

Council opposes bill allowing guns in parks

The Dickson City Council passed a resolution opposing a bill that would amend several statutes regarding firearms, including repealing the prohibition on carrying firearms in local parks.

At a March 16, 2026, special session, the Council unanimously approved Resolution #2026-26 opposing House Bill 2064 by Rep. Chris Todd, R.-Madison County, and Senate Bill 2467 by Sen. Paul Bailey, R.-Sparta, currently under consideration in the 114th Tennessee General Assembly.

Among other changes, the bill proposes to remove state law that prohibits carrying a weapon in public parks.

Tennessee Code Annotated § 39-17-1311(a) currently states, “It is an offense for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, with the intent to go armed, any weapon prohibited by § 39-17-1302(a), not used solely for instructional, display or sanctioned ceremonial purposes, in or on the grounds of any public park, playground, civic center or other building facility, area or property owned, used or operated by any municipal, county or state government, or instrumentality thereof, for recreational purposes.”

The legislation currently under consideration proposes to delete that section and replace it with: “It is not an offense for a person authorized to carry a firearm pursuant to § 39-17-1351 or §39-17-1366 or a person who is not prohibited from carrying a firearm to do so in any state or local park, on a greenway or other recreational property, or, to the extent permitted by federal law, within or on property designated by the federal government as a national park, forest, preserve, historic park, military park, trail, or recreation area.”

The same bill allows any person convicted of stalking or misdemeanor domestic violence to possess a firearm after five years, among other changes.

Resolution #2026-26 states, “the Council of the City of Dickson, Tennessee, wishes to maintain the authority to decide whether to allow or prohibit the carrying of firearms or other dangerous weapons in parks and recreational areas where the public, including children of all ages, gather.”

City Administrator David Travis said the city’s Parks and Recreation Advisory Board instituted a ban on firearms in city parks several years ago. “We want to keep it the way it is now,” Travis said.

While the city doesn’t have a “civic center,” Mayor Don L. Weiss Jr. questioned whether the city’s Senior Activity Center would be included as one, therefore allowing firearms under the proposed changes.

Mayor Weiss pointed out that Tennessee’s 2021 change to a “constitutional carry” state means anyone over the age of 18 who is not otherwise prohibited can carry a weapon open or concealed without any training or certification.

The resolution opposing the change regarding firearms in parks was sent to Rep. Mary Littleton, R.-Dickson, Rep. Jody Barrett, R.-Dickson, Sen. Kerry Roberts, R.-Springfield, and the members of the House of Representatives and Senate Judiciary committees.

The bill is scheduled for consideration in the House and Senate Judiciary committees March 23.