation (sidewalks/greenways and bicycle paths) to integrate all types of residential housing with businesses, schools, restaurants, public transit, etc. into a distinctive, pleasant urban environment in which people can enjoy a good quality of life. We have sought to do that by improving one of the first, early 20th century suburban areas developed west of downtown Knoxville.</p> <p>In 1999 we realized we needed a professional plan which was supported by local government so we worked with MPC staff to create a Bearden Village Opportunities Plan which was passed in 2001 by MPC and Knoxville City Council members. The Bearden Council was formed to implement specific goals in that document and now we feel that we are possibly nearing the completion of the "Village"□</p> <p>In the last two years this City Council has assisted us in the following ways with land use issues beneficial to the plan which will result in additional "vested"residents and a huge population of hungry UT students and their families visiting this area.</p> <p>1) Mann Street was closed so that UT could build the 40 acre Intramural Athletic Fields on Sutherland. UT has supported our efforts in this "arterial"area of the village by adding a greenway connection, providing parking, a public plaza, trees and crosswalks on Sutherland.</p> <p>2) Up-scale condominiums for are being added on Sutherland Avenue close to West High in an industrial zone which was down -zoned to medium density residential.</p> <p>3) The Historic Sutherland Heights neighborhood has been rezoned from R-2 to R-1.</p> <p>As described in the MPC plan these three improvements, with the addition of a new sidewalk on the north side of Sutherland between Hollywood and Jade Streets, will complete a second of four village centers listed for development in the Village design. The first center to be completed was a core commercial/transportation hub near the Earthfare.</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	5/28/13	Walkable business centers -- Closure of Ben Atchley St.	<p>Late last night, I responded to an email sent by Terry Faulkner about her ideas on closing Ben Atchley Street, an item on the agenda. Other council reps were on her email and my reply. To be sure others interested in this topic can view the response, here it is:</p> <p>Thanks for the note, sharing your ideas, Terry. My wife Donna has been thinking about this issue and set out her own ideas about the walkable shopping area you espoused. Her comments, from Saturday, are worthy of note as well, and are set out below. Here they are:</p> <p>Nick D</p> <p>WALKABLE BUSINESS CENTERS</p> <p>I've watched with interest over the last several weeks as my husband has been bombarded with calls and emails for and against the closing of Ben Atchley Street. I felt that at this time I wanted to voice my opinion.</p> <p>Nick and I lived for three years in a walkable neighborhood. We lived in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn, N. Y. It was a great experience. We didn't own a car. We walked along the sidewalks with our pull-along, two-wheel, collapsible basket to do our grocery shopping and laundry, stop at the produce market, pork store, bakery, and liquor store. Returning home we carried everything up 82 steps, four flights to our apartment. At night, when we had a few bucks to spend, we might walk over to the neighborhood pub on the corner of Seventh Avenue to listen to the students from Julliard play the piano while we had a meal. On weekends, we might bike over the Brooklyn Bridge to Manhattan, take the ferry to Staten Island (past the Statue of Liberty), and bike around the smaller neighborhoods there. Our neighborhood had great sidewalks, tree-lined streets, and close proximity to Prospect Park (designed by Frederick Law Olmstead), zoo, and the arboretum within several blocks. The area was very compact.</p> <p>I'm sure many here would like to leave their cars at home and enjoy such a lifestyle in Knoxville. However, there are tradeoffs. To enjoy such nearby amenities, you have to have density. All businesses need a certain population base to be sustainable-i.e., profitable-or they will fail. In Park Slope, people rarely owned cars. There was no place to park, no parking lot at the grocery store or any of the other shops I mentioned earlier. The stores were successful because there was enough foot traffic nearby to support them. Buildings were close together, sharing common walls, and were several stories high.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the shops in Bearden cannot rely on foot traffic alone to be successful. Anthropologie, whose average customer earns \$200,000/year (according to the article Mr. Cappiello distributed to Council), will not succeed if it can't draw customers from all over Knox county and beyond. (By the way, the average income in East Tennessee is closer to \$39,000 than it is to \$200,000.)</p> <p>Unless we want to bulldoze the quaint neighborhoods in Bearden and build high rises and multi-family dwellings to achieve sufficient density, the shopkeepers will not be successful from foot traffic alone. They will have to rely on vehicular traffic.</p> <p>Yes, let's aim for more sidewalks and tree-lined streets in Knoxville. If, however, you make the areas less accessible to vehicular traffic these dream walkable shops and stores will fail. If Anthropologie is as successful as its supporters expect, there will need to be a plan to handle the extra traffic and potential congestion it will create. If it fails (or moves), Ben Atchley Street will have been closed to the detriment of the original businesses that made the area an attractive location in the first place. Consider carefully what you wish for. The reality is rarely as attractive as the planner's drawings on the page.</p> <p>Thank You Donna Della Volpe</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	2/27/13	SAFETY CENTER PRESENTATION 2/27/13	<p>SAFETY CENTER PRESENTATION -- NDV Summary</p> <p>A brief report on the 2/27/13 meeting sponsored by Commissioner Amy Broyles about the proposed Safety Center to be operated by Helen Ross McNabb near its 201W. Springdale Ave. location one block off to the left of North Central Ave. Sheriff JJ Jones, District Attorney General Randy Nichols, and Helen Ross McNabb President Andy Black helped with the presentation and answering questions.</p> <p>THE PROBLEM: One way to address overcrowding jails, and multiple repeat arrests with high cost mentally ill and/or drug and alcohol dependent (but non-violent) offenders is to use a safety center (not a jail) to detox and medically stabilize these folks in a mental health intervention-type center, and hopefully get them enrolled with some type of follow-up provider that can help keep them properly medicated and stable for the longer term.</p> <p>The sheriff says it costs his department some \$180 to \$190 per day to handle each such problem, public-disorder offenders (hospital/ medical care, psychotropic drugs, etc) versus an average \$78 per day to house other types criminals. He projects the need to build another \$18 M jail pod at the County's Maloney Road jail if this problem is not dealt with. Overall, the sheriffs office spends \$30 M of its \$70 M budget on corrections each year. Officers spend over 1 1/2 hours each time they ferry criminals to distant Maloneyville Rd.</p> <p>The extra hidden cost is a criminal conviction takes away support/ care money by the loss of TennCare and SSI monies. This usually dumps care to unreimbursed emergency room providers (at a cost of \$1500 per day), and puts these people in worse shape back on the streets. Attorney General Nichols these folks would get criminal diversion (= no record) and keep their benefits. If they cause trouble, JJ says they go straight to jail. This is for those willing to accept help and stick with the program.</p> <p>Helen Ross McNabb (sometimes "HRMN") acknowledges this system is not perfect and that only so much can be done in a 3-day stay and that some system of follow-up care for mentally-ill persons is necessary to keep them on their meds and thus stable after release. They work with other mental health care provides like Penninsula and Cherokee, as well as state facilities like Moccasin bend and Ridgeway for such care, but that there is usually more demand than capacity available.</p> <p>THE PROPOSAL: Build a \$1 M facility next door to Helen Ross McNabb's existing facility on Springdale Ave. (essentially a light industrial area) on HRMN using shared city and county money for such stabilization services. It would be approx 10,000 sq. ft. and have 16 to 20 CSU beds plus 10 medically-monitored beds (HRMN already has 5 such beds for its present program which treated about 500 patients last year). The annual cost to run this new facility is estimated at \$1.8M. It would employ 27 people and would treat 1500 to 1700 such patients per year. The state would pay monies via TennCare and through some of the funds channeled to mentally ill service providers from the recent state closure of Lakeshore mental health facilities. Possibly, they could get some help from area hospitals and/or foundations for follow-up care.</p> <p>THE QUESTIONS: Here are a few of the many good questions and concerns from the audience of approx. 60 people.