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# Knoxville NEWS SENTINEL

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## EARLY VOTING ENDS TODAY

It's the last day to cast an early voting ballot in the primary election! Head to any early voting site at the designated hours (see **Page 3A** for details), and you can skip the line on Election Day.



Want to learn more about the candidates? Scan the QR code to read the Knox News Voter's Guide with tons of interviews.

### NEYLAND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

## 'Will transform not just gameday but 365 days'



The G10 garage – familiar to many going to events at Neyland Stadium, Food City Center and the University of Tennessee – will be partially demolished this summer, then rebuilt as part of the development of the new Neyland Entertainment District project. CAITIE MCKEIN/NEWS SENTINEL

### Project to begin this summer with demolition of G10 garage

**Adam Sparks** Knoxville News Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Tennessee athletics director Danny White said the Neyland Entertainment District project will break ground this summer, beginning with the demolition of the G10 garage. • The \$280 million project is pending approval by the UT Board of Trustees and various state commissions that deal with capital projects. The Neyland Entertainment District is on the agenda for the May 4 meeting of the UT Board of Trustees. • But White doesn't anticipate any major obstacles, he said during a Big Orange Caravan stop near Chattanooga on April 28.

#### Inside

Temporary traffic flow changes to go into effect for Combs' concert. **4A**

that will happen on the south end of our stadium.

"I think it will transform not just

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"It'll just be awesome," White said. "We are really excited about the entertainment district – the hotel, condo, restaurant, amenities. It's a private development – about a \$280 million development –

## State set to allow secret hiring

### Police chief searches not included in final bill

**Allie Feinberg**

Knoxville News Sentinel  
 USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Job candidates in Tennessee for all but one of the most powerful positions in local government now will be evaluated in secrecy if they ask for it under a new bill approved by state lawmakers.

The proposal forces local governments to conceal job candidates' identities for top tier jobs if they ask. That includes conducting interviews behind closed doors. The only candidate who will be named is the one who is hired. It's practically assured of becoming law with Gov. Bill Lee's signature after passing both chambers in the General Assembly.

The final version of the bill exempts police chief searches. The identities of finalists for that role and their qualifications must be made public.

In Knoxville, for instance, the bill allows secret hiring down to department heads, which includes the director of public works, law director and chief financial officer. It includes similar positions in Knox County's government and the Knox County Schools superintendent, who is hired by the Knox County Board of Education.

State Sen. Richard Briggs, a former Knox County commissioner, is a co-sponsor of the Senate version of the bill. Briggs said the measure is necessary to ensure cities and counties attract high-quality candidates who might be unwilling to apply if their identities are public.

Briggs told Knox News as the bill was debated the major concern was that "tier 1 candidates" won't apply because they fear they'll face retaliation from their current employer. Briggs said local governments retain the

See **SECRET HIRING**, Page 13A

## Commissioner's vote could upend state election law

### Durrett isn't the first official under fire for 'cross-voting'

**Allie Feinberg**

Knoxville News Sentinel  
 USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

If prosecutors decide to pursue a criminal case against Knox County Commissioner Courtney Durrett for "cross-voting," it would be a first of its

kind case that could provide a clear answer about who is allowed to vote in a political party's primary.

The Knox County Republican Party asked District Attorney Charme Allen to investigate and prosecute Durrett after she posted a video to Facebook explaining why she, an elected Democrat, voted in the GOP primary election. Allen, a Republican, is seeking to have a special

See **VOTE**, Page 14A



Knox County Commissioner Courtney Durrett speaks during a Knox County Commission meeting on Jan. 29. ANGELINA ALCANTAR/NEWS SENTINEL

#### Inside

DA: Someone else should look into allegations against Durrett. **4A**

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