

Billy J. Stokes

**7320 Wheatfield Place
Knoxville, TN 37919**

billy@knoxmediations.com
(865) 679-0782

July 28, 2025

Hon. Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor
City/County Building, Suite 615
400 Main Street
Knoxville, TN 37902

Re: Richard L. Bean Juvenile Services Center

Dear Mayor Jacobs:

I write to you, the duly-elected CEO of Knox County, Tennessee, in an effort to supplement an incomplete and inaccurate public record of recent events at the Richard L. Bean Juvenile Services Center ("the Center"). As you are aware, I served on the Board of Trustees (Board) charged with oversight of the Center until that Board (established 1919) was dissolved pursuant to the "Emergency Ordinance" you pushed through the Knox County Commission. I have no qualms with the Board being dissolved. John Valliant, Jr., Sherry Mahar, and I are all volunteers, donating time and efforts to the Center. I was appointed to the Board by Judge Irwin, the other two by the Knox County Commission, pursuant to then-existing law.

However, I am disappointed that neither you or Commission sought any input from the Board regarding the recent turn of events. It appears that all actions adverse to Mr. Bean in implementing drastic changes at the Center were based on a single sourced media report that seemed to take on a life of its own. That account is woefully incomplete.

I have discussed these events with Mr. Bean. What follows is a timeline that I pieced together from those conversations and my own observation of events. I will refer to the nurse involved, apparently the only or primary source regarding the existence of a medical emergency at the Center, as "RN." Even though she has sought publicity, I won't use her name here.

On May 22nd, the Thursday before Memorial Day, Mr. Bean consulted with Judge Irwin regarding the RN and the problems that he, as Superintendent, was having due to her actions adversely affecting the operation of the Center, including a negative impact on morale of other employees. He advised Judge Irwin that he intended to offer the RN the opportunity to resign or be discharged. Judge Irwin advised Mr. Bean that he (the Judge) had no problem with that course of action. The RN did not work that Friday. The following Tuesday, the day after the holiday, Mr. Bean gave that RN the opportunity to resign or have her employment terminated for cause. She chose not to

resign. When then advised that she was fired, she advised Mr. Bean that he would be hearing soon from her lawyer, Margaret Held.

I have attached a copy of the Separation Notice (with personal identifying information redacted) [Exhibit 1]. That Notice indicates that the RN was discharged from employment for a number of valid reasons. Those reasons were listed as follows:

Insubordination, trying to get a co-workers nursing license pulled, had a male detainee in the exam room without a male officer present after being told not to go around the males without an officer present, giving 28 files to the Comptrollers inspectors who were here checking on PREA records, had a link set up to communicate with DCS, the Public Defenders office and certain employees without the approval of Superintendent Bean, her supervisor.

Then, on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, the very next day, Mr. Bean was summoned to a meeting in Judge Irwin's chambers. When he arrived at that meeting he was greeted by you, your Chief of Staff, Judge Irwin, Law Director David Buuck, Deputy Law Director Mike Moyers, and a representative of Knox County's Personnel Office. The results of this meeting are troublesome.

With very little discussion, Mr. Moyers presented Mr. Bean with a document and instructed him to sign it. That document reinstated the RN and another affected employee who had resigned in lieu of termination. Mr. Moyers advised Bean that this action was necessary due to a possible whistleblower action. Such legal advice and instruction was given without regard to lawyer/client confidentiality or any regard for Mr. Bean's privacy. I assume Mr. Moyers was acting in his capacity as Mr. Bean's lawyer. Mr. Bean signed the document as instructed.

Apparently, the administrative decision to reinstate the employees turned solely on the possibility of a lawsuit alleging retaliatory discharge as a whistleblower. The reasons listed in the Separation Notice were apparently ignored altogether, although such constitutes valid defenses to possible allegations.