</p> <p>Location: Good idea, but why here, in an already over-missioned area? Why not build a facility downtown on the county's State Street land and then hire the provider to manage it? (= will be looked at.) Why not ask the state to turnover one of the existing Lakeshore buildings for such a treatment facility in a fenced in area? (= site transfer can be inquired into, but otherwise state wants out of mental health service business). Why not re-hab and reuse former Rule High School? (bad roof and asbestos = too costly to fix.). What happens to north knox property values? (=present care at HRMN is non-intrusive, said to be basically invisible to community)</p> <p>Where do they go after 3 days? These people will likely go off their meds without some form of follow-up guidance / support. They won't be put on the streets in the neighborhood, but if no follow-up provider help, they get released in front of City-county bldg. There is limited capacity for all the follow-up services; does this become another revolving door? (= JJ says this program is for the willing, after about two tries you are a jail, not re-hab case; same as unruly patients). There will be 24/7 police presence at HRMN.</p> <p>Tried elsewhere? General Nichols said they looked at Akron, Ohio and Tucson, Arizona and hope for similar positive results. One of those locations had a big private donor to help fund the effort</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	2/25/13	Safety City Siting Concern	<p>Please note the Safety Center meeting-Tuesday night, 6 pm.</p> <p>As you can see from the incorporated note below, the compassionate citizens of Old North Knoxville support the concept of a safety center but DO NOT want an additional burden placed on their already overly-taxed community, a community which labors mightily to right itself from previous mission initiatives.</p> <p>I invite you and others in the broader community to consider finding a more suitable location....like a building in a fenced-in area in old Lakeshore. Regardless of who runs it, Lakeshore has a century long history of being fit to stabilize those who are mentally or chemically impaired. Some portion of that public-owned facility can be other than a walk in the park....</p> <p><i>"From: 37917@yahoogroups.com On Behalf Of Chester Kilgore Sent: Monday, February 25, 2013 2:34 PM To: 37917@yahoogroups.com"</i></p> <p><i>Thank you Amy for arranging the meeting. ...</i></p>
62	Nick Pavlis	2/14/13	Broadband services in Knoxville	<p>Being in the industry for years I can assure you they do not offer anymore than what Comcast can service their customers with. They have a minimum of subscribers for their "gig" which is over 350.00 per month, who needs that at home in addition to their other services such as video.</p> <p>I can provide you horror stories around the country of such ventures that failed, and failed miserably. Goes as close as Memphis and learn of their entry into broadband services which failed and left the rate payers on the hook for 30 million dollars.</p> <p>I would also direct you to the horrible mess the Ciity of Clarksville has expereinced upon entering the business. Few if any in the state are on track with their payback model, and in fact, are not reducing debt service but merely making interest payments.</p> <p>I have stacks of information on why these ventures are not good investments and am glad to discuss it further with anyone that wants more information. Of course Council members we would discuss in a workshop or other public venue.</p> <p>Government has no business competing with private enterprise and Knoxville is certainly not underserved. Keep in mind, Knoxville is served by Comcast, Knology, AT&T, Dish and Direct TV. Let private enterprise work and not interfere with the investment and jobs already provided by these companies. KUB is a fine utility provider lets not detract them from what they do best and not spend an estimated 500 million to duplicate what is already in place.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Nick Pavlis</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	1/23/13	Lexington Mayor Strikes Deal to Weather Pension Shortfall	<p>Lexington Mayor Strikes Deal to Weather Pension Shortfall</p> <p>According to news reports, Mayor Jim Gray of Lexington, Kentucky has negotiated a proposed deal with the police and fire employees to help whittle away at the \$290+ million pension shortfall faced by that town. While all pension plans are different, Lexington's bold, employer--employee, cooperative actions are worth examination and possibly adaptation or emulation here.</p> <p>Gray met with police and fire reps and agreed to increase city funding (to \$20 million, up from \$11 million/ year) towards reducing the pension shortfall in exchange for worker agreements to reduce pension COLA (sliding scale from 2% down to 0% until 2016, thereafter to 1%, based on pension benefit); increase in the retirement age; a lower base salary multiplier; reduced disability payments (from 60% down to 50%); increased worker contributions to 12% of pay.</p> <p>These efforts are expected to cut the pension shortfall nearly in half, to \$160 million.</p> <p>Details can be found in a web article: http://www.kentucky.com/2013/01/18/2481153/mayor-police-and-fire-unions-agree.html</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	12/20/12	Just the Facts, Sir	Nick P, thanks for your concern. I was not asking about the merits of the Park. I wanted engineer Jim to be ready to explain / justify the high cost of the design contract. I wanted him to be ready with the facts tonight, so we can all evaluate this intelligently.
62	Nick Pavlis	12/20/12	Inappropriate email	<p>Jim, you better have a good reason why we should spend almost \$700,000 to design a 5 acre park. Dollars are scarce. You could likely build 3 parks for your design cost!</p> <p>Nick Della Volpe, 4th District 5216 Crestwood Drive Knoxville, TN 37914 525-2880</p> <p>Nick I am posting this as a cure if any sunshine violation occurred.</p> <p>I will also remind you this project was part of the Mayor's capitol budget which we approved 9-0.</p> <p>In addition, this project was vetted very transparently for 2 years if not more by experts, neighborhood groups, and members of the public and to go back and question every expenditure as the project moves forward would be an insult to the hard work that went into this important project.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Nick Pavlis</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	12/11/12	KNOXVILLE APP -- Has Arrived!	<p>The wait is over. The Knoxville App has arrived! It is available in both Apple and Google formats. Test drive it today. And provide feedback to Visit Knoxville for next-Gen improvements. Finally, a guidebook that's always with you.</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	12/6/12	KNOXVILLE APP -- A Stocking Stuffer for Christmas	<p>UPDATE, North Pole: The Knoxville App is nearing its journey's end to your phone, tablet, or other electronic device.</p> <p>The team at Visit Knoxville, with the help of its tech designer, have shipped the hand-crafted App off to Apple for final approval this week. Hopefully, the telescoping or cascading array of screens identifying places to stay, shop, dine, and sights to see, as well as local events to enjoy, will be under your tree or in stockings hanging from the mantle this Christmas. This downloadable tool will help you and prospective visitors to Knoxville plan and find their family's activities easily. You can dig as deeply as you want, from simple identification and location, right down to the selected entity's own detailed website, menus and maps. Even to a non-techie like me, it seems easy to use. With "customer" feedback, it should grow and improve with time.</p> <p>Navigating will soon be a Snap with the Knoxville App.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/27/12	Consider Changing to Two way traffic on east Mall Roads	<p>It may be worthwhile to study the possibility of converting the one way only frontage roads by east town mall (knoxville center to you modernists), as well as the western side big box stores, to two way traffic. The goal would be enhance access to both the Mall side and to the Home Depot / Lowes side. There is also an issue of visibility.</p> <p>It has been suggested to me that prospective tenants to those sites find the road access and crossover system sufficiently confusing to cause them to hesitate and resist making major investment commitments to those sites-- especially if they are trying to attract and serve passing interstate traffic -- usually catnip to restaurants and national retailers -- to turn off at the visually hidden business sites, sites that can be a bit frustrating to cipher to strangers.</p> <p>I spoke briefly to Mark Donaldson briefly and he agrees that the old crossover approach is now passé (in planning circles) as well as the driving there can be a bit confusing. When you couple that with the physical fact that these business sites are "hidden" somewhat by the much lower grade of the interstate and the now overgrowth of trees (we all love trees, but perhaps not when they block visual access to what historically been the 7th largest taxpayer in this county (the mall). Unfortunately: out of sight means out of mind. And once you pass the interstate exit, it would be hell for a stranger to wind back, as the road splits into I 40 a short distance to the south.