

LOCAL

Light turnout at forums for proposed charter school

By Rebecca Williams Special to the News Sentinel

Parents and community members raised questions Tuesday about a possible new charter school in North Knoxville at four community meetings held at the Emerald Youth Foundation.

They asked questions ranging from whether children would wear uniforms and follow the Common Core State Standards to whether parents would be required to volunteer.

"I hope you know what you're getting into, because it isn't easy," said Anne Loy, a retired public educator and Emerald Youth Foundation volunteer.

The foundation is an urban ministry that works with Knoxville youth through after-school tutoring and leadership programs.

Some parents said competition might be good for nearby public schools. "I think it might make some of the other schools think how they need to change. Not anything against public schools, but maybe focusing on Common Core and test scores, instead of family involvement, is not a good thing," said Kathy Kron-Tullus.

By law, Tennessee charter schools must follow Common Core State Standards. However, they are run by separate boards, so they are freer to lengthen the school day, require uniforms, or take other creative approaches to curriculum.

Charters are still public schools, however. They are free to Knox County students and funded by taxes based on enrollment. Tennessee currently has 69 charter schools but none in Knox County.

percent of its students are minorities and 85 percent are from low-income families, Crooks said.

In 2012, the school system went to a charter school process that requires applicants to first submit a letter of intent, which gives some basic details about the proposed school and evidence of public outreach.

The actual application is due April 1.

Anderson commissioners vote no on proposed jail referendum

Sponsor says he's not too disappointed

By Matt Lakin lakim@knoxnews.com 865-342-6306

Anderson County commissioners voted down a proposed referendum on housing federal inmates in the county jail Tuesday, but the sponsor said he's not completely disappointed.

"Did the motion pass? No," said Commissioner Dusty Irwin, who pushed for the referendum. "Did our intention prevail? Yes. The purpose was to give the people a voice in the process."

The vote didn't resolve the question of whether the county should house federal inmates, which some commissioners have suggested as a way to help

cover the cost of the 36 jailers needed to staff a 212-bed, \$10 million add-on to the jail. Proponents have said the only alternative might be a 15-cent property tax hike.

Irwin said he's not convinced that's the only solution, and others said they hope to find a third way. "There was quite a bit of discussion about commissioners being duly elected to make these types of decisions," Commissioner Tim Isbel said.

Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank, who opposes housing the inmates and favored the referendum, said the commission's vote was worthwhile, if only to promote discussion.

"Even though it failed, I don't think it was a vain effort," Frank said. "I heard several commissioners speak out who had been silent up to now."

Garbage pickup for city residents delayed

News Sentinel staff

If your garbage pickup did not run on a normal schedule, don't be alarmed.

Because of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Monday, trash and recyclables pickup for many city of Knoxville residents has been moved back a day.

"Generally everyone gets moved back a day," said Eric Vreeland, communications manager for the city.

Waste Connections Inc., the city's contractor for trash and recyclables pickup, will resume its normal schedule next week.

recycling normally gets picked up on Wednesday, it will probably be picked up Thursday.

Vreeland encouraged residents to dial the city's 311 phone number if they have any questions about when to expect their pickup.

For a while a part of the city of Knoxville's website incorrectly stated that the garbage routes would run on a normal schedule. According to Vreeland, this error has been fixed.

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