

**SUMNER COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 4:00 p.m.**

**Members present:** Chairman M. Allen Ehmling; Secretary Denise D. Shepherd; Commissioners Patricia D. Collins, J. Michael Fussell and Jeffery B. Hulsey. Also present: Lori D. Atchley, Administrator of Elections and Annette Haw, Assistant Administrator of Elections.

**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. with a motion by Commissioner Hulsey, seconded by Commissioner Collins and the motion passed 5 – 0. A quorum was present.

**II. APPROVE AGENDA**

Commissioner Hulsey made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Collins and the motion passed 5 – 0.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**IV. APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion by Commissioner Hulsey, seconded by Commissioner Collins to approve the January 14, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes and the motion passed 5 – 0.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. NEW BUSINESS INSPECTION – APPEAL PROCESSED VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS**

None

**B. INSPECTION – NEWLY PROCESSED VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS**

Commissioners inspected 45 voter registration applications out of 441 new registration applications with no discrepancies noted. Commissioners present signed the report to be submitted to the State Division of Elections.

## **C. REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATOR**

### **- FACILITY UPDATE**

AOE stated that the County Commission approved a recommendation that Law Director Eric Sitler prepare a proposal to present to the SCEC to relocate the SCEC operations and equipment from 1019 Union School Road to the Archives Building behind 355 N. Belvedere Dr., Gallatin, TN 37066.

### **- BUDGET UPDATE**

Finance Department has continued to request correction of negative account balances via funds transfers between SCEC budget account lines. AOE reiterated that the Budget Committee meeting issued instructions that no appropriations or other monies shall be appropriated unless an "emergency," which was not defined. AAOE has transferred funds to cover negative balances but reiterated there will be a point where there will not be sufficient funds to transfer monies within existing account lines for expenditures that will be due by the end of the fiscal year June 30, 2025. Chairman Ehmling will confer with Attorney Tom Lee regarding the matter.

### **- PRECINCT SIZE TCA 2-3-103**

AOE advised the Commissioners that 8 precincts are in excess of the 6,000 per precinct statute [Precincts where voting machines are used shall, whenever practicable, in the judgment of the county election commission, after taking into consideration all facts and circumstances, be limited in size to a maximum of six thousand (6,000) registered voters.] There is an exception that the SCEC can allow this amount to be exceeded; however, with the current and anticipated continued growth of the county, this issue will have to be addressed. AOE and AAOE have searched diligently for additional precinct locations within the current districts, and there are several areas which have no additional precinct locations available. AOE recommended that Sumner County pursue Convenient Vote Centers. It is the only viable option.

### **- FINALIZE 2025 SCEC MEETING DATES**

All Commissioners will review their calendars and notify AAOE of dates.



- **OTHER**

At the January 11, 2025, SCEC meeting, AOE advised that additional responsibilities have been placed on the election deputies/staff regarding felony restorations and citizenship confirmation and verification, with no consideration to cover costs the county will incur. Commissioner Shepherd recommended submitting a letter to the Coordinator of Elections and Secretary of State regarding what appears to be an unfunded mandate. A motion to submit a letter to the State Division of Elections was made by Commissioner Fussell, seconded by Commissioner Collins to submit the agreed upon letter and the motion passed 5-0. All SCEC Commissioners signed the letter.

**VI. REPORT FROM ELECTION COMMISSIONERS**

**A. CHAIRMAN**

No report.

**B. ELECTION COMMISSIONERS**

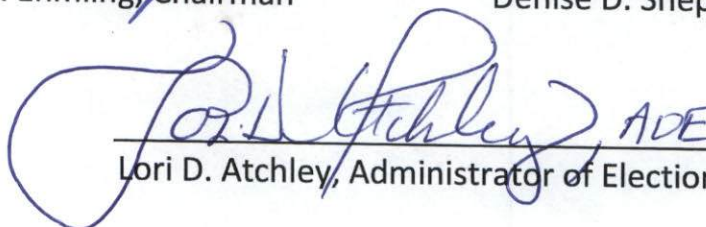
Commissioner Collins advised there were still difficulties regarding scheduling high school registration requirements.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Hulsey, seconded by Commissioner Fussell to adjourn the meeting and the motion passed 5 – 0. The meeting was adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

