

**ISSUES AND PROGRAMMING CONCERNS
OF THE
WTVC VIEWING AUDIENCE
4th QUARTER
October 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020**

Government Accountability

Crime/Criminal Justice

Education

Health

Race Relations & Civil Rights

WTVC QUARTERLY ISSUES/PROGRAMS LIST

4th Quarter, 2020

There follows a listing of some of the significant issues responded to by WTVC-TV, Chattanooga, Tenn., along with the most significant programming treatment for the period of October 1st, 2020 through December 31st, 2020. The order in which the issues appear does not reflect any priority or significance. The list is by no means exhaustive.

ISSUE: GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

NewsChannel 9 at 6

Broadcast Date: November 23rd, 2020

Length: 2:00

Source: Local

Description: County election offices across Georgia are preparing to tally votes in the presidential election again. This comes after President Trump's campaign requested a recount of the near 5 million votes cast across the state in the Presidential race. Catoosa County will start counting ballots by machine on Monday at 9 a.m. They will continue to count ballots until the process is completed ahead of the Secretary of State's deadline of Wednesday, December 2nd by midnight.

NewsChannel 9 at 5

Broadcast Date: December 15th, 2020

Length: 1:30

Source: National

Description: The CEO of Dominion Voting Systems agreed to testify before the Michigan House and Senate Oversight Committees on Tuesday. The election software company has been at the center of fraud allegations in the 2020 presidential election and was cited by a witness testifying with Rudy Giuliani when he met with lawmakers Dec. 3, 2020.

NewsChannel 9 Midday

Broadcast Date: December 8th, 2020

Length: :30

Source: Local

Description: The conservative, Nashville-based think tank The Beacon Center released its annual "pork report" on Tuesday, and it includes something that [made](#)

[headlines in Chattanooga earlier this year](#). Back in July, the City of Chattanooga [audited transactions with Global Green Lighting \(GGL\)](#), a company the city hired a few years ago to provide street lamps around the city. The [audit found](#) GGL removed thousands of street lights from a warehouse through an agreement with the city attorney, that city leaders say they weren't aware of, and one that the Chattanooga City Council never approved.

NewsChannel 9 at 5

Broadcast Date: October 7th, 2020

Length: :45

Source: Local

Description: Hamilton County looks at more than two thousand acres of land to build an industrial park. Today, commissioners passed a resolution to survey and consider buying land at McDonald Farms. Mayor Jim Copping says there is no purchase price on the property right now. Commissioner Randy Fairbanks says he's received calls from concerned citizens about the proposal. He says soon those residents will be able to weigh in on it.

NewsChannel 9 at 11

Broadcast Date: October 28th, 2020

Length: 1:00

Source: Local

Description: An effort by Hamilton County Sheriff Jim Hammond to secure a \$20,000 raise for himself ahead of his takeover of Silverdale Detention Center has failed. Hammond's request failed for lack of a second vote during Wednesday's Hamilton County Commission meeting. Hammond had argued that the raise was meant to accommodate the additional workload of taking over operations of the jail by the end of 2020. Commissioners had previously voiced opposition to the idea, with Commissioner Katherlyn Geter said that they were already having a shortfall in hiring many of the positions Sheriff Hammond and his department had brought to them.

ISSUE: CRIME/CRIMINAL JUSTICE

NewsChannel 9 at 6

Broadcast Date: October 25th, 2020

Length: 0:45

Source: Local

Description: Juvenile Court [Judge R. Jay Blevins, II](#) was arrested Thursday on a domestic assault charge, according to Mike Taylor, 12th Judicial District Attorney General. Taylor says officers with the South Pittsburg Police Department arrested Blevins at his home, based on allegations that he physically assaulted his wife. According to Taylor, Blevins was released from the Marion County Jail on Friday.

NewsChannel 9 Midday

Broadcast Date: November 25th, 2020

Length: 0:30

Source: Local

Description: The Georgia Bureau of Investigations says an Alabama man is awaiting extradition to Georgia, this after he was accused of murdering a person in our area. According to the GBI, on Sunday, November 22, Rossville Police called them in to help investigate after Satia Siv was shot to death in a business' parking lot early that morning. In a statement, the GBI said Joseph Edward Hunt of Bryant, Alabama was determined to be the suspect, and was arrested at his home on Tuesday by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office and Alabama State Bureau of Investigation.

NewsChannel 9 at 11

Broadcast Date: November 24th, 2020

Length: :30

Source: Local

Description: Grundy County Sheriff Clint Shrum [says](#) a 46-year-old Palmer man faces second degree murder charges. Sheriff Shrum says in a release that Charles Dewayne "Swain" Layne of Palmer was taken into custody recently in connection with the death of 48-year-old Rodney Sanders of Gruetli-Laager. Shrum says Layne turned himself in to authorities without incident.

