

**REGION**  
**REOPENING**

Sullivan County Schools announce return plans » **A3**



**SPORTS**

**BIG PICTURE**

Lebanon baseball coach teaches team not to allow diversity to keep them down » **B1**

**WEATHER**

**ISAIAS**

Florida prepares for hurricane » **A10**



**BRISTOL HERALD COURIER**

SATURDAY, August 1, 2020

HeraldCourier.com

148th Year | \$2.00

Southwest Virginia-Northeast Tennessee | The Birthplace of Country Music® | 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service | 2018 Scripps Howard Award for Community Journalism

**City sues BVU over OptiNet proceeds**

Bristol, Virginia claims it's owed \$6.5 million from 2018 sale

BY DAVID MCGEE  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

BRISTOL, Va. — The city of Bristol, Virginia is suing BVU Authority, claiming it is owed \$6.5 million from the 2018 sale of BVU's former OptiNet division.

The civil action was filed Friday

in Bristol Virginia Circuit Court by Washington, D.C.-based attorney Adrien C. Pickard of the Blank Rome firm, on behalf of the city.

This is the latest step in a long-simmering disagreement between leaders of the cash-strapped city and its utilities provider over what, if

anything, the city is owed since BVU was a division of the city for the first nine years the OptiNet telecommunications division was in operation. BVU Authority completed the \$50 million sale on Aug. 2, 2018.

The complaint claims BVU "owes the city millions of dollars in pro-

**TIMELINE**

- Feb. 5, 2016** BVU announces plans to sell its OptiNet division for \$50 million
- Feb. 9, 2016** City Council reapproves BVU transition agreement
- Aug. 2, 2018** BVU closes on transaction
- Oct. 26, 2018** Then-Mayor Mumpower requests audit of transaction
- April 17, 2019** Report shows net loss, meaning city to receive no proceeds
- July 31, 2020** City files lawsuit seeking \$6.5 million

ceeds" from the sale "but has refused to pay a dime." It claims breach of contract, unjust enrichment and formation of contract. It seeks a jury trial, \$6.5 million in compensatory damages plus other relief and costs.

See **OPTINET**, Page A5

**MEGAN BOSWELL CASE**

**'Another matter'**

Sullivan prosecutors to bring another issue on Boswell to grand jury

BY TIM DODSON  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

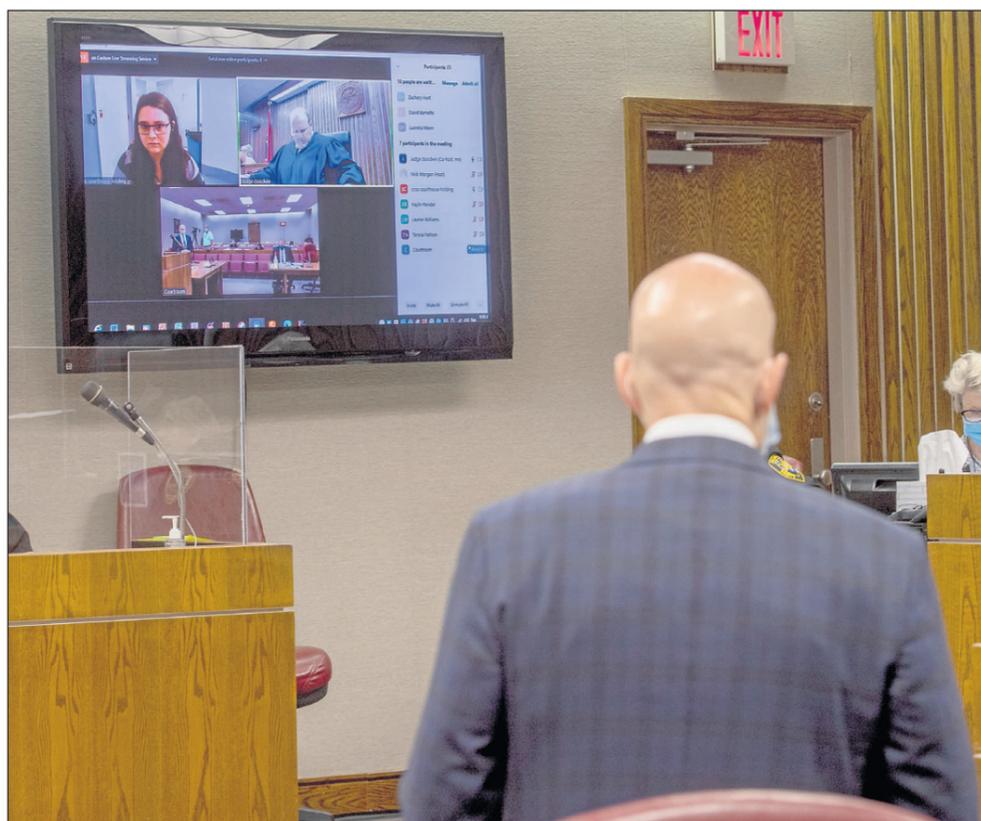
BLOUNTVILLE, Tenn. — Sullivan County prosecutors plan to bring "another matter" involving the mother of Blountville toddler Evelyn Boswell — whose body was found in March — before a grand jury later this month, District Attorney General Barry Staubus said at a Friday court hearing.