  
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M. Allen Ehmling, Chairman

  
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Denise D. Shepherd, Secretary

  
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Lori D. Atchley, Administrator of Elections

**ABBREVIATION LEGEND:**

SCEC: Sumner County Election Commission  
AOE: Administrator of Elections  
AAOE: Assistant Administrator of Elections

SCC: Sumner County Commission  
SCM: Sumner County Mayor

## SUMNER COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION

355 N. Belvedere Drive, Room 106

1019 Union School Road

Gallatin, TN 37066

Office (615) 452-1456 \* Fax (615) 230-6147

[elections@sumnercountyttn.gov](mailto:elections@sumnercountyttn.gov) \* [www.votessumner.org](http://www.votessumner.org)



February 3, 2025

The Honorable Tre Hargett  
Secretary of State  
State Capitol  
Nashville, TN 37243-1102

Coordinator of Elections Mark Goins  
State of Tennessee Division of Elections  
312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Snodgrass Tower  
Nashville, TN 37243-1102

Re: Recent requirements regarding citizenship processing

Sirs:

Good afternoon. We, the Sumner County Election commission, want to make a statement regarding the recent requirements that the responsibility of processing citizenship shifted from the State Division of Elections to the individual 95 counties in the State.

The requirement is going to involve significant expense at the county level. The first batch received by Sumner County included 81 identified voters with questionable citizenship status. The reports must be extracted and printed from the State transfer system requiring staff to process and print. Each voter registration record must be manually retrieved, extensively researched (all scanned and stored documents, miscellaneous voter activity dates, notes, etc.) within the voter registration database system to validate accuracy for that voter. Each voter identified will then require a letter that must be processed by a staff member to include the State appeal form, require an envelope and postage for which the Election Commission will bear the cost. Returned mail will have to be processed by a staff member, scanned to the



voter record in our system and physically attached to the manual voter registration card. We are assuming the returned mail notification would be reported via the State portal.

A spreadsheet program would be required to manually maintain, via a calendar notification system, to track the 30-day period in which the voter has an opportunity to respond. A separate citizenship area would be created in the Electronic File System (Rotomat - the machine that houses the manual voter registration cards) to track the pending voter's citizenship status. Unresponsive voters would be purged as required, and permanent purges would be retained in a separate area in the Rotomat.

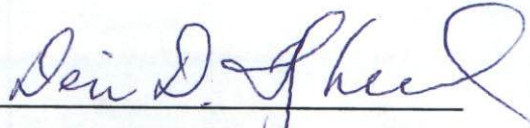
The new and evolving citizen verification process now required is in addition to the new lengthy felony process established just prior to the August 2024 election. The Sumner County Election Commission has requested a new election deputy staff member for five plus budget cycles/years that has been denied by the current county commission. We feel these additional citizenship verification requirements would justify yet another additional staff member.

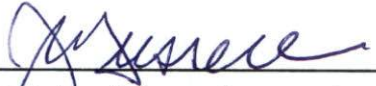
In summary, this new requirement is an expensive undertaking in staff processing, storage, materials and postage. It is in effect another unfunded mandate. While the Sumner County Election Commission agrees in theory with the citizenship verification process, we also feel that financial arrangement should be made to cover the costs, whether that be via HAVA or other resources from the State of Tennessee.

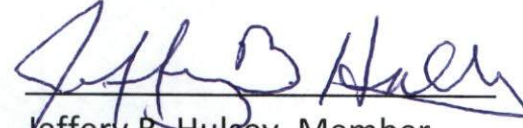
We look forward to your response.


With much appreciation,

  
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M. Allen Ehmling, Chairman

  
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Denise D. Shepherd, Secretary

  
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J. Michael Fussell, Member

  
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Jeffery B. Hulse, Member

  
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Patricia D. Collins, Member