

Dear Sir or Madam;

This past week I received several calls and two e-mails from residents who are impacted by the annexation issue that will be on the upcoming ballot by the City of Coal Run. People have called asking the City of Pikeville to help set the facts straight so that residents could make up their own mind on the circumstances. I would like to take this opportunity to help those folks impacted by the annexation to better understand the circumstances and facts.

You may be asking why the City of Pikeville has not gotten involved in this issue before now. The answer is a simple one. We feel the annexation will be defeated in court regardless of the election. The purpose of the suit is to protect the City of Pikeville investment (utilities) and continue the prosperity for the region. You may have read in the press that 23 of your neighbors in the area impacted by the suit (Mossy Bottom, Wells Addition, Mullins Addition, etc) has joined the City of Pikeville against the City of Coal Run, who did not follow the legal guidelines to annex this territory. The issue will be decided in court but the City of Pikeville feels confident with our position.

Residents who contacted the city last week stated that the Mayor of Coal Run has been knocking on the doors of the residents who have "Vote No on Annexation" signs in their yard asking them to change their vote. The concerns of those who called felt that scare tactic is being used to try to change the minds of the people into changing their "NO" vote to a "YES" vote. According to those we spoke with, it's being said that if residents do not vote "YES" to allow their community to be annexed by Coal Run then due to a new law the City of Pikeville will have be able to annex their property regardless of their choice. This is absolutely NOT TRUE.

I would like to take the opportunity to explain certain facts.

1) I have been the City Manger for five years. In that time the City Commission has not annexed the first resident. In June of 2005 the City adopted its first comprehensive plan in years. In that plan it outlined the need for the City of Pikeville to annex certain territories and to grow in order to allow the region to continue to grow. The City has annexed areas without houses for future development. The Mayor and City Commissioner's have stated time and time again that the City has NO intent to annex a community unless that community wants to be part of the City of Pikeville

2) The folks that have contacted us have stated that it has been said that if residents don't agree to vote "YES" to be annexed into Coal Run then the City of Pikeville will automatically be able to annex them without their say-so, a petition or a vote. According to the understanding of those who called, they have been told that due to a new law and or due to the City of Pikeville owning the utilities the community will not have a voice in a annexation decision. It has also been stated since the City of Pikeville owns and operates the utilities that they have the right by law to automatically annex you or your community. Both these examples are absolutely NOT TRUE. Any property or community that the City of Pikeville may attempt to annex now or in the future would be required to follow the same annexation laws that have existed for some time. Any areas that a city would consider to annexed without the consent of the owner MUST follow KRS 81A.420. All property owners or those living on the property affected would be able to sign a petition and force the issue to a vote, just like you are doing now. The community and property owners would have the right to make the decision. We invite you to log onto <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/> to look at the Kentucky Revised Statue (KRS) to validate this statement. You may also contact the Secretary of State's office who oversees annexations. You will find the fact is the decision is yours and not in the hands of government.

I am now asking you the same question that Coal Run has asked. If you end up as part of Coal Run, ask yourself what did you gain or lose. The difference is the City of Pikeville is not trying to annex you and has said repeatedly that it has no plans on taking your community by force, unlike what Coal Run is trying to do.

By being annexed and living in Coal Run ask yourself what changes in your community. You end up with the same volunteer fire department, the same utility company, and the same ambulance service. So what changes? A weak financial position, you lose the county's financial support (for items like blacktopping your roads) you gain 1 police officer, you lock in always having to pay the out-of-city utility rates, and now more taxes. Why should you be bullied into being annexed by Coal Run when you will receive most of the same services today as you have if annexed? If you are paying more, shouldn't you at least receive something in return?

I say this because Coal Run insinuates that it is better to live in Coal Run than Pikeville and therefore they are saying this is why you should vote "Yes" for their annexation. The City of Pikeville is offended by the fact Coal Run is using scare tactics to force you into a decision that you will more than likely later regret by not giving you all the facts. It is these tactics that caused 23 of your friends and neighbors to join the law suit with the City of Pikeville to hold Coal Run accountable to follow the law. I have tried only to illustrate what is truth.

Everyone in the area regardless of the outcome is still our utility customers and our friends and will continue to be whether you stay in the County or end up in the City of Coal Run. We feel as our customers it is our responsibility that you understand our position and the facts. The facts are the City of Pikeville is not annexing your community, Coal Run is and the Kentucky law gives every community the right to choose to say "NO" whether it is the City of Coal Run or the City of Pikeville. The decision is yours.