The actions taken at this meeting somehow became public knowledge rather quickly, resulting in a barrage of negative press for Mr. Bean, local and national. Much of that revolved around your public comments, including your assertions that you had lost confidence in Mr. Bean's ability to run the Center, that you were deeply troubled by the RN's claims of poor control over prescription medication at the Center, that the Center was being operated with archaic methods, and that a crisis existed. You very publicly invited the Governor to take over due to the urgency of the situation. You called for an emergency ordinance to be enacted to dissolve the Board of Trustees and install new leadership at the Center. All that has since been accomplished. Likewise, given your comments that you had lost confidence in Mr. Bean, he resigned under pressure, sensing that was the reason for your comments. This is plainly stated in Bean's resignation letter that was provided to you the day it was signed. For your convenience, I have attached a copy for your review [Exhibit 2].

Despite all of the claims of an emergency at the Center because of the way prescription drugs were handled, no changes were made in that process for several weeks, and maybe not even to this day.

You continued advising media that you had called the Governor for emergency aid from the State due to the egregious nature of the problem. The Tennessee Department of Children's Services offered a few public comments, of no real consequence, but no changes in the medication procedures were suggested. Apparently, the Center was likewise checked out by the Knox County Health Department. According to comments those folks made to Mr. Bean, everything was in proper order. If so, for quite some time, perhaps even up to today, no actions were taken to resolve an issue so urgent it triggered a plea for help from the Governor and an emergency ordinance for the Knox County Commission. Admittedly, it made entertaining fodder for the press. As a side note, media reports kept harping on the claim that the affected RN was the only employee legally capable of distributing medication to the confined population at the Center. In reality, an LPN has been on that staff for over 20 years. Likewise, four (4) correctional officers had been trained and certified by the State, authorizing them to administer prescriptions to the affected population. If anyone had bothered to ask Mr. Bean, these facts would have been revealed.

In any event, the Law Department decided that since the affected employees had threatened a lawsuit, they were entitled to 90 days paid vacation. A memo from the Knox County Personnel office to Kay McClain, Assistant Superintendent at the Center, is attached [Exhibit 3]. The woman who recently complained about the Property Assessor was likewise given three months of paid vacation after conferring with the Deputy Law Director. That is 9 total months salary and benefits gifted at the expense of Knox County taxpayers somehow as a result of threatened legal action. I'm curious if there are more we don't yet know about.

Are you aware that a lawyer acting on behalf of Mr. Bean requested that hard drives on the computers of the two affected employees be preserved? I have attached that non-spoilation letter for your review [Exhibit 4]. Since then, the hard drives have been secured by the Law Department. Because the previous Board of Trustees may possibly be named Defendants in future litigation, we appreciate that lawyer's action. There may be quite a bit of incriminating information contained on those drives, detrimental to the potential Plaintiffs. Why would a nurse in a correctional facility need private links to outside agencies, especially the Public Defenders Office? Why would the IT specialist for a correctional facility need to set up unauthorized links for the RN without advising management of the facility? What information was passed to outside agencies, especially the Public Defenders Office? Was any medical information divulged without consent in violation of the HIPAA laws? What other compromises of private information may exist? I won't be surprised to see emails regarding a planned lawsuit against Mr. Bean on the hard drives.

Another curious situation also involves the Law Department. For weeks or months preceding the recent actions, an attorney working for the Department had visits with the RN at the Center or the Juvenile Court. Whenever he logged in as a visitor, the RN met him and escorted him to private meeting places. This may mean nothing, but in view of how swiftly you and the Law Department took drastic actions when Mr. Bean discharged the RN, it certainly is interesting, even if coincidental. If a lawsuit does develop, the Law Department will be charged with defending Mr. Bean and the Board, if named. It's not hard to understand that all of us are likely to be concerned given the actions of the lawyers for Knox County involved in these actions.

