

# JASPER TAYLOR HONORED WITH CROCKETT BOARD ROOM MEETING DEDICATION



**Above:** Crockett County Mayor Gary Reasons congratulates Jasper Taylor on the Board Meeting Room dedication and also declared Tuesday -- which was Taylor's birthday as well -- Jasper Taylor Day in Crockett County, with a proclamation saluting his service to the county and the school district. Board member Kyle Utley (center) looks on as Reasons and Taylor shake hands. (Photo by Ron Barry)

## By Ron Barry

Jasper Taylor knows the pressure is on him now to be on his best behavior.

"Yes, they surprised me, for sure," Taylor said upon watching the Crockett County Board of Education unveil its new Board meeting room Tuesday evening -- with his name on it.

"People don't usually name things after somebody who's still alive," the Bells attorney said. "They wait until they're dead so they don't have any time left to embarrass themselves."

No one is expecting Taylor -- who is still the current Board chairman, but wasn't aware the other members were about to pull off Tuesday's surprise -- to embarrass himself despite the name dedication while he most definitely still has a vibrant pulse. The stories they told at the Open House for the new Board of Education building spoke volumes of the respect they have for a man who has been active in the lives of local children and students for decades.

And on his birthday, no less.

Crockett County Director of Schools P. A. Pratt gathered those in attendance in the new Board room and turned the festivities over to Board member John Cole.

"For over 36 years, Jasper Taylor has served as a Board member of the Crockett County Board of Education and as chairman for more than 25 years of that tenure," Cole said. "On behalf of my fellow Board members, Director Pratt, Assistant Director (Jared) Foust, administration, staff, and most importantly our children, I have the personal honor of announcing and dedicating our new Board of Education Office for S. Jasper Taylor IV."

Cole continued the tribute with a note of personal gratitude to Taylor, who serves on many local boards and has been tireless in his support of students and Crockett athletics.

"It's truly hard to put into words the amount of respect that I have for Jasper," Cole said. "I have had the pleasure of serving alongside Jasper on our school board for over 18 years, but also had the privilege of serving together at church, Chamber of Commerce board, E911 board, and others.

"As a new incoming Board member in 2006, it was Jasper who I looked to on how to be an effective and successful school board member. I have learned way more from Jasper than any of the day-long conferences and seminars I have attended. Jasper, I have learned so much from you, not only about the school business, but how to be a true servant to our community and county. Many may not admit it, but I will: I am better at what I do and how I do it, thanks to you."

Pratt also shared comments from Utrust Administrator Dr. Dan Tollett: "Crockett County is highly commended for naming its new Board of Education building in honor of Jasper Taylor, a man whose service and vision have shaped education in Crockett County and beyond. Naming this building in his honor is not just a tribute; it's a testament to a legacy of leadership, commitment, and advocacy for students, teachers, and staff.

"As Chairman of the Crockett County Board of Education, he's guided the Board through countless challenges with dedication and integrity, always with an eye on creating a better tomorrow for children. His impact stretches beyond his community, as he's served West Tennessee with distinction as a trustee for Utrust, championing initiatives that make schools better places to learn and work."

Utrust is an organization that began in 1980 as the Tennessee School Boards Insurance Trust. Its mission was to assist local school boards with employee benefits. The name was changed to Utrust and employee recognition, appreciation, and development was added to the mission. It is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees elected by member school boards. Historically, its primary focus has been the administration of unemployment compensation for local school boards.

Taylor is currently the city attorney for Bells and county attorney for Crockett County. He is a trustee, deacon, and Sunday School Director for Alamo First Baptist Church and serves as director of ASPELL Manor, Boy Scouts, Carl Perkins Center, and the Crockett County Chamber of Commerce, and as a member of the county ethics committee, County Industrial Board, County Technology Committee, Constitution and Bylaws Committee of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, County Park and Recreation Committee, and the Lions Club.

Pratt and his administrative staff opened the brand new building to the public Tuesday. Located on the southeastern corner of the high school campus, it houses the offices of the administrative staff of the school district, the Board meeting room, an additional conference room, an office staff work room, a tech work room, a vault, and three storage rooms.

A central phone number -- 731-696-2604 -- connects callers with Board secretary Gina McCoy in Office #112. She can reroute calls to any other staff members in the building.

The complete list of offices and personnel housed in the new building:

#112 – Gina McCoy, Secretary

#113 – Kayla Kelley, Assistant Bookkeeper

#114 – Sherry Ward, Payroll Clerk / Benefits Coordinator

#115 – Laura Bell, Business Manager / Finance Director

#116 – Jared Foust, Assistant Director of Schools

#118 – P. A. Pratt, Director of Schools

#119 – Cody Dew, Special Education Supervisor

#120 – Misty Bailey, Coordinated School Health Director

#122 – Judy Hoover, Director of Academics & Accountability

#123 – Dawn Byrum, Grades 6-12 Instructional Supervisor

#124 – Bret Piatt, Transportation / Attendance / Student Data

#125 – Allison Smith, Federal Projects / Pre-K Supervisor

#126 – Whitney Thornton, School Nutrition Supervisor

#127 – Cindy Nolen, Grades K-5 Supervisor

#128 – Keith Eason, IT Director & Clint Brown, IT Coordinator

#137 – Kristina Kail, Special Education Teaching Consultant

#138 – Ron Barry, Media Specialist

#139 – Duke Kail, Athletic Director / Groundskeeping



**Left:** : Crockett County Director of Schools P. A. Pratt welcomed visitors and special guests to the Open House for the new Board of Education building ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** ... and then turned things over to Board member John Cole for the surprise announcement that the Board Meeting Room would be named for chairman Jasper Taylor. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** The Open House debuted the new Crockett County Board of Education building, located on the southeastern corner of the high school campus. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Right:** : This was the moment Jasper Taylor learned that the Board Meeting Room was being named in his honor. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Left :** Assistant Director of Schools Jared Foust unveils the lettering on the Board Meeting Room wall. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** The Open House crowd listens to tributes to Jasper Taylor read by fellow Board member John Cole. When he finished, there was an enthusiastic round of applause and approval. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Below :** A snack table and cake were available for Open House visitors Tuesday. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Jasper Taylor stands with his other current Board of Education members after the dedication. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Left:** The new building contains an additional conference room ... (Photo by Ron Barry)





**Left:** ... and a work room for the office staff, as well as individual offices for the district administrative personnel. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** The Board Meeting Room is a spacious location with the latest technology available. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Below :** The Jasper Taylor family, following the dedication. (Photo by Ron Barry)