</p> <p>As you know, neighborhoods like ABSHNA, are deeply concerned about Knoxville Center Mall's decline, and the two way road fix might be a relatively modest way to help pump new life into the area. It might be good business, as well as good service, to our city.</p> <p>I have asked the administration, and now I ask you, to consider authorizing a feasibility study, a public meeting, and engaging in a dialogue with some of the two shopping center developers and the major tenants. Our goal should be: how can our city help you succeed?</p> <p>This both community health and tax revenue significant. Thanks Nick Della Volpe, 4th District</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	11/26/12	Illinois -- Unfixable Pension -- Canary in the Mine?	<p>Now that you have exhausted every leftover turkey recipe on the planet, it's time to re-focus on the broader news.</p> <p>The WSJ reported on Friday November 29th that Illinois pension system is "headed for a meltdown." It is apparently some \$200 billion underfunded--although it conveniently reports less (about \$95 billion) by using an assumed, and unrealistic, 8% growth rate or discount rate (compare that to an actual 0.75% realized by their teachers fund in 2012 and less than 0.1% by other state employees' funds). The WSJ reports that Illinois business groups have declared the state's pension crisis "so severe" that it is now "unfixable." The WSJ adds that the state's problem is "worsening so fast that the usual menu of reforms won't be enough to keep public pensions from sucking taxpayers and whole cities into its yawning maw." The Governor is trying to rally public support for drastic pension reform, including a possible income tax to help fund it.</p> <p>Scary stuff!</p> <p>I'm glad that we have made a fair "start" on our pension problem here at home. But the real work is far from done. There is no time for complacency. Unless we want to endure 20+ years of strained budgets and restricted services to our citizens, we need to do more to rein in the overruns / underfunding in the now-closed pension system (Note: "closed" here means no new entrants, but there remain some 3500+ retirees and vested/ covered employees who remain part of the "old" city pension plan. The underfunding gap in those closed plans has been widening in recent years due to a poor financial markets and a slowed economy, despite increased city annual funding and the extra \$10 million transferred from our so-called "rainy day fund." That rain barrel is shrinking, and we need a healthy margin to preserve our bond ratings and prudent reserves.</p> <p>What's next? Growing the city revenue pie, by attracting new businesses, will certainly help. So will smarter investing of pension plan assets. But everything needs to be on the table. More realistic pension growth assumptions are needed; so are cost limiting measures, like trimming back automatic COLA, and pro-active meetings with employees to enlist their help to hopefully nip this problem in the bud...</p> <p>The seas are getting rougher. Let's trim the sails before the Nor'easter blows.</p> <p>Nick D</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
62	Nick Pavlis	11/11/12	James White Parkway extension	<p>Hello to all. The buzz this week is obviously about the upcoming TDOT meeting set for December 6th. I am receiving phone calls, emails etc. I want to make my thoughts transparent to you all. First off, this is a very politically charged issue because there is strong sentiment on both sides, but I cannot support TDOT's plan to proceed for these reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I feel the trail system and the Urban Wilderness theme is South Knoxville's future. It has branded us, and we can capitalize on it in many ways. This attracts folks to South Knoxville to live, work, and play.2. Because of the trails, an estimated 2 million dollars in private real estate have been purchased in South Knoxville.3. I have seen first hand the devastating effect that the diversion of traffic from Chapman highway has had on our merchants due to the Henley Bridge closure.4. Thousands of private dollars, along with donations from many organizations, have been given. Continuation of the present plan would certainly be a disservice to these donors.5. Lastly, about the Appalachian Mountain Bike Club's efforts: I have never seen such dedication to a project. Literally 1000s of hours of sweat equity have been donated by the men and women of this organization to create these trails, not to mention their individual cash investments. <p>The JWP extension project had merit in its conception, but since that time everything South has changed for the better with the Urban Wilderness theme and multi-use trail system, and for that reason I oppose the current plans.</p> <p>I look forward to working with the City Administration and TDOT to find a better solution. I know this will not please everyone, but my decision is to support the long term betterment of South Knoxville and Knoxville as a whole.</p> <p>Please do not hesitate to reach out to me 454-7216.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Nick Pavlis</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	10/16/12	PENSION SHORTFALL, UNIVERSITY COMMONS, AND YOU	<p>Pension Shortfall, University Commons, and You</p> <p>The actuary's Annual Valuation & Report (effective as of July 1, 2012) has been released. It shows a \$218 million shortfall in the City's pension fund (i.e., liabilities total \$661 million and Assets total \$443 million).</p> <p>A lousy year in the stock market (earnings averaged about 1/2%), has produced a \$37 million decline in assets on hand -- down to \$443 million from the plan;s expected growth up to \$480 million, at the assumed 7.375% rate of return. Obviously, that expected rate of return on investments was not achieved. More importantly, it is clear that our historic return rate averages only 5.6% -- so you might ask why use the more generous rate (read: unrealistic rate) of 7.375%? It's wishful thinking and it masks the real scope of our pension problem.</p> <p>WHY AM I ASKING THIS NOW?</p> <p>The City is on the cusp of giving a private developer \$1.5 million from our shrinking City Fund balance (which at best is \$19 million in "unassigned funds" = free to use, with \$2.5 million of that already committed to the TVA/ city-after-hours-use garage). Okay, you like the idea of a Walmart/ Publix project slated for University Commons, and you know the site has issues, both environmental and traffic logistical. I get that. But lads and lasses, the big storm's a comin' and we need those rainy day funds to offset clearly expected liabilities already at our doorstep...</p> <p>The actuary's annual report has a slide presentation section on the unfunded pension liability. It shows the yearly amount needed to be contributed by the City each year for the next 10 years (See slide or presentation page 21) -- those start at \$20.63 million and rise up by approx. \$2 million/ year higher over the next 10 years, reaching \$32.95 MILLION BY 2021.</p> <p>Doable? BUT WAIT, THOSE FIGURES ARE COMPUTED WITH GROWTH PEGGED AT THE UNREALISTIC RETURN RATE OF 7.375 % PER YEAR. GOSH, OUR AVERAGE RETURN IS ONLY 5.6%, that means the expense is understated .</p> <p>When you plug in the 5.6% actual rate of return it raises the ante by \$7 million to \$10 million per year!! Thus, mathematically, you will need to pay in \$27.16 million next year, and raising by roughly \$2 million / year to \$43.39 million by 2021. YIKES! This City needs one helluva rainy day fund that we ain't got. Pay or job cuts, reduced services, raised taxes, here we come. Yes, I am praying for an economic recovery that would help mute those projected expenses.</p> <p>THE POINT: Look before you leap giving up scarce saved/ reserve tax dollars to a big-boy risk-taking developer. The taxpayers come first. Time for brothers Bud and Jim to find other risk-taking partners for their project.</p> <p>My two cents anyway.</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	10/8/12	Homeless Daycenter	<p>Ok great, I have a meeting at Lake Forrest and can't attend Ftn.City so any update will be appreciated.</p> <p>Nick P</p>