I am further concerned that the Law Department might arbitrarily settle potential litigation, without input from Bean or the Board, if named. For example, the County recently agreed to pay a Plaintiff

\$75,000 because the Sheriff's Department took her photograph in a manner that offended her religious/cultural norms. I hope that no money is ever paid to the RN or other employees on my behalf in the instant situation. If I am sued, I anticipate going to trial, with counsel provided by Knox County, but not necessarily the Law Department, representing me. We will cross that bridge if and when we come to it. But it is readily apparent that potential conflicts of interest exist. Likewise, the actions of the Law Department to date look like capitulation to the complaining parties rather than zealous defense.

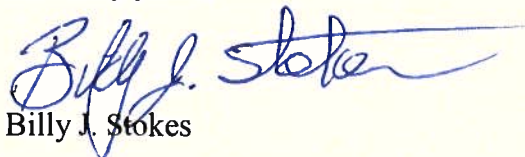
It is worth noting that in the past half-century, not a single juvenile confined at the Center has died or been seriously injured while in custody. Several employees have sustained injuries as a result of being assaulted though. When one considers the number of altercations that occur in such facilities when humans are locked up together, this is a sparkling record indeed. Compare it to the last 50 years at confinement facilities operated by KCSD, KPD, TDOC, DCS, or any other facility where humans are confined against their will. Not all of the juveniles incarcerated at the Center are just misunderstood children. Many are dangerous youths capable of causing real harm by violent means.

Moreover, in over 50 years running the Center, Mr. Bean has been sued only one time. He and a shift supervisor were named as Defendants by a husband and wife employed at the Center. When that case has been mentioned in some media accounts, it has been reported that Bean was represented by his "personal attorney", i.e., me. I did represent Mr. Bean in that litigation, but my services were retained by the Law Director. Gary Prince of O'Neil, Parker & Williamson, was likewise retained to represent the other Defendant. As I recall, Mr. Prince and I were prepared for trial, but the Law Director decided to settle instead. To the best of my memory, I have never had any other lawyer/client relationships with Mr. Bean, with the exception of assisting him and his late wife, Lillian, with personal matters that were non-adversarial.

Again, the sole purpose of this correspondence is to supplement the record, publicly. As Mayor, your papers and correspondence are likely archived. My wish is that this correspondence winds up stored with other documentation of Mr. Bean's last weeks as Superintendent of the Center. If you or the Law Department dispute any facts described herein, I would be more than happy to discuss it further.

While this situation has caused Mr. Bean incredible pain, he did what he thought was right for Knox County, as he always has.

Sincerely yours,



Billy J. Stokes

Enclosures

cc: Dwight Van de Vate
David Buuck
Mike Moyers
Judge Tim Irwin
Lynn Tarpy
County Commission
Legislative Delegation
Richard Bean

Exhibit 1

Separation Notice



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

SEPARATION NOTICE

1. Employee's Name: 2. SSN:
First Middle Initial Last
3. Last Employed: From: 10/13/2023 to 05/27/2025 Occupation: Nurse
(mm/dd/yyyy) (mm/dd/yyyy)
4. Where was work performed? 3321 Division Street Knoxville, TN 37919

5. Reason for Separation: ☐ Lack of Work ☒ Discharge ☐ Quit

If lack of work, indicate if layoff is: ☐ Permanent ☐ Temporary - Recall Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

If temporary, report any vacation pay that will be paid. Week Ending Date Amount \$
(mm/dd/yyyy)

If layoff is indefinite vacation pay should not be reported.

6. Employee received: ☐ Wages in Lieu of Notice ☐ Severance Pay

In the amount of \$ for period from 05/17/2025 to 05/30/2025
(mm/dd/yyyy) (mm/dd/yyyy)

If other than lack of work, explain the circumstances of this separation:

Insubordination, trying to get a co-workers nursing license pulled, had a male detainee in the exam room without a male officer present after being told not to go around the males without an officer present, giving 28 files to the Comptrollers inspectors who were here checking on PREA records, had a link set up to communicate with DCS, the Public Defenders office and certain employees without the approval of Superintendent Bean, her supervisor.

