

**HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
Monday, March 21, 2016**

Call to Order:

Upon notice duly given, Chairman Walden called to order a called meeting of the Hamilton County Election Commission at 8 a.m. on March 21, 2016 at the office of the Hamilton County Election Commission, 700 River Terminal Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Invocation: **Commissioner Clem**

Pledge of Allegiance: **Chairman Walden**

Present at Meeting:

Commissioners Walden, Summers, Clem, and Scott were present at the meeting, as well as Christian Bennett of Mauldin and Jenkins, members of the public, and staff of the Election Commission.

Approval of Minutes:

**Secretary Summers** made a motion to approve the minutes.

**Commissioner Clem** seconded the motion.

All were in favor.

New Business:

**Certification of Election**

**March 1, 2016 Presidential Preference/County Primary Election**

*Election Statistics*

**Administrator Steelman** said the agenda packet includes a short summary comparing the percentage turnout of this year's Presidential Preference Primary with previous presidential election years. The report includes both Election Day and Early Voting numbers for the Presidential Preference Primary. In 2016 we had the highest turnout that we've ever had for a Presidential Preference Primary. Over 76,000 ballots were cast in this election, which is 42% of registered voters.

**Commission Scott** asked about the number of voters on the summary. In 2012 we had 214,000 voters and we're now down to 181,000. That many people got purged?

**Administrator Steelman** said yes, either purged or moved, or otherwise made inactive. We went through the list maintenance process in 2015 and a significant number were made inactive for lack of activity in two consecutive November general elections.

**Commission Scott** said he sees a similar trend in 2008 with a similar number and it jumped up in 2012, and then went back down in 2016.

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**Administrator Steelman** said when you are talking about two consecutive November elections, there's going to be a fluctuation in numbers. You can go back even further to 2004 and 2006 and see similar fluctuations.

### Audit Report – Christian Bennett (Maulding & Jenkins, CPAs)

**Auditor Christian Bennett** said he was glad to report the audit procedures went without issues. The commission staff was very helpful providing us with any backup information we needed for our counts and based on those counts, we recommend certifying the audit report as presented.

**Commissioner Clem** made a motion to certify the audit report as presented.

**Secretary Summers** seconded the motion.

All approved.

### Certification of Election Results (PPP, County Primary, Early Voting)

**Secretary Summers** made a motion to certify the election results.

**Commissioner Clem** seconded the motion.

All approved.

**Commissioner Scott** said in the future he would like to see a copy of the election results prior to the meeting.

**Administrator Steelman** said Mauldin and Jenkins provides a draft copy of the certification but cannot provide a final copy of certification until it is actually certified by the commission. In the future he will forward the draft copy to the commission before the meeting.

**Christian Bennett** said they could provide Steelman with a pdf and hard copies for distribution to the commissioners prior to the meeting.

### Certification of Expenses

**Administrator Steelman** said the expenses were in line with previous elections. One exception was a slight increase in the cost of supplies to restock some supplies which were low. Also, we replaced some equipment, specifically some printers that were increasingly unreliable. Clearly we can't get caught in a situation where an Early Voting satellite location has a printer that doesn't work.

**Commissioner Clem** made a motion to approve the expenses as submitted.

**Secretary Summers** seconded.

All approved.

### Scheduling

**Chairman Walden** said the next commission meeting will be June 8, 2016 to approve the ballot for the August 4, 2016 State Primary and County General Election.

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### Other Business:

#### **Potential Vacancy: County Commission District 3**

**Administrator Steelman** said if Marty Haynes wins the Property Assessor race state law says he must resign as County Commissioner, but he will not be required to resign until he is sworn in to office on September 1, 2016. However, the parties can call a