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Paintsville receives most recent audit



James Bryant, with Wells and Company, PSC, presents to the Paintsville City Council the financial audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017.

By Aaron K. Nelson
 Editor

On Monday, the City of Paintsville received a clean, unmodified audit for its prior fiscal year, ending June 30, 2017, with no compliance issues found.

Auditors with Wells and Company, PSC determined that the city's general fund operated with overall revenue totaling \$6,194,953, and total expenses of \$6,136,759, leading to a net \$58,194 difference. With other city departments and funding sources factored in, including a \$195,000 influx from Paintsville Tourism for the city's Apple Day responsibilities,

Paintsville Herald photo by Aaron K. Nelson

See **AUDIT** Page A2

City discusses 911 operating loss, possible new ordinance

By Aaron K. Nelson
 Editor

The City of Paintsville's most recent audit brought a long-standing issue back into the discussion: the deficit in which the city's 911 fund operates.

The fund receives revenue in the form of a surcharge on phone bills, regardless of whether the customer lives in the City of Paintsville or elsewhere in Johnson County. One 911 dispatch center operates for both the Paintsville Police Department and for the Johnson County Sheriff's Office.

For the past several years, Mayor Bill Mike Runyon said, that revenue has not been enough to sustain the operations of the 911 center, meaning it has operated at a loss. In their most recent audit, the amount owed to the general fund by the 911 fund has risen above \$500,000.

"That's been accumulating. We've talked about this for the last decade," said James Bryant, a CPA with Wells and Company, PSC. "At first, it started out, it was about \$40,000 a year. Then it was up to about \$100,000 a year. I think the past year's about \$70,000, because I think the revenue did increase for 911 about \$30,000 last year."

Bryant said the 911 fund would likely never have the money to account for this loss.

"Maybe, something you as a council, and mayor, may want to sit down and discuss, more than likely the general fund is going to have to forgive that money," Bryant said. "If they do, it needs to be taken out of the fund balance of the general fund."

Councilman Tim Hall said he felt the Johnson County Fiscal Court should contribute a share toward that paying for the annual overrun.

"I think it's past time that we revisit the 911 ordinance," Councilman Tim Hall said. "I don't know what it's going to take. For the taxpaying citizens of Paintsville to be totally paying for all of 911... I'd like to approach the elected officials in Johnson County. I'd like to know the split of citizens from the county to the city. At some point I think

See **LOSS** Page A2

Central Elementary teacher brings King's legacy to life



Paintsville Herald photo by Aaron K. Nelson

This "substandard" hall classroom was given to brown-eyed students as an allegorical demonstration of how unreasonable racial segregation was, and the important work that the Civil Rights Movement accomplished in ending those policies.

By Aaron K. Nelson
 Editor

One teacher at Central Elementary in Paintsville brought history to life in her classroom on Wednesday, with a lesson on segregation and the lasting legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jamie Harless, a fifth grade teacher, divided her students based on eye color, similar to an exercise first developed by Iowa teacher Jane Elliott shortly after the assassination of King.

The segregated brown-eyed students are taken to a "substandard" classroom in the hall just outside, while the blue-eyed students receive better treatment — all to demonstrate how it makes no sense to divide

people based on entirely arbitrary hereditary qualities.

While in Elliott's original exercises, some blue-eyed students seemed to take fondly to the system, Harless said she found her students more compassionate — with one of her blue-eyed students being outspoken in displeasure with the practice.

"She didn't like the fact that (the brown-eyed students) were being mistreated," Harless said.

The exercise comes the week before Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the annual holiday celebrating the birth of the country's foremost Civil Rights Movement leader. This year, the third Monday in January falls on King's actual birthdate, Jan. 15.

Angie's Cast Iron Grill closes

By Waylon Whitson
 Staff Writer

After nearly three years in its location at the Paintsville Golf Course Country Club, Angie's Cast Iron Grill, a restaurant that began with help from Paintsville city government, has closed its doors, effective as of Jan. 1.

According to both Paintsville Mayor Bill Mike Runyon and Angie Gamble Music, the owner of the restaurant, Music's husband had been ill during the time in which she was running the business and deteriorating health led to Music considering whether she would renew the lease at the Country Club Road location or close.

"Originally, I had decided that we were going to close," Music said. "My husband has Alzheimer's and we just thought it would be in his best interest to go ahead and close. Then, we sat down as a family and thought, you know, this is my source of income, I retired from the state ... and opened this up. We decided we would keep it and change our hours to where everybody would have a life and it would allow me to be home more."

Music and Runyon agreed that she had approached him about not renewing the lease, and during the time between making the decision to close and deciding against it, Runyon had already arranged to have a different business begin a lease at the location after the first of the year. According to Runyon, he had considered allowing Music to renew the lease and continue operating there, but didn't want to break the agreement he had made with the prospective new tenant.

Music said that she had called City Hall and left a message for Runyon that she wanted to renew the lease before Runyon had entered into that agreement, but there was a miscommunication and Runyon never received that message, leading to the disagreement and, ultimately, the closing of the restaurant.

Runyon said that this lack of communication is an important issue in the city government and that he wants to take steps to improve the state of communication in the future.

See **CLOSE** Page A2



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