Employer's Name: Knox County Government

Address where additional information may be obtained:

400 Main Street, Suite 360
Knoxville, TN 37902

Employer's Telephone Number:

(865) 215-2321

Employer's Email Address:

human.resources@knoxcounty.org

Employer's Account Number: 06503125

Number shown on State Quarterly Wage Report (LB-0851) and
Premium Report (LB-0456)

I certify that the above worker has been separated from work and the information furnished hereon is true and correct.
This report has been handed to or mailed to the worker.

Signature of Official or Representative of the Employer
who has first-hand knowledge of the separation

Title of Person Signing

Date Completed
and Released to
Employee

Rick J. Bean

Superintendent

05/28/2025
(mm/dd/yyyy)

NOTICE TO EMPLOYER

Within 24 hours of the time of separation, you are required by Rule 0800-09-01-.02 of the Tennessee Employment Security Law to provide the employee with this document, properly executed, giving the reasons for separation. If you subsequently receive a time sensitive request for separation information for the same information please give complete information in your response.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEE

YOU MAY BE INSTRUCTED TO MAIL OR FAX THE SEPARATION NOTICE TO TENNESSEE CLAIMS OPERATIONS IF YOU FILE A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS.

Exhibit 2

Resignation Letter

RICHARD L. BEAN
JUVENILE SERVICE CENTER



May 30, 2025

John P. Valliant, Chairman
First American Plaza, Suite 1650
800 S. Gay Street
Knoxville, TN 37929

Dear Chairman Valliant:

Please accept this correspondence as notice of my resignation as Superintendent of the Richard L. Bean Juvenile Services Center, effective August 1, 2025.

It has been my honor to serve in this role since February 1, 1972. During this time, thousands of youngsters have passed through the doors, ranging from kids dealing with domestic situations not of their own making, such as foster kids, run-aways and victims of domestic/familial issues, all the way to youths charged with felonies ranging from rape to murder. My staff and I, over these many years, have attempted to offer appropriate care for all the young people in our custody in terms of providing safe shelter, food and even educational opportunities to the extent possible under conditions of involuntary incarceration.

I am dismayed and disappointed by the rush to judgment by the Mayor, Judge Irwin, and other county leaders as a result of a personnel decision I recently made. An employee of the Center that I believed was not only underperforming, but adversely affecting the day-to-day management of the Center was fired.

The Center is understaffed. I have been working hard to recruit competent personnel to work in a stressful and sometimes dangerous situation. Over the last several years, the pay and benefits for the Center's employees has grown tremendously. Even so, finding competent employees is a challenge.

My intention is to help get the Center shipshape, fully staffed and running as smoothly as possible before my departure. I am willing to work with any State agency that offers assistance or oversight. However, the Department of Children's Services has been plagued by staffing problems as well and I am not sure how well that will work out. In any event, I welcome any help the State of Tennessee can provide in improving the day-to-day functioning of the Center. I will share access to our daily operations and staffing history fully.

I look forward to working with you and the Board toward a successful transition to new leadership.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Bean

RLB/km

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cc: Billy J. Stokes, Board Member
Sherry Mahar, Board Member
Glenn Jacobs, Mayor
Tim Irwin, Judge
Knox County Commissioners
Knox County Legislative Delegation

Exhibit 3

Memo From Knox County Personnel Office

From: Stephanie Candler <Stephanie.Candler@knoxcounty.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 5, 2025 3:51 PM
To: Kay McClain <Kay.McClain@knoxcounty.org>
Cc: Tiffany Barnard <Tiffany.Barnard@knoxcounty.org>
Subject: ~~Announcement~~ Return

Hi Kay,

~~Stephanie Candler and Kay McClain~~ have retained legal counsel and so the law department has made an agreement with their lawyer to allow them to stay out for 90 days in lieu of returning right now so I wanted to let you know that we will continue to pay admin leave for the two of them through September 3rd. I copied Tiffany in payroll on this as well so she's aware to continue their admin leave through that date. The expected return date at this time is September 4th but that may change depending on how things go between now and then. I will update later if that is the case. Let me know if any questions!