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74	Mark Campen	10/8/12	Homeless Daycenter	<p>Hey Nick,</p> <p>I will be at the meeting tonight, so we should be hearing from the Family Promise rep(s) and concerned neighbors. Let's discuss further after the meeting.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Mark</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	10/2/12	Homeless Daycenter	<p>Mark,</p> <p>Are you aware of a Homeless Daycenter to be located at 609 Cedar Lane? I am being advised of a meeting this Monday at Ftn.City Town Hall to discuss this???</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	9/30/12	FLATBACKIN FOR BROCCOLI	<p>This money is going to infrastructure not any businesses. Other such projects that received similar funding were Turkey Creek, Market Square, Waterfront, just to name a few , how did those turn out? Where I live we go nine miles one way for a grocery store with just that option. So imagine everyone that lives from Knox County line to campus has no grocery store!!</p> <p>The City now receives 7k for property taxes for this plot of land. When and if this project comes to fruition we will realize 120,000 in property taxes, not to mention the sales taxes, and jobs which we desperately need. I think this is a good return on investment.</p> <p>Folks can disagree and I hope you understand why I will support the 60 million investment and utilize a blighted browns field to boot. Cas has been gone for some time now.</p> <p>Nick P</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	9/29/12	FLATBACKIN FOR BROCCOLI	<p>Dr. Lyons has taken up as lead salesman for giving away City Voter's dollars to a pair of connected developers, who previously cut their \$10M tax relief deal with the City, but now have come back for more free money--\$1.5 M more.... Money that would come from our shrinking protective reserve fund. One that has recently shrunk by \$15M for other City funded needs.</p> <p>That money may well be needed for rainy days ahead...</p> <p>Cutting through the Recent rationalizations, and looking past the mythic fears of mass starvation in the so-called "food desert" (aren't ya getting a wee bit tired of all that sustainability lexicography), we are left with either a badly executed project pro-forma on the part of the developers, a planned two-step negotiation to revisit taxpayers pockets, or a City willing to pick winners and losers by funding select developers in a tight economy.</p> <p>These smart developers need to solicit private venture capital dollars OR sell this project outright to others in the private sector willing to do the job. We led with the City's best offer. We made a deal. Seek elsewhere. It's tme for the private economy to man up...</p> <p>My thoughts anyway.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	9/25/12	University Commons Comes A'beggin"	<p>By the way, the City has recently taken some \$15 M from its reserve cookie jar = \$10 M for a supplement to the pension fund in late June, plus \$2.5 M for the state street garage addition and \$2.5 M for the land acquisition for new TVA/ public after-hours garage project just getting started.</p> <p>We need to save for a real rainy day...</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	9/25/12	University Commons Comes A'beggin"	<p>Developers Bud Cullom and Jim Harrison have approached the City to throw some \$1.5 million their way to help build out the bridge infrastructure for their for-profit University Commons retail development. Huh?</p> <p>The city cut them a tax break earlier to help them get financing and make their pro-forma business plan work. Okay, forgoing some taxes to help the brown fields project make sense. The city will earn some sales tax in addition to the base level (pre-development) property tax. A fair trade for the taxpayers.</p> <p>But taking tax dollars from the city's rainy day funds--to help them build their project? Very Questionable!!! I'll try to keep an open mind, but these guys need to chase venture capital partners, not the public fisc.</p> <p>Among other things, --First, I question the propriety and even legality of this. Job One is running this city as lean as possible. --Second, I decry the favoritism this would show to one business versus others. How do we ever say No to someone else? --Third, We are facing a potential fiscal crisis as the ongoing pension funding shortfall comes home to roost-- probably to the tune of \$20million + in the next year or so. --Finally, if the city were to, in essence, put in 25% of the front end money (in infrastructure costs) -- Bud and Jim are kicking in \$5million up front--to pay costs that the developer should be fronting, then the City should have a limited partners share of any profits as our return on investment (ROI). but we are not really intended to be a business entity.</p> <p>Time to demand that these gentlemen find outside venture capital.... My two cents anyway.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/12/12	Rhode Island Pension Struggles -- A Lesson??	<p>Pensions burden Rhode Island towns despite state reform By Hilary Russ Reuters 8/12/12</p> <p>Last year, Rhode Island enacted what experts said was the most far-reaching, sophisticated public pension reform in the country to date, becoming a model for other states and cities seeking to reshape their own ballooning pension systems. Yet the smallest state in the United States can't say it has won the fight: the reform didn't apply to dozens of independent local pension plans, many of which are sorely underfunded and are stuck fending mostly for themselves. Whether towns have acted urgently on pension reform, however, is another matter. At a heated town council meeting in West Warwick in June, the biggest item on the agenda was a long-running squabble with the school board about whether to hand over a few million dollars to spare cuts in sports and music programs. Sean Henseler, a parent and coach, was trying to get the message out that the real demon on the fiscal horizon was the town's nearly \$235 million of unfunded liabilities for pension and other retirement benefits. "That's the iceberg they've already hit. The Titanic is going down," Henseler said after the meeting. "These guys are paying lawyers to rearrange the deck chairs."</p> <p>Debate about public pensions is playing out across the United States as state and local governments - many of which already are struggling under bare-bones budgets in the post-recession era - face retirement systems that are increasingly burdensome or even unsustainable. The overhauls, which could reshape municipal governments for years to come, are fractured in a nation with thousands of funds and a jumble of different laws at play. Rhode Island is not the only state that has a raft of independent local pension plans. Pennsylvania, for example, has about 3,200 totally independent local pension plans, a quarter of all public pension plans in the country. "These smaller local plans tend to be less efficient and cost more and tend to have less oversight than the larger statewide plans," said Keith Brainard, research director for the National Association of State Retirement Administrators. "And when you've got individual small employers trying to navigate investment markets and taking on all of the actuarial risk on their own, they're likely to experience higher costs, lower returns and higher volatility," he said. Reform in Rhode Island, which took effect July 1, suspended cost-of-living adjustments, raised the retirement age, and moved state employees onto a hybrid pension plan of defined benefits and mandatory defined contributions. The state has four main pension funds covering about 66,000 teachers, judges, police and other state workers. RHODE ISLAND LOCAL PENSIONS UNDER THE GUN Rhode Island also has 36 separate local pension plans administered by 24 municipalities for firefighters, police and city employees. More than a dozen were funded at less than 34 percent in fiscal 2010. Last September, the state's auditor general, Dennis Hoyle, reported that locally administered pension plans were collectively \$2.1 billion short in fiscal year 2010, the most current data available for all the plans.</p>
68	George Wallace	8/5/12	crematorium-reply 2	<p>Agenda Item 12 C for Tuesday August 7 is the first reading on crematories. Will we postponing this item until after the workshop?</p>
72	Brenda Palmer	8/2/12	Hanna's on Cumberland	<p>Nick, A letter directing the owner of Hanna's to appear before the Beer Board at the August meeting has been sent via certified mail. The Law Department manages legal action including any show cause complaint that might be filed. bp</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/2/12	Pensions Revisited - The Big Picture	<p>SAN BERNADINO, CALIFORNIA-- Chapter 9 Banruptcy Update The city has a similar size population of 210,000. It reported \$1 Billion of debt, including over \$200M in unfunded pension liabilities. HMMM.... Might want to avoid debt-inducing practices, like uncertain market risks, in your pension plans.</p> <p>SCRANTON, PA -- Property Tax Increase The Pennsylvania town has backed off its \$7.25 per hour wage cut or freeze to deal with its insufficient funds. It had a union contract that set the wages and it was enforcible in court. So, instead, Scranton officials voted to raise property taxes some \$38%. A 38% increase in one year! Yikes! Talk about potential damage to its future growth. Isn't that the same destructive path that tipped Detroit into a death spiral? With residents moving out and the property values headed south? MORAL OF THE STORY: NIP OVER-SPENDING IN THE BUD, BEFORE YOU GO OVER THE CLIFF!</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	8/2/12	Hanna's on Cumberland	<p>Thanks Brenda, Does that mean we will not proceed on the order to show cause? or just that info is presently insufficient? Can Wanda contact the owners directly to learn more? Thanks Nick D</p>
72	Brenda Palmer	8/1/12	Hanna's on Cumberland	<p>At the July Beer Board, discussion about Hanna's on Cumberland took place. Signs in the window at Hanna's say the business is closed. No other information is available at this time.</p>
68	George Wallace	8/1/12	Work shop on crematoriums	<p>Are we up against a deadline that we have to meet on August 30? If not, I would prefer a date in September.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/31/12	crematorium-reply 2	<p>Thanks Nicky P. My bad...</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
