

Davidson County Election Commission

October 3, 2025 9:00 a.m.

The Davidson County Election Commission (DCEC) met at 9:00 a.m. at the Howard Office Building in the Sonny West Conference Center. Commissioners Butch Burns, Jenean Davis, Betty Lynn Duley, Dan Davis, and Kenny Byrd were present.

Nicki Eke of the Metropolitan Department of Law was also present.

DCEC staff members present included Administrator of Elections (AOE) Jeff Roberts, Elizabeth McPencow, Lisa Pierce, Laurie Grafton, Rick Brown, Alexandria Mitchell, Sandy Troope, and Kelley Harrison.

Chairman Burns convened the meeting.

Public Comments

None

Davidson County Administrator of Elections (AOE) Search

Before the interview proceedings, Commissioner Byrd commented on criteria and attributes of the Administrator of Elections position. He also brought attention to the *Code of Conduct for County Election Commission Members and Administrators of Elections*.(attached)

Motion stated: Commissioner Byrd made a motion that any person the Commission approves will commit to be the type of person that follows the *Code of Conduct for County Election Commissioners and Administrators of Elections* found on page 109 of the Election Law Seminar notebook that State Coordinator Mark Goins distributed on June 23, 2025.

Seconded by: Commissioner Jenean Davis

Discussion ensued.

Outcome of motion: Passed with 3 votes (Aye: Commissioners Burns, Jenean Davis, Byrd. Abstain: Commissioners Dan Davis, Duly)

The Commission proceeded with AOE interviews. Eight (8) candidates were scheduled. Six (6) were interviewed: Billie D. Savage-Short, David Benton, David Hamilton, Jennifer Rasmussen-Sagan, Susan Knopf, and John Richardson. Two (2) candidates dropped out: Laura Nelson, Aspen Collins.

Chairman Burns called for a 15-minute recess once the interviews were completed.

The Commission reconvened at 4:15 p.m. to begin deliberations.

Discussion ensued with each commissioner having an opportunity to share their thoughts about the candidates.

Motion stated: Commissioner Byrd made a motion to hire David Hamilton as Administrator of Elections.

Seconded by: Commissioner Jenean Davis

Discussion ensued.

Outcome of motion: Failed 3-2 by a roll call vote:

Commissioner Byrd –aye

Commissioner Dan Davis - nay

Commissioner Jenean Davis – aye

Commissioner Duley – nay

Chairman Burns – nay

Motion stated: Commissioner Jenean Davis made a motion to hire Jennifer Rasmussen-Sagan as Administrator of Elections.

Seconded by: Commissioner Byrd

Discussion ensued.

Outcome of motion: Failed 3-2 by a roll call vote:

Commissioner Byrd – aye

Commissioner Dan Davis – nay

Commissioner Jenean Davis – aye

Commissioner Duley – nay

Chairman Burns – nay

Chairman Burns called for a dinner recess.

Upon resuming the meeting, Chairman Burns suggested the position be reopened another week with a meeting to follow on October 16 or 17. Any applicant voted on today could be reconsidered at the meeting, as well as any new candidates. October 13 was discussed as a more convenient date, or possibly October 15 or 21.

Motion stated: Chairman Burns made a motion for DCEC staff to contact Metro Human Resources to re-open the Administrator of Elections position online for another week beginning Monday, October 6, 2025, and ending at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, October 10, 2025, at which time staff would share the applications and make their recommendations to Commissioners by October 13 or 14. The Commission will meet at the Call of the Chair, consistent with dates discussed.

Seconded by: Commissioner Jenean Davis

Outcome of motion: Passed 5-0 by a roll call vote:

Commissioner Byrd – aye

Commissioner Dan Davis – aye

Commissioner Jenean Davis – aye

Commissioner Duley – aye

Chairman Burns – aye

Reminder of scheduled meetings:

Monday, October 13, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.

HOB, Sonny West Conference Center

Friday, December 5, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.

HOB, Sonny West Conference Center

Adjourn

With no further election business to discuss, Commissioner Byrd made a motion to adjourn.

Seconded by: Commissioner Jenean Davis

Outcome of motion: Passed unanimously

Attachment:

- **Code of Conduct for County Election Commission Members and Administrators of Elections**

Jenean Davis (Secretary)

Code of Conduct for County Election Commission Members and Administrators of Elections

County Election Commission members and Administrators of Elections are expected to faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of their office in order to conduct fair and trustworthy elections. The actions and conduct of the County Election Commission members and the Administrator of Elections impact the integrity of the election process. To further the interest of instilling confidence in the electoral process, County Election Commission members and Administrators of Elections must observe and follow the Code of Conduct as described below:

1. Comply with existing laws governing the conduct of elections in Tennessee;
 - a. TCA §§ 2-1-111, 2-1-102
2. Implement the election laws in a fair and impartial manner;
 - a. TCA §§ 2-1-111, 2-1-102, 2-2-203, 2-12-116 and CEC policies
3. Demonstrate impartiality and fairness to all voters, political parties, candidates and their representatives and all members of the public;
 - a. TCA §§ 2-1-111, 2-1-102, 2-12-116 and CEC policies
4. Do not make disparaging or supportive comments or remarks about candidates or issues on the ballot, including but not limited to writing letters to the editor of a newspaper or posting comments on an internet blog; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or any other social media, or participating in any way with direct mail, TV, radio, or other forms of communication in favor for or against any candidate or ballot referendum, identifying your position as a County Election Commission member or Administrator of Elections;
 - a. TCA §§ 2-1-111, 2-1-102
5. Protect the secrecy of each voter's ballot;
 - a. TN Const. Art. IV, § 4 (as interpreted by *Mooney v. Phillips*, 118 S.W.2d 224 (1938) and *Burson v. Freeman*, 112 S. Ct. 1846 (1992)); Atty. Gen. Op. No. 96-027
6. Do not provide favors or divulge information which may be advantageous to candidates, or political parties, or ballot issues, unless such favor or information is available or provided to all candidates and political parties;
 - a. TCA §§ 2-1-111, 2-1-102
7. Do not participate in the consideration of any election commission decisions involving immediate family members whose names appear on the ballot; and
 - a. TCA §§ 2-1-111, 12-4-114, SEC
8. Conduct all duties in a professional manner.
 - a. TCA §§ 2-1-111, 2-1-102, 2-2-203, 2-12-116, CEC policies

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary actions in accordance with the State Election Commission's statutory authority under Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-12-101, including removal of a county election commission member or decertification of a certified Administrator of Elections.