

## Haywood County “Toeprints”

August 19, 2012

Vol. #3 Issue #5 (Subject: HCC President Candidates, HCC Trustee Appointments, Cronyism)

[www.haywoodtp.net](http://www.haywoodtp.net)

### What’s Happening?

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform Haywood County Taxpayers of what transpires at the bi-monthly County Commission Meetings. This newsletter will be written from the perspective of a casual observer, myself. Any opinions expressed will be mine.

### “College president search had long-lasting implications”

This was an article in the Mountaineer, presumably by Vicki Hyatt, on June 13, 2012. Some excerpts:

“While the process is officially confidential until it’s finished, word is out that **no candidates with Haywood County ties** will be among the finalists — or were even presented by the consultant for serious consideration out of the starting gate. While there was a search committee request to see all the qualified applications, the college governing board wouldn't allow it.”

“At least two top-notch, local candidates who are well-respected for their abilities were among the applicants.”

What a minute! If this process is officially confidential until it’s finished, then why is (presumably) Vicki Hyatt printing that there were two top-notch local candidates that were in the running? Who are these two top-notch candidates that (she) is referring to? We’ll get back to this.

### HCC Board of Trustee Appointments.

There has been a flurry of HCC Board of Trustee resignations and an apparent frantic and concerted effort to re-pack this board. Three of the recent appointments seem to be related directly or indirectly to **Michael Sorrells**, current Haywood County Commissioner. These recent appointments have been made by either the County Commissioners or the Haywood County School Board. The recent appointees are:

- **Mary Ann Enloe** County Commission appointment
- **Bill Barker** School Board appointment
- **Susan Sorrells** School Board appointment.

### County Commission Appointment, June 28, 2012.

There were three commissioners present during this interview, followed by a county commission meeting:

- **Michael Sorrells**
- **Kevin Ensley**
- **Kirk Kirkpatrick**

There were three interviewees:

- William F. Rhodarmer
- L. Dean McMahon
- **Mary Ann Enloe**

I recorded the interviews, much to the displeasure of the commissioners, as I usually do, although I had to terminate the recording of Dean McMahon prematurely. One of the recordings has been posted on [www.haywoodtp.net](http://www.haywoodtp.net), that of **Mary Ann Enloe: Sorrells (& Ensley) appoint Enloe to HCC Board of Trustees. Sorrells votes Enloe over McMahon. Why? Enloe interview with Sorrells, Ensley & Kirkpatrick (.mp3), 6/28/2012. 7/25/2012...**

During these interviews, interviewees started to get questions about how they would consider or rate “local talent” for the position of HCC president. I thought commissioners started to cross the line when asking Dean McMahon questions about the process and candidates that I thought was supposed to be confidential information, which is when I switched off my recorder during that interview. Did commissioners know who these “two top-notch, local candidates who are well-respected for their abilities were among the applicants?”

With this background, it was no surprise that **Mary Ann Enloe** was the pick. The vote was **Sorrells** and **Ensley** for **Mary Ann Enloe**, and **Kirkpatrick** for Rhodarmer. As I have been attending HCC Board of Trustee meetings for some time now, McMahon was, to me, the most qualified, and should have remained on the board. Yet **Sorrells** and **Ensley** kicked him off and installed **Mary Ann Enloe**.

### Haywood County School Board Appointment.

This board has been under the radar. An article in the Mountaineer on May 9, 2012, “**Board of Education Seeks Individuals to Appoint to HCC Board**” prompted me to consider applying for one of these two open positions. There were four (4) applicants to be interviewed at the June 11, 2012 school board meeting:

- Richard Coltman
- Bill Yarborough
- Monroe Miller
- Bill Barker

After sitting through and listening to the other three candidates, I felt that two of the candidates were best worthy of consideration for the job, so at the end of the interview, I withdrew my application for board member. There were two good candidates, and I didn't want to mathematically reduce their chance for appointment or stand in their way. At least one of the two would then be appointed. The two I felt that were best for the job were Richard Coltman and Bill Yarborough.

The board appointed Bill Yarborough and Bill Barker. What?

As it turned out, Bill Yarborough must have submitted an application for this position to the governor, as he was also appointed by **Purdue**. Yarborough evidently had a choice of who he wanted to be appointed by, and he chose the governor, which left another vacancy for the school board to fill.

**School Board HCC Appointment, August 13, 2012.**

The school board met again on August 13, 2012 and had an interview with two applicants for HCC Trustee:

- Richard Coltman
- **Susan Sorrells**

I requested, and received a video recording of this interview, and an opinion expressed by lawyer Pat Smathers. Pat Smathers is the lawyer for the Haywood County School Board, **and** the Haywood Community College Board of Trustees. I converted the DVD file to one that could be posted on [www.haywoodtp.net](http://www.haywoodtp.net) : [Video! Haywood County School Board interview - Susan Sorrells \(wife of County Commissioner and previous school board member Michael Sorrells\) and Richard Coltman, Opinion afterwards by lawyer Pat Smathers. Who would you have picked for new HCC Trustee? 8/13/2012. 8/17/2012...](#)

Yes, that is correct. **Susan Sorrells** is the wife of **Michael Sorrells**, Haywood County Commissioner. **Michael Sorrells** was also a prior member of the Haywood County School Board.

Who are these school board members?

- Chuck Francis           Term runs through 11/30/2012
- Jimmy Rogers           Term runs through 11/30/2014
- Ann Barrett            Term runs through 11/30/2012
- Larry Harbin            Term runs through 11/30/2012
- Steve Kirkpatrick      Term runs through 11/30/2014
- Bob Morris             Term runs through 11/30/2012
- Walter Leatherwood    Term runs through 11/30/2012
- Larry Henson           Term runs through 11/30/2014
- Jim Francis             Term runs through 11/30/2012

How did these school board members vote? Coltman or **Sorrells**?

- Chuck Francis           Chair, did not vote.
- **Jimmy Rogers**         **Sorrells**
- **Ann Barrett**         **Sorrells**
- **Larry Harbin**         **Sorrells**
- **Steve Kirkpatrick**   **Sorrells**
- Bob Morris             Recuse [HCC chair]
- **Walter Leatherwood** **Sorrells**
- Larry Henson           Coltman
- **Jim Francis**         **Sorrells**

Watch the video. How would you have voted?

**Cronyism.**

According to Wikipedia, the definition of cronyism is:

*Cronyism is partiality to long-standing friends, especially by appointing them to positions of authority, regardless of their qualifications. Hence, cronyism is contrary in practice and principle to meritocracy.*

Many of these school board members are coming up for election in November. If you would like this “good ole boys club” to continue as is, leave them in. Otherwise, vote ‘em out. The “good old boys (and woman)” are:

- **Ann Barrett**
- **Larry Harbin**
- **Walter Leatherwood**
- **Jim Francis**

Now we get back to the original question here. Who are these “two top-notch, local candidates who are well-respected for their abilities (that) were among the applicants”, and will they re-appear in this next set of five (5) candidates the HCC board will expand to consider?

**Legend:** If any name is in **bold**, it can't be a good thing.

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