62	Nick Pavlis	7/31/12	crematorium-reply 2	<p>That's fascinating. I ask a procedural/ scheduling question and you retreat to the forum-- one that hardly any council person uses. Then, the man who usually says not everyone can make every meeting, now worries that Mark has gone missing for a month. So the Council cannot educate itself on an important issue.i Begins to sound like dodgeball to me...but I complement on your obvious skill ...</p> <p>Nick you are jumping the gun here. The only reason I "RETREATED" to the forum is that we could possibly have to take council action such as a postponement and I would rather be safe and answer here. True not everyone can make all the meetings and if you will recall I was ready to meet for the last one but too many were going to be absent and this is a very important issue to the City.I trust you agree it is important to have as much input from all of Council, if possible.</p> <p>Council has delayed votes on issues that were very important to a particular district in the past. This issue arose from yours and Councilman Campen's district and I was extending him a courtesy as I would you or any other councilperson for that reason and no other.</p> <p>Also, I explained to you that Attorney Frost is still in deliberation with the Law department on the issue so I did not want to rush him or them and let them do the work we pay them to do. As an attorney yourself you should understand that.</p> <p>With all this being said I will ask the Records office to go ahead and poll members so I cannot be accused of playing "dodgeball".</p> <p>Nick</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	7/31/12	Work shop on crematoriums	<p>As you know our most recent attempt to hold a workshop on crematoriums was cancelled. I will update you and let you know Rob is in discussion with the law department as of this week. In addition, Councilman Campen is not available for a workshop until after August 21 st and this is an important issue for him. I plan to schedule a workshop upon his return.</p> <p>I welcome your thoughts.</p> <p>Nick</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/25/12	BALLOT -- PENSION REFORM -- WHY NOT GIVE THE VOTERS A CHOICE	<p>BALLOT -- PENSION REFORM -- WHY NOT GIVE THE VOTERS A CHOICE? We all agree on one thing: Knoxville needs pension reform for the city employee pension system. That pension has an increasing unfunded aspect that makes it "unsustainable." If we close and thus freeze the present plan, what do we replace it with? That's the real question. The issue was narrowed down to two options.</p> <p>Some suggest it is with a <i>new "hybrid plan,"</i> which is part defined benefit and part defined contribution. It's long term cost is unknown, as it relies in part on performance of investments in the stock and bond markets, and those markets have proved to be volatile and uncertain in recent years. That "market risk" falls on the city and its taxpayers under the hybrid plan.</p> <p>Others suggest we adopt a <i>"defined contribution plan."</i> The city puts its funds in the plan (along with the employee's own contribution), and the plan pays whatever it pays based on its internal investment earnings. It works like a 401(k), which many voters have for their own employment savings, and plan is portable by the employee. The city's contribution is fixed and the "market risk" remains on the employee in a defined contribution plan.</p> <p>WHY NOT GIVE THE VOTERS A CHOICE OF WHICH PLAN THEY ARE WILLING TO STAND BEHIND? After all, it's their tax dollars that are at stake. Opponents of choice say their hands are bound by state election law. The ballot question must be a yes or no question only. We seem to be interpreting the state law as if we can't trust the voters with a compound question: voter do you prefer A or B? What does this state law actually say? Tennessee Code Annotated section 2-5-208 (f) states in part: <i>(1) Whenever a question is submitted to the vote of the people, it shall be printed upon the ballot before or at the top right of the list of candidates, followed by the words "Yes" and "No," so that the voter can vote a preference by making a cross mark (X) opposite the proper word; ... Any question submitted to the people shall be worded in such a manner that a "yes" vote would indicate support for the measure and a "no" vote would indicate opposition.</i></p> <p>Surely our team of skilled city lawyers can draft such a question, whether framed as a single question, or a series of related questions. Crudely stated here, something like: Q. Voter, please answer yes or no to only one of the following questions which are concerned with closing the existing pension plan to new employees and substituting a new plan, either: A). A hybrid plan made partly of a defined benefit plan and partly of a defined contribution plan-- () yes, () no; OR B) A defined Contribution plan. -- () yes, () no NOTE: YOU CAN ONLY CHOOSE ONE OF THOSE OPTIONS; if you select both your vote will not be counted.</p> <p>Another approach might be to ask three separate questions. Something like: 1) do you you want to close the present pension plan and substitute a less costly plan? Yes/No 2) if you answered yes to the last question, do you want to substitute: A) a hybrid plan? Yes/ No OR, if you answered "No"to A above B) a defined benefit plan? Yes/ No</p> <p>In any event, however properly done, the voters of Knoxville deserve a real choice. Let's find a way to do so...</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/23/12	Pensions Revisited - The Big Picture	<p>ARTICLE BY KNOXVILLE PRIVATE FINANCIAL ADVISOR DAVID MOON, 7/22/12 NEWS SENTINEL: Read David's article, http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2012/jul/22/david-moon-pension-health-costs-can-lead-to-ruin/?print=1</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/19/12	GREENWAYS -- WILLIAMS CREEK GREENWAY, A NATURAL TRAIL?	<p>Discussion today about the future Williams Creek trail along the banks of the east Knoxville creek, indicates that the Clean Water Network (one of the trail's land grant sponsors) hopes that a natural Forest Service type (I.e., unpaved) trail-- whether made of earth or chert fill-- can be built. This would be less disturbing to the forested banks and the receiving stream.</p> <p>I hope Knoxville can find a way to do that at Williams's Creek and in other locations around the city. Volunteers can help build such natural trails making the out-of-pocket cost significantly less than paved trails -- and the city can multiply the number of trail miles built each year. There is much to commend this.</p> <p>Some say this approach could raise ADA concerns. I wonder... no one is benefitted by building less miles of trails, and surely accommodating features can be incorporated into the design of natural trails Ultimately, appropriate segments could be paved as soon as grant or appropriated funds can be obtained, creating eleven better access.</p> <p>Working together, we need to find a way...</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/19/12	Pensions Revisited - The Big Picture	<p>MY ERROR!</p> <p>SMALL GAIN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011/2011: I misread the report-- there are two figures: one for realized gain and one for unrealized gain. Our performance for the year is the therefore the NET. Thus, there was a net gain of \$2.68M for the year in the market place (at least before the the \$2.7 M in fees paid). So theoretically , we had roughly a 0.6% gain forr the year.</p> <p>I had best leave the math to the accountants...</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/19/12	Pensions Revisited - The Big Picture	<p>FISCAL YEAR 2011/2012 RESULTS: Improving but still negative</p> <p>The June 2012 pension system report is in. June was a better month than May, and the year's loss in the marketplace has been reduced to \$24.66 million (down from roughly \$36M) reported earlier. Of course, a negative earnings year does not grow the pie, but rather decreases the assets available to meet pension liabilities.</p> <p>ASSETS/CONTRIBUTIONS: To help ameliorate that loss, the plan uses 10-year smoothing of assets and liabilities (roughly: a way to average out the year to year fluctuations) and is supplemented by employer and employee contributions. The City contributed \$21.8 M to the pot, the employees contributed \$3.8 M during the 2011/2012 fiscal year funding. Total assets now total \$453M. (These numbers will be audited and adjusted as needed by the time the fiscal year report is finalized in December)..</p> <p>CALPERS--THE NATION'S LARGEST PENSION FUND: California's pension system ended the year with a 1% gain. Their target was 7.5%. It was a bad year in the market for most plans. Like our own 7 3/8s assumed growth rate, Calpers assumed 7.5% growth rate is unrealistic under present circumstances. To help ease the pain (or mask the perception?), Calpers decided to talk about its twenty year average earnings rate (going back to the 1990's which were more generous earning years) to help boost their average record. Clever but hardly pro-transparency.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
