

Mayor Patty Woodby Featured on Signature Required with Spencer and Carli Patton

Carter County Mayor on regional partnership, recovery after Helene, and leading with resilience

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Signature Required, hosted by Spencer and Carli Patton, released a new interview today with Carter County Mayor Patty Woodby, one of only three female county mayors in the state of

Tennessee. In the conversation,

Woodby shares how regional collaboration, relentless advocacy in Nashville, and deeply personal leadership helped guide Northeast Tennessee through crisis and recovery.

The logo for 'Signature Required', featuring the word 'Signature' in a blue script font and the word 'REQUIRED' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with a blue underline beneath 'REQUIRED'.

“

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Mayor Patty Woodby

Woodby, who has served as mayor of Carter County for five years, underscored her focus on making sure all Tennesseans understand the urgency and value of Northeast Tennessee. “When I came into this role as the mayor of Carter County five years ago, one of the things that was continuously said is nobody realizes that this part of the state exists. Everybody thinks the state stops at

Knoxville,” she said. “And so I really made that a focus personally and professionally to change that.”

Woodby also spoke candidly about being a woman in executive leadership. “The state of Tennessee has 95 counties and there’s only three female county mayors that are currently in that role,” she said. “I was scared, nervous, and I felt like I had to prove myself.” Early on, she said, she made a decision “to make sure that I walked through every door and pushed it open, whether or not it was shut regardless, and made every ask that I could to get it back to Northeast Tennessee and to Carter County.”

That persistence, she said, has yielded results. “At my calculations in my five years of being the

mayor in Carter County, I have brought in around \$120 million directly or indirectly into Carter County.” She added that this reputation has followed her to the Capitol: “Now it’s a running joke... when I show up, it’s time to find some money.”

A major focus of Woodby’s tenure has been addiction recovery and workforce restoration. She described how local leaders and judges worked together to convert a closed state prison into a long-term, in-patient regional recovery program. “We turned an actual prison into an inpatient treatment facility,” she said. The program, she explained, is designed for 12 to 18 months of residential recovery, followed by re-entry to work and community. The effort required eight counties to dedicate opioid settlement funds. She noted, “We had a total of \$10.8 million in our bank account to get this off the ground.”



Mayor Patty Woodby with Spencer Patton and Carli Patton

The mayor also reflected on Hurricane Helene, which caused catastrophic flooding across Carter County and Northeast Tennessee in September 2024. “We received two months of rainfall in two days,” she said. “The speeds of our rivers were at twice the speed of Niagara Falls... destroying everything in its path. Literally removing homes, lives and everything people have worked their entire life for.”

One of the most urgent fights after Helene was saving Hampton High School, which was hit by more than six feet of water. “Very early on, FEMA was saying, you can’t rebuild. You can’t fix it.” Woodby said. With local enrollment starting to drop and the community’s identity at stake, she called Governor Bill Lee directly: “I said, we just do not have the money to fix this school. I’m not going to let them close it down.” She recalled, “I cried. He cried.”

That conversation resulted in a lifeline. She explained that shortly after, the governor announced \$20 million allocated to Hampton High School. That commitment allowed Carter County to begin repairing and reopening the school rather than dispersing students permanently to other campuses. “Sometimes in a rural community, a school or a high school is more than just a school. It’s a piece of the community. It’s an identity.” she said.

Woodby made clear that, for her, the work is both public and personal. “It matters who’s in these roles,” she said. “It matters who is in these roles at the local level... local decisions are important.”

About Mayor Patty Woodby

Patty Woodby is the Mayor of Carter County, Tennessee — one of only three female county mayors in the state. A lifelong resident of Northeast Tennessee, she is the first woman to hold the office in Carter County's history. Since taking office in 2019, she has led major recovery and infrastructure efforts following Hurricane Helene and has championed initiatives in addiction recovery, rural healthcare, education, and regional economic development. Woodby is known for her collaborative leadership among Northeast Tennessee's county mayors and for securing more than \$100 million in investment for her community.

About Spencer and Carli Patton

Spencer Patton is a Tennessee-based entrepreneur who grew his businesses from \$0 to over \$100 million in less than ten years. He and his wife, Carli Patton, co-founded the Patton Foundation and co-host the Signature Required podcast, where they interview Tennessee changemakers — business leaders, policymakers, and educators — who embody the state's entrepreneurial spirit.

About Signature Required

Signature Required spotlights Tennessee trailblazers — entrepreneurs, policymakers, educators, and community leaders — who embody the state's entrepreneurial spirit. Hosted by Spencer and Carli Patton, the show invites listeners to think deeply about leadership, community, and impact. Learn more at www.spencerpatton.com/podcast

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