Best,
Stephanie

Stephanie Candler, MBA, SHRM-SCP

Senior Director

Human Resources and Benefits Department

Phone: 865-215-4575

From: Stephanie Candler <Stephanie.Candler@knoxcounty.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 5, 2025 3:51 PM
To: Kay McClain <Kay.McClain@knoxcounty.org>
Cc: Tiffany Barnard <Tiffany.Barnard@knoxcounty.org>
Subject: ~~Thomas and Brandon~~ Return

Hi Kay,

~~Thomas and Brandon~~ have retained legal counsel and so the law department has made an agreement with their lawyer to allow them to stay out for 90 days in lieu of returning right now so I wanted to let you know that we will continue to pay admin leave for the two of them through September 3rd. I copied Tiffany in payroll on this as well so she's aware to continue their admin leave through that date. The expected return date at this time is September 4th but that may change depending on how things go between now and then. I will update later if that is the case. Let me know if any questions!

Best,
Stephanie

Stephanie Candler, MBA, SHRM-SCP

Senior Director

Human Resources and Benefits Department

Phone: 865-215-4575

400 Main Street, Suite 345
Knoxville, TN 37902



KNOX COUNTY
TENNESSEE

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Exhibit 4

Non-Spoliation Letter



TARPY, COX,
FLEISHMAN
&
LEVEILLE
PLLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

1111 N. NORTHSORE DRIVE
LANDMARK CENTER NORTH TOWER
SUITE N-290
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE 37919

T. LYNN TARPY	TELEPHONE
EDWARD A. COX, JR.	(865) 588-1096
LORI F. FLEISHMAN	FACSIMILE
THOMAS M. LEVEILLE	(865) 588-1171
EDWARD J. SHULTZ	WEB
TAYLOR DRINNEN	tcflattorneys.com
KELLI D. HOLMES	

OF COUNSEL
JARED B. KARNES

June 6, 2025

david.buuck@knoxcounty.org

Honorable David L. Buuck
Knox County Law Director
400 Main Avenue, Suite 612
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902-2495

Dear David,

Richard L. Bean has initially engaged me to assist him during the investigation of the events of the last several days that ultimately led to his resignation as Superintendent of the Richard L. Bean Juvenile Services Center (the "Center"). Given comments made by Ms. Clowers on the day her employment was terminated and a letter received from Ms. Clowers dated June 3, 2025, it appears she may pursue legal action against Knox County, Mr. Bean, and perhaps others.

As you are aware, there were several issues that led Mr. Bean to determine Ms. Clowers' employment was no longer beneficial to the Center in addition to the possible "whistleblower" status she has tried to establish. Having her work computer formatted to privately link to outside entities as well as certain employees was a very important factor. Mr. Bean fears that these actions may subject Knox County and himself to other legal actions, such as HIPAA violations. If Ms. Clowers were sharing medical information about detainees without proper authorization, it could be a major problem down the road. Accordingly, preserving this information is vitally important both to Knox County and him.

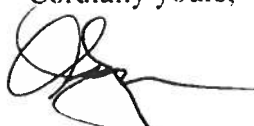
In anticipation of litigation, please accept this letter as a non-spoilation demand relative to the information contained on the computers of the two affected employees. We recommend that your office immediately seize the hard drives of these computers before any information contained on such hard drives can be deleted or manipulated.

I appreciate your attention to this and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.



Honorable David Buuck
June 6, 2025
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Cordially yours,



Lynn Tarpy

Cc: Richard L. Bean
Sherry L. Mahar smahar1450@aol.com
Billy J. Stokes billy@knoxmediations.com
John P. Valliant, Jr. jvalliantjr@gmail.com