68	George Wallace	7/18/12	514 Forest Hills Blvd	<p>As you may remember, a couple months back the COK purchased a house located at 514 Forest Hills Blvd 37919 for \$130,000. The property is in terrible condition but very attractive and in a great area. Kathy Ellis with COK Community Development is coordinating marketing efforts to sell the house. The house has a lot of appeal but needs significant work. Many people have looked at and several are giving serious consideration to purchase it.</p> <p>We need to sell this house but we also need to find the right buyer. A buyer who will renovate the house in a timely fashion, someone who has experience remodeling older houses and can afford the anticipated cost overruns. Finding the right buyer match is critical for us to be able to call this a successful project. We don't have to look any further than South High School for an example of the right price but poor buyer match. The price is important but not as important as matching the buyer to the project.</p> <p>Get here and take a look. Get out of your car and walk around the house. And if you're really into it, call Kathy Ellis at 945-9979 for a personal guided tour.</p>
68	George Wallace	7/18/12	Parking App	<p>I saw an online presentation today give by Brian Kaminski from Streetline, Inc. Very interesting company that offers electronic management of parking spaces, parking meters and parking availability for cities all across the country. You can download a free app to either a Droid or iPhone. Search for "Parker" in the App Store. The app will show each of the downtown garages, parking info, available spaces, etc. Very cool. Check it out.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/16/12	AUTOMATIC PAY RAISES -- A \$2M Luxury We Cannot Afford	<p>As George reminds us: "cash is king." Without it your business (whether public or private) is at risk of failure.</p> <p>The city's growing unfunded pension liability means we are headed for a long-term cash crunch in the coming years. it's time to pare back expenses...and make conscious decisions about spending scarce dollars.</p> <p>Let's start by repealing Ordinance Section 2-454 which provides for an automatic 2 1/2% annual pay increase for city employees. It costs the city roughly \$2M each year in direct costs and considerably more downstream/ indirect costs, as the automatic bump increases the "base wage" upon which annual fringe benefits (easily 35% of wages) and future pension benefits are calculated. That approach is unheard of in private industry -- there is no automatic anything. Carefully and consciously consider all expenditures.</p> <p>EYES WIDE OPEN. If an increase is needed, then affirmatively evaluate it, including consideration of inflation, other costs, and available funds to pay for it. If its warranted and you can afford it, then make the increase. The city needs to make conscious, transparent decisions when it spends scarce taxpayer dollars, not set the plane on auto-pilot and ignore the consequences.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/15/12	Courtyard Development -- under review by MPC	<p>PUBLIC COMMENTS:</p> <p>Some folks are excited by the prospect of infill housing surrounding a charming interior courtyard. Others worry that this may result in builders getting away with building on the cheap--in essence, houses crowded around a skimpy common area "not worth a darn for anyone." R-1 is intended for single family housing mostly on traditional individual lots. The inner city can use help though with quality infill housing.</p> <p>Obviously, the Devil is in the details. We need to be safeguards are built into the process, so the MPC or Council can weed out the token attempts by plans review and appropriate conditions. The warning is well taken, though, there are always people trying to cut corners to make an extra buck.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/15/12	KNOXVILLE APP -- in the making?	<p>I told some of you about my recent trip to Bardstown, Ky, a city of less than 20,000, with a tourist business premised in large part by proximity to Kentucky's famed Bourbon Distilleries. It has a small quaint downtown, a 200 year old post road style tavern that serves meals, and a farm based country-side that grows the corn, hops and other ingredients that go into bourbon. In addition to a few shops, it had is share of restaurants and hotels due to proximity to the interstate. As to events, a jazz festival was happening that weekend.</p> <p>Small town, but it has it's own downloadable mobile app--a handy index-like tool, pointing the way to local food, lodging, tour sites, local happenings, etc. These topic lists then expand (with a screen touch or swipe) into specific listings within the categories, and ultimately into location-specific information (maps, menus, and links other the participant's own web page). What a great tool for a traveler. In moments, you can download and have a tour guide for you day trip or short stay.</p> <p>Even though I'm not a tech guy, I was enthused and knew Knoxville needed its own App !! I enlisted Angela Starke of the administration, and later the tourist folks at KTSC to look into this. (I had visited with the DMO or tourist guru while downtown in Bardstown and learned they had a tech company develop their app for \$1200, or maybe \$1200 each for an apple app and a google app). Either way, that's short money to have such a handy tool for locals, as well as tourists, to use.</p> <p>Think of it: you might readily convince an interstate traveler to pull off the road and stop to savor some of the wonders Knoxville has to offer (downtown, old city, tHe arboretum, the zoo, the civil war trails, the museum, restaurants, etc.). Ideally, they will stay over and enjoy themselves, leaving their cash and tax dollars behind to grow local jobs and help further cultivate the features of our city.</p> <p>Let there be APP !!</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/12/12	Pensions Revisited - The Big Picture	<p>Cities Are Failing Right and left!</p> <p>In recent weeks, 4 cities in California have filed for Chapter 9 bankruptcy protection, because of shrinking tax receipts and rising pension and benefit costs. Some of this is attributable to excessive foreclosures on "underwater" homes and a stagnant economy, but some of this is due to over generous and unsustainable pension costs. Cash flow and services are under stress.</p> <p>For example,</p> <p>San Bernadino, Cal (pop. 210,000) filed on July 11th, citing a \$45 million dollar added cost from unfunded benefits.</p> <p>Stockton, Cal and Mammoth Lakes, Cal fell in the past few weeks. Stockton first had cutback some 25% of its police and fire workforce to stem the tide of rising costs.</p> <p>Vallejo, Cal and Pritchard Alabama went under in prior years. Pritchard had ignored its problems and now has retires w/o paychecks.</p> <p>Scranton, Pa was also a recent casualty to out-of-control expenses. Recently they cut everyone's wages down to \$7.25 per hour (the min wage) because they are down to virtually no cash balance.</p> <p>Harrisburg, Pa has been struggling as well, but has not yet filed for chapter 9 protection.</p> <p>DO YOU SEE A PATTERN HERE? These problems cannot be ignored. They fester and become toxic, and before you know it you are amputating municipal limbs!</p> <p>So, again, I am glad we have begun to tackle these issues here in Knoxville. We must remain vigilant and tackle the big enchilada coming down the pike (not just the pension for new hires). We must both grow the pie (tax base), and trim the excess.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/10/12	Courtyard Development -- under review by MPC	Website posting of an early Courtyard success, Third Street Cottages in Langley, Washington: http://www.rosschapin.com/Projects/PocketNeighborhoods/ThirdStreetCottages/ThirdStreet.html
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/10/12	Pensions Revisited - The Big Picture	<p>Transparent reporting?</p> <p>The July 10th Wall Street Journal has an editorial styled "Pension Accounting for Dummies" in which it makes clear that the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) has again failed to adopt pension accounting guidelines that force local governments to calculate pension liabilities using "risk free" rates, pegged to conservative investments like high-grade municipal bonds or long-term Treasuries -- just like the private sector has been required to do since the 1980s (under the Federal Accounting Standards Board or FASB).</p> <p>The thinking for using the lower-yielding but more secure rates is that pensioners are effectively treated like secure creditors, that get paid even in difficult times or bankruptcy. If pension payouts are going to be treated as riskless (in terms of payment), then the resulting liabilities should be discounted at similar risk-free market rates. Call it like it is.</p> <p>The article compares this to private sector accounting (FASB) and observes: "Governments have resisted climbing down from Fantasyland because using lower discount rates would explode their liabilities. When the Financial Accounting Standards Board introduced its risk-free guidelines, many companies shifted workers to 401(k)s because they didn't want to report larger liabilities. Such defined-contribution plans are by definition 100% pre-funded."</p> <p>Let's be sure our accounting and reporting is fully transparent. We owe the taxpayers honest disclosures, not sugar-coated fantasy. Eventually, we will have to pay the piper...</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/9/12	Courtyard Development -- under review by MPC	<p>I should have included the official definition (in Art. II of the draft):</p> <p>"2. Courtyard development means a residential development of four to ten dwelling units arranged on small lots on no less than two sides of a common open area with frontage onto a street of sufficient width to allow direct pedestrian access to the street. Vehicular access is via an abutting alley or private drive."