



NEWS RELEASE

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Council approves transfer of historic Bradley Academy to City Parks & Rec

1917 Schoolhouse Building listed on the National Register of Historic Places

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — The City of Murfreesboro and the Bradley Academy Historical Association, Inc. have reached a tentative agreement in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to transfer management and operations of Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center back to the City of Murfreesboro. The City Council voted to approve the MOU during its July 30, 2015, council meeting. The formal transfer will become effective August 1, 2015.

“Managing and operating Bradley Academy Museum and its historic value is in keeping with our long-term preservation and programming mission,” said City Parks and Recreation Department Director Lanny Goodwin. “We are excited to work with the Bradley Academy Association and its Board of Directors to help maintain and manage this rich cultural resource.”

Under the agreement, the Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department will manage, operate, and program the museum facility. The Bradley Board will serve as an advisory/friends group, raising funds and providing volunteers for special programs and events. The City of Murfreesboro FY 2016 annual budget allocated approximately \$145,000 to manage and operate the facility.

Since 1996, the Bradley Academy Historical Association has leased the facility under an agreement with the City of Murfreesboro. The lease agreement was designed for twenty years but the Bradley Academy Board has found it necessary to transfer management and operations of the facility back to the City. The Council approved renovations to Bradley Academy Museum that included a new roof, front door, window repairs and electric items totaling more than \$117,000. BB & T Contractors of Murfreesboro secured the bid for \$112,500. A \$5,000 change order was added after lead paint was discovered.

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The non-profit Bradley Academy Historical Association, Inc. has worked to restore the landmark to preserve the history of its contribution to the community. Bradley Academy, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was founded in the early nineteenth-century as a school for white males. Among the earliest students was James Knox Polk, the eleventh president of the United States. From 1884 until the 1960s, it was an elementary and secondary school for African-Americans in Rutherford County who struggled to obtain a formal education in the post-Civil War period. The 1917 building is an example of standardized, early-twentieth-century Schoolhouse architecture. In 2017, the structure will be 100 years old.

“The Board of Directors of the Bradley Academy Historical Association, Inc. and the City of Murfreesboro are in agreement that Bradley Academy should be preserved as a historical site,” said Assistant City Manager Jim Crumley. “Bradley Academy is an architectural and cultural resource that should be maintained as a Rutherford County tourist destination with programming that promotes African American history.”

Bradley Academy is located at 415 South Academy Street in Murfreesboro. An hour-long documentary on the Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center produced by CityTV can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/aacz25UhG3I>.

The City, through the Parks and Recreation Department, will assume responsibility and costs of operation, maintenance, management and scheduling use of the facility. The Bradley Academy Association will help promote Bradley Academy with fundraising efforts, special programming, exhibits and other needs.

For City News online, visit www.Murfreesborotn.gov.

Photos attached:

1. *View of Bradley Academy exterior.jpg*
2. *View of Bradley Academy history.jpg*
3. *3rd grade class Bradley Academy, 1941.jpg*

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