NewsChannel 9 at 5:30

Broadcast Date:

Length: 2:00

Source: Local

Description: The Cleveland Police Department is charging a Bradley County Sheriff's Deputy with domestic assault. CPD spokeswoman Sgt. Evie West tells us officers arrested Eric Geren on Friday, and was later released on bond. Bradley County Sheriff's Office spokesman Taylor Woodruff tells us that after his arrest, Geren was suspended without pay, and is now internal investigation while Cleveland Police conduct their investigation into the incident that led to his arrest.

NewsChannel 9 Midday**Broadcast Date: November 25th, 2020****Length: 0:30****Source: Local**

Description: An open records request is shedding more light on a deadly crash in Polk County earlier this month. According to Tennessee Highway Patrol investigators, 19-year-old Ricardo Santiago was driving on U.S. Highway 64 around midnight on Nov. 9 when the car went off the right side of the road. The report says Santiago drove through a ditch, struck two culverts, and then went airborne, flipping end over end before coming to a rest on its wheels in a ditch. Santiago now faces vehicular homicide charges.

ISSUE: EDUCATION

NewsChannel 9 at 5:30**Broadcast Date: November 11th, 2020****Length: 2:00****Source: Local**

Description: The Walker County School district has now seen a further surge of positive cases and quarantines, with Friday's [COVID-19](#) report showing there are 957 students quarantined, and 77 active cases among students. The district will be closed due to the surge starting Monday, November 16, with no in-person OR virtual learning. The closure comes right before Thanksgiving break. Superintendent Damon Raines said on Thursday that all schools will reopen on Monday, November 30 and will operate on a hybrid schedule for the remaining three weeks before Christmas break.

NewsChannel 9 at 6**Broadcast Date: December 10th, 2020****Length: 2:00****Source: Local**

Description: Due to the rapid rise of [COVID-19](#) cases in the community and other challenges, Hamilton County Schools officials have decided to switch to a Phase 1 learning plan for the district, closing all schools and moving to remote learning. The transition begins Monday, Dec. 14th and runs through Friday, Dec. 18th. The new phase means students will learn virtually all five days of the week.

NewsChannel 9 at 6**Broadcast Date: December 30th, 2020****Length: 2:00****Source: Local**

Description: The Tennessee Department of Health [announced changes to its vaccination distribution plan on Wednesday](#), pushing up teachers on the priority list. The state said Tennessee teachers are moving up to Phase 1b, just after first responders and healthcare workers. This is tied to the risk of exposure they take to be in the classroom everyday. Their projection is that could start in February of March.

NewsChannel 9 Midday**Broadcast Date: December 29th, 2020****Length:0:30****Source: Local**

Description: Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has called for a special legislative session slated for January to address the state's education system and learning losses stemmed from the coronavirus pandemic. The Tennessee General Assembly is expected to convene on Jan. 19, 2021 to focus on what the governor's office is calling "urgent issues facing Tennessee students and schools in the 2021-22 school year." The state reports preliminary data showing an estimated 50% decrease in proficiency rates in 3rd grade reading and a projected 65% decrease in proficiency in math.

NewsChannel 9 at 11**Broadcast Date: October 7th, 2020****Length:2:00****Source:Local**

Description: Nearly 38 teachers and staff at The Howard School were not in class on Wednesday. This caused staff from the central office to fill in to ensure students were able to learn. One school official says these fill ins and gaps are not new. Hamilton County Schools have been in session for nine weeks and while regular staff absences can take a toll on the classroom, add in absences due to [COVID-19](#) and contact tracing, and you have more spots to fill.

NewsChannel 9 at 5**Broadcast Date: December 11th, 2020****Length: 0:45****Source: Local**

Description: School districts across our area are changing plans ahead of Christmas break, as [COVID-19](#) continues to affect staff, students, and families both in and outside the classroom. Many schools say they plan to go virtual during the final week

before Christmas break. Some others are cancelling the final week before Christmas break.

ISSUE: HEALTH

NewsChannel 9 at 11

Broadcast Date: December 18th, 2020

Length:0:30

Source:Local

Description: Gov. Brian Kemp says the state of Georgia will keep paying for extra nurses to assist hospitals and nursing homes that have struggled to find staff during the coronavirus pandemic. The Republican made the announcement Thursday at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta where Public Health Commissioner Kathleen Toomey received a coronavirus vaccine to show the vaccine is safe and effective. Kemp says Georgia will commit as much as \$70 million to pay staffing agencies that are providing extra nurses through March.

NewsChannel 9 at 6

Broadcast Date: November 30th, 2020

Length: 0:30

Source: Local

Description: COVID-19 cases continue to rise rapidly in Hamilton County. The county Health Department has confirmed 310 new cases of the virus in the past 24 hours. This is the second highest number of cases we have seen in a single day since the start of the pandemic. There more than 2-thousand active right now. Health officials also confirmed two COVID-19 deaths today. That brings the total to 155 since mid-March.