Megan Boswell, 19, was indicted by a county grand jury in May on 11 counts of making false reports to authorities as they searched for her missing daughter, whose remains were found on Boswell family property near Blountville.

An extensive search for Evelyn started in mid-February after local authorities received a Department of Children's Services referral stating that said she had not been seen since before Christmas.

No charges have been filed in Evelyn Boswell's death and

See **BOSWELL**, Page A5



PHOTOS BY DAVID CRIGGER/BHC



Sullivan County District Attorney General Barry Staubus (right) speaks during a video hearing in the case of Megan Boswell on Friday morning in Blountville, Tennessee. Boswell's 15-month-old daughter, Evelyn, was reported missing in February and her body was later found on family property in Blountville. Prosecutors plan to bring "another matter" involving Megan Boswell to a grand jury later this month, Staubus said.

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

LOCATION	#CASES	#DEATHS
Worldwide	17,500,000+	678,000+
United States	4,500,000+	153,000+
Virginia	89,888	2,174
Tennessee	105,959	1,060

SOURCES: Johns Hopkins, Virginia and Tennessee Departments of Health, AP

**Fauci remains confident virus vaccine will be ready in 2021**

BY RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR and MATTHEW PERRONE  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Dr. Anthony Fauci said Friday that he remains confident that a coronavirus vaccine will be ready by early next year, telling lawmakers that a quarter-million Americans already have volunteered to take part in clinical trials.

But if the future looks encouraging, public health alarms are still going off in the present. Officials testifying with Fauci at a contentious House hearing

See **FAUCI**, Page A5

**Court overturns Boston Marathon bomber's death sentence**

BY ALANNA DURKIN RICHER  
The Associated Press

A federal appeals court Friday threw out Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's death sentence in the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, saying the judge who oversaw the case did not adequately screen jurors for potential biases.

A three-judge panel of the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ordered a new penalty-phase trial on whether the 27-year-old Tsarnaev should be executed for the attack that killed three people and



Tsarnaev

wounded more than 260 others. "But make no mistake: Dzhokhar will spend his remaining days locked up in prison, with the only matter remaining being whether he will die by execution," Judge O. Rogeriee Thompson wrote in the ruling, more than six months after arguments were heard in the case.

An attorney for Tsarnaev said

they are grateful for the court's "straightforward and fair decision: if the government wishes to put someone to death, it must make its case to a fairly selected jury that is provided all relevant information."

"It is now up to the government to determine whether to put the victims and Boston through a second trial, or to allow closure to this terrible tragedy by permitting a sentence of life without the possibility of release," David Patton said in an email.

A spokesperson for the U.S. At-

torney's office in Boston said they were reviewing the opinion and had no immediate comment. Prosecutors could ask the full appeals court to hear the case or go straight to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The mother of Krystle Campbell, the 29-year-old killed in the attack, expressed outrage at the court's decision.

"I just don't understand it," Patricia Campbell told The Boston Globe. "It's just terrible that he's allowed to live his life. It's unfair."

See **MARATHON**, Page A5

Thank you, **William Schlobohm**, for subscribing to the Bristol Herald Courier. **88/67** Weather » A10



INSIDE: CLASSIFIED B8-10 | COMICS B6 | DEATHS A4 | OPINION A8 | SCOREBOARD B2 | TELEVISION B7

**BART LONG & ASSOCIATES REALTY AND AUCTION, LLC**

1430 Bluff City Hwy. Bristol, TN 37620 (423) 573-5000 TN Lic. #6163

**best of Bristol & Washington County**

906 W. Main St. Abingdon, VA 24210 276-466-4663 VA Firm #2908 00732

www.BartLongAuctions.com

ITAA, NAA, VIRGINIA AUCTIONEERS ASSOCIATION