



## Commission, mayor end opioid litigation dispute

Omer Yusuf | November 20, 2018

The County Commission unanimously approved a resolution that ends multiple lawsuits involving the pending opioid litigation, an issue that divided the legislative and executive branches of government for much of the past year.

The lawsuits resolved Monday were the County Commission's pending litigation against the pharmaceuticals industry over opioid addiction and the administration's suit against then-commission chairwoman Heidi Shafer, who steered the commission to file opioid litigation without then-Mayor Mark Luttrell's approval.

Shafer made an appearance before the County Commission Monday expressing her gratitude over their decision.

"I came today so I could get a sense of personal closure on it, and this has been an answer to fervent prayer for about a year now," Shafer said. "This is exactly how government is supposed to work. I'm very proud of y'all."

Shelby County government will now move forward with one joint opioid lawsuit, supported by the administration and County Commission, in state court. They will be represented by New York-based law firm Napoli Shkolnik PLLC and Memphis attorney Julian Bolton, a former county commissioner.

Harris said improving the relationship between the administration and County Commission remains a top priority.

“We’ve been able to work collaboratively. I hope it holds,” he said.

Turner said county government can now focus on the opioid litigation and not infighting between the branches of government.

“We can turn our eyes to getting this litigation on the right track and going after the bad guys, and more importantly, bringing justice to this county for all those individuals who have been affected by this opioid crisis,” Turner said.

In other business, the County Commission approved moving the start of time of its meetings from 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The change will take place immediately.

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