NewsChannel 9 at 5

Broadcast Date: December 30th, 2020

Length: 2:30

Source: Local

Description: While many [healthcare workers and nursing home residents](#) & staff across the country receive the vaccine, some at-home caregivers and their clients have been unsure if they qualify to be vaccinated – specifically here in [Hamilton County](#). But now, we're learning they're eligible, and some say they'll get the vaccine as soon as they can. The owner of [Caring Senior Service of Chattanooga](#) tells us he didn't

know if his workers qualified to get the shot. Ivan Widen didn't receive allocation cards – back when they were required – for his employees.

NewsChannel 9 at 6

Broadcast Date: December 31st, 2020

Length: 2:00

Source: Local

Description: The Hamilton County Health Department has made it clear that adults with disabilities, and the staff that take care of them, are now eligible to get the covid-19 vaccine, [as part of phase 1a1](#). This provides these individuals, and their families, significant hope going into the new year. But for some members of this vulnerable population, there are still a few logistical challenges left to overcome...before they will be able to actually get vaccines in their arms. Chattanooga resident and disability activist, Jean-Marie Lawrence, is one of these individuals. She has muscular dystrophy and a lung condition.

NewsChannel 9 Midday

Broadcast Date: October 31st, 2020

Length: 0:30

Source: Local

Description: Tennessee Governor Bill Lee has signed two new executive orders Tuesday, which remove [COVID-19](#) restrictions on businesses and gathering sizes across most of Tennessee and extend the State of Emergency. Governor Lee's Office released a statement Tuesday, saying "*Gov. Lee today signed [Executive Order No. 63](#) to extend certain, targeted provisions of previous executive orders through October 30, including the authority of local governments to institute mask requirements. Remaining restrictions on businesses and gathering sizes in the 89 counties with a state-run health department have been removed.*"

NewsChannel 9 at 5

Broadcast Date: October 29th, 2020

Length: 2:00

Source: Local

Description: If you are headed to the polls on Election Day, but have [COVID-19](#), its symptoms, or have to quarantine, there's still a place for you to vote in person. Each county in Tennessee will have a designated polling site for those people who are sick. In Hamilton County, the designated location will be at the Hamilton County Election Commission. If you have COVID-19 and you want to show up to the polls, you have to call your county's election commission beforehand to let them know.

ISSUE: RACE RELATIONS

NewsChannel 9 at 6

Broadcast Date: October 8th, 2020

Length:2:00

Source:Local

Description: The [pandemic](#) is changing how the world looks at China. A new study from [Pew Research](#) shows unfavorable views of China are at a record high globally. The study says here in the U.S. negative views of China have reached their highest levels in the more than 12 years that Pew has studied these perceptions. According to the survey, 42 percent of those surveyed here in the U.S. say they have "very unfavorable" views of China. Director of Asian Studies at the University of Tennessee Shellen Wu says public negative rhetoric can be dangerous. She says it's important to distinguish between events taking place on the international stage, and what is happening with the Asian American community at home.

NewsChannel 9 at 11

Broadcast Date: October 5th, 2020

Length: 0:30

Source: National

Description: The American Medical Association now recognizes racism as an "urgent threat" to public health. The professional association represents tens of thousands of doctors. It's now pledging to work on dismantling racist policies and practices in health care by creating a set of best practices to mitigate the impacts of racism as well as support external funding for research on the topic. Marginalized communities in the U-S tend to have shorter lifespans, more chronic illness and less access to care.

Good Morning Chattanooga

Broadcast Date: November 12th, 2020

Length: 0:30

Source: Local

Description: Tennessee's largest county has settled a lawsuit alleging a minority business program led to discrimination against white-owned companies. The Commercial Appeal reported that a settlement approved Monday by the Shelby County Commission gives more than \$330,000 to two groups of contractors in Memphis. Filed in January 2019, the lawsuit asked that the county be prohibited from implementing its program. The ordinance launching the program was passed after a 2016 study showed that about 88% of all prime contracts from the county went to white males, whereas only 5.8% went to businesses owned by African Americans. The lawsuit called that study "fatally flawed."

Good Morning Chattanooga

Broadcast Date: November 25th, 2020

Length: 0:45

Source: Local

Description: A transgender woman is suing the Georgia department of corrections. after she says it failed to protect her from sexual assaults. The lawsuit alleges inmates and prison staff sexually assaulted her more than 14 times at men's prisons in the past year. It alleges eight of those assaults took place at Coastal State Prison in Savannah where she is currently jailed. The Georgia department of corrections says it cannot comment on pending litigation.

NewsChannel 9 at 6

Broadcast Date: December 11th, 2020

Length: 2:00

Source: Local

Description: We have seen the Black Lives Matter movement and the push for racial equality sweep the nation, and hit home right in our backyard. Months after the death of George Floyd took center stage and protests continued, we wanted to find out - where does the fight for racial justice in Chattanooga stand? [Back in June](#), Mayor Berke created an Office of Community Resilience. He told us then that the office's purpose is to help communities minimize their contact with law enforcement, and that they originally had planned to appoint a board with the help of the City Council. But as of today, no one has been appointed to that board.