</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/9/12	Courtyard Development -- under review by MPC	<p>Courtyard Development will be an integral part of the inner city proposed "Heart of Knoxville" zoning, now under internal review at MPC. I have heard from Joe Holquist that it might also be useful if added as a possible "use on review" option in other/existing residential zones. I suspect that MPC can do that once the criteria are finalized.</p> <p>Meantime, if you are curious, here is a peek at the current draft of the courtyard housing criteria under consideration at MPC as part of the larger HK zone:</p> <p>G.R-1HK standards for courtyard developmnt</p> <p>These standards shall apply to applications for use-on-review of proposed courtyard development within the R-1 HK zone district. The intent of these standards is to provide opportunities for individual ownership of small residential lots oriented onto a courtyard or common open area. Lots in courtyard developments shall be arranged subject to the following:</p> <p>1. Applicability. Courtyard developments of detached and attached houses are permitted in all R-1HK zoning district areas and have access from an alley or private drive.</p> <p>2.Ownership. The lot(s) for houses and courtyard or common open area may be established by one of several methods:</p> <p>a.Separate lots for each house with permanent easement(s) to create the courtyard or common open area;</p> <p>b.Condominium ownership through which the courtyard or common open area is established relative to the surrounding houses; or</p> <p>c.Other methods that are approved through the use-on-review process that realize the intent of mutual ownership of the courtyard or common open area.</p> <p>3. Density. Courtyard developments shall not exceed a density of twelve (12) dwelling units per acre. Each individual courtyard development shall contain no less than four (4) or more than ten (10) dwelling units on lots around a courtyard or common open area.</p> <p>4. Orientation of houses. Houses shall be oriented to, and have a main entry onto, a courtyard or common open area. However, houses on lots abutting a street shall front the street; that is, the rear of the house shall not face the street. Houses fronting the street shall have a secondary entrance onto the courtyard or common open area.</p> <p>[NOTE: photos/sketches did not copy to this forum]</p> <p>Courtyard House Development: Bird's Eye View Courtyard House Development: Courtyard View Courtyard House Development: Street View</p> <p>5. Lot and Bulk Standards. The following lot and bulk standards shall apply:</p> <p>a.A unified, contiguous courtyard or common open area shall be provided, with total area of no less than two hundred fifty (250) square feet per dwelling unit.</p> <p>b.The courtyard or common open area shall be accessible to all houses in the development and shall have building lots abutting on no less than two (2) sides.</p> <p>c.Minimum lot sizes shall be waived.</p>
74	Mark Campen	7/9/12	Greenways	<p>The mayor needs to appoint a permanent replacement for Will Skelton. Donna Young and Kathleen Gibbi, I think, temporarily held the position, but it's been years since a permanent chairman of the Greenways Commission has been in place. I will be out of the country Aug 3-19, so I'll miss the dinner with Joe and Lori, so someone needs to add that to the discussion. We really need to have the Greenways Commission work closely with the city and county greenways, as well as the Greenways Coalition, which Donna Young now chairs.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/9/12	Focus Ministries -- 826 Broadway -- Disregard for Community	<p>Do good works... I suppose that's how it starts.</p> <p>But Focus Ministries and its Deane Hill church congregation and apparent financial sponsor, Central Baptist of Bearden, are engaged in what amounts to a rogue enterprise: a halfway house/ prison ministry at 826 Broadway for paroled felons in another community's backyard -- in defiance of Knoxville's zoning laws.</p> <p>Oh, I know, they deny it is technically a halfway house because they were careful (after a few tries) to jigger the ingredients a bit. But if it houses paroled felons ordered to be there, it doesn't matter what you call it is a de facto halfway house, and it brings with it its own set of problems (safety, fear, increased crime) for the receiving community. Our zoning laws are designed to keep these things from being concentrated in one area and near protected facilities, like schools and playgrounds.</p> <p>Love thy neighbor as thyself? Why did this church on a shining hill not invite these people into their own back yard? Minister to them in your own home. The north Knoxville area already has 7 halfway houses, in a city whose zoning laws limit the distance between such facilities (at least 1 mile apart), as well as keeping them 300 feet away from parks, schools and daycare centers.</p> <p>No one questions Focus' desire to help felons re-enter society. Yet why in the name of all that is holy place these criminals next to the hard working folks in Old North Knoxville and 4th and Gill? Folks struggling to restore our historic inner city? That presence creates understandable fear for their children's safety, as well as a perception which affects the value of their homes and the integrity of their neighborhoods.</p> <p>Community members first protested to city codes back in November 2011, and a stop order was issued to halt an unpermitted renovation to the planned halfway house. A minor zoning violation complaint was filed in city court -- a court that lacks equitable injunctive powers. A \$50 fine was paid before a re-scheduled hearing, without any admission of guilt. Soon the facility was "camouflaged"into being just a boarding house (it just happened to choose felons as their tenants). Focus closed its Wells Ave halfway house and started shifting folks to 826 Broadway. They assert they eliminated staff supervision, and have no training for re-entry programs-gosh, they are merely renting space to a couple of paroled felons. Just regular landlords...</p> <p>Do unto others....? Neighbors have protested this continued flaunt to the city. Thus far, the administration has been "happy to meet" with the residents (kumbaya)-but has effectively done nothing to cure this unlawful cancer. People live here. It's their home.</p> <p>Citizens have repeatedly asked the City's legal department to intercede and get an injunction. All they got were excuses-we're building a case, yada, yada... Action speaks louder than words. Inaction, unfortunately, currently speaks volumes. The people-the taxpayers-- deserve better! If our laws are not up to the task, then let's enact new ones.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/9/12	Crematorium -- Tell 'em what they want to hear??	<p>The quickest way to get to Knoxville's zoning code online is through the Municode website: http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientid=11098</p> <p>Once there, scroll down to Appendix B, Article V, section 4, which states that an accessory use must be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) customarily incidental to the principal use established on the same lot 2) subordinate to and serve such principal use 3) subordinate in area, extent and purpose to such principal use 4) contribute to the comfort, convenience, or necessity of users of such principal use

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/8/12	Happy 4th of July!!	<p>Everyone needs an editor.</p> <p>While young lawyer Thomas Jefferson was preparing the draft declaration, giving vent to his flowery speech, the crusty older printer, Ben Franklin, grabs his pen and strikes through one of the phrases, making the words much more forceful.</p> <p>Ben changed: Whe hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable... Into: We hold these truths to be self-evident...</p> <p>You gotta love the sage publisher of Poor Richard's Almanac!</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/8/12	Storm- Power Outage	<p>Sunday Morning -- KUB reports they are down to about 100 customers w/o power and hope to reach those remaining folks today. If you are still w/o power , they advise that you call the KUB phone number 525-2911 to be sure they have your house on their radar .</p> <p>Thanks KUB workers for working overtime to clean up behind Mother Nature's fury.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/7/12	Crematorium -- Tell 'em what they want to hear??	<p>Gentry-Griffey Crematorium, located near the Duck Pond in Fountain City, squeaked by city council (5 to 4) and the BZA on the premise that what they were building was an "accessory use" to their existing funeral home--which is located in an O-1 (office) zone and which is near existing residences, day care facilities and a community recreation resource (the lake)--premised on the notion that the cremation services were incidental to services extended to families that use their funeral chapel facility, who wish to use cremation (rather than embalming) for their loved ones sent on at that funeral home.</p> <p>Tom Reynolds, the city codes official, clearly cited that Gentry Griffey intended "accessory use" in his prepared testimony before the BZA. See the 4 criteria In Article V, Section 4 of the Knoxville zoning code (showing an incidental use is site related to the "principal use" lawful at that location).</p> <p>It is being reported by 4th district residents that the facility is now cremating bodies delivered by outside entities: including, Unity Mortuary and Jarnigan Mortuary of Knoxville and Byrd Mortuary of Maynardville. Forget the early morning odors and various pollutants emitted by that facility. If that external marketed use is verified, that would be a direct violation of the zoning ordinance and the publc trust extended to Gentry Griffey in the city's granting them a permit on their representation of accessory use only.</p> <p>Funny how things seem to chang once the permit was granted.</p> <p>Could it be that site manager Eric Botts and his influential financial backers from the Clayton Bank are more interested in turning a buck than their solemn word to the city permitting department? Hopefully, our stalwart legal department will investigate and bring any illegal activity to a halt.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/7/12	Storm- Power Outage	<p>There appears to be about 1000 homes still without power. KUB is trying to get to them as soon as they can. Check their website.</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/7/12	Storm- Power Outage	<p>Visit KUB's website: http://www.KUB.org for more information about the storm and an update on the status of repairs.</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	7/7/12	Storm- Power Outage	<p>Thursday's storm cause signicant interruptions to lower power distribution lines, with some 52,000 KUB customers losing power to their homes and businesses. our own power just returned at 5am this Saturday morning. Several thousand homes are still awaiting power to be restored as I write this at 5:30 am. Hopefully they will reach these folks today. KUB is working hard to get that done. you can reach KUB at 524-2911 if you have specific outage information to report.</p> <p>I hope all are safe, and hopefully, all will be cool as well, as power is restored. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated in this hot weather. It's a good time to check up on your neighbors, especially the elderly, and make sure they are okay.</p> <p>It certainly teaches you how accustomed we are to modern day conveniences when they are not there. Be well</p>
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/5/12	Greenways	<p>Thanks. Did you also ask Carol Evans, as you suggested?</p> <p>Nick D</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/5/12	Pensions Revisited - The Big Picture	<p>We are in the process of getting a pension for new employees to be place on the ballot in November. That's a good thing, but it only addresses workers hired after January 1, 2003. It's only a start.</p> <p>There are currently some 3500 system participants, between the retirees (approx. 2300) and existing employees (approx. 1200) who are vested, or nearly vested in the city's existing pension plans. And those plans are underfunded. They have been recognized to be "unsustainable"as presently configured. The Mayor has vowed to work on this with her staff, and that too is a good thing. At some point, however, the fiscal buck stops here with City Council, which is responsible to approving the annual budget. We need to continue our study of ways to address and resolve these issues.</p> <p>The funding problem is illustrated by the recent May 2012 Pension report. (The 2011/ 2012 final fiscal year report will be available once June's data is compiled - in a few weeks.).</p> <p>The May numbers show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Market Loss for fiscal year to date = approx. \$36M;-Funding Shortfall has widened using the new, but still-artificially low, 7.375% projected earnings rate. The May report estimates the plan is 66.73% funded;-Projected Shortfall: By my amateur calculations, using the actual average 5.6% annual growth rate over the past decade, we are more likely only 50.67% funded!-That computes to about a \$328M shortfall. (The pros can provide more accurate numbers). <p>That is clearly more serious than the actuary has been reporting using the former projected 8% growth rate, or the newer 7.375% rate adopted by the pension board last fall. Indeed, if I recall his statements during the recent workshops, the plan only realized an average 5.6% growth rate over the past ten years (although he mitigates that somehow by adding back the rate of inflation to get the higher number-I admit that calculation makes my feeble eyes begin to cross).</p> <p>However calculated, this situation clearly calls for more study, and more realistic pension analysis and reporting. We need a cooperative dialogue between the city and its employees to find ways to cut existing pension expenses (e.g., by higher wage contribution rates, lower COLA adjustments, or different tiers with lower annual payouts or higher age limits, or other mutually-agreed adjustments). I don't know the answer.</p> <p>It is clear we all benefit from a fiscally sound pension system and a fiscally sound city. While an improving economy may help lessen the burden going forward, by growing the portfolio - if that is possible with Europe's current economic turmoil - further pro-active steps are called for in the interest of fiscal responsibility. I look forward to working with you to solve these issues. No one wants to see diminished services, employee layoffs, or higher taxes on Knoxville's citizens.</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	7/5/12	Golf committee	<p>Good morning all,</p> <p>If you have not already done so please send your names to the Council office for the golf committee.</p> <p>Thanks.</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	7/5/12	Greenways	<p>Nick,</p> <p>Joe and Lori are coming to the August dinner.</p>

POSTER ID	Poster Name	Date	Subject	Text
73	Nick Della Volpe	7/4/12	Happy 4th of July!!	<p>Enjoy the holiday, guys, and be mindful of our reason to celebrate this date:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America</p> <p>When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.</p> <p>We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.</p> <p>He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.</p> <p>He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.</p> <p>He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.</p> <p>He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.</p> <p>He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.</p> <p>He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.</p> <p>He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.</p> <p>He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.</p> <p>He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.</p> <p>He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.</p> <p>He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.</p> <p>He has effected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	7/3/12	Greenways	<p>I agree and probably include Carol Evans as well. we need to coordinate all efforts for maximum benefits amongst our outdoor folks.</p> <p>I will check the calendar for August.</p>

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73	Nick Della Volpe	7/3/12	Greenways	<p>Now that the City has a new Greenway Coordinator, Lori Goerlich, I think it would be helpful to arrange a meeting with her and Joe Walsh to discuss several topics, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- resumption of the monthly Greenway Commission meetings that Will Skelton and Donna Young used to discuss and coordinate greenway plans among interested groups and agencies, -- discussion of Greenway segments under development this year, -- ways we can use citizen volunteers to help get Greenways built more quickly, --consideration of building more primitive forest service type trails--at a much lower cost. <p>Perhaps this could be done at a council dinner or a workshop in the near future.</p> <p>Nick D</p>
62	Nick Pavlis	6/29/12	Thank you for visiting our site!	<p>Today, on behalf of my colleagues on City Council, I am pleased to let Knoxvilleians know that we have started our City Council internet forum. Allowed under State law, this internet forum lets members of City Council exchange ideas on a variety of topics in a public electronic setting which can be viewed by everyone. The internet forum's address is http://ccforum.cityofknoxville.org. Even though State law prohibits posting on the internet forum by anyone other than members of City Council, all of your representatives on Council can easily be contacted by email, telephone or mail. All of our contact information is at http://www.cityofknoxville.org/citycouncil/members/ or you may call 215-2075 as well.</p> <p>If you do not have access to a computer to view the internet forum, one will be made available to you at the City Recorder's office, which may be contacted at 215-2075.</p> <p>Thank you and enjoy the site.</p> <p>Nick Pavlis Vice Mayor</p>
60	Forum Admin	6/26/12	Resolution Establishing Forum	<p>The attached resolution approved May 1, 2012 establishes a publicly viewable forum for the members of Knoxville City Council. Only city council members may post/reply to forum topics.</p> <p>Resolution R-120-2012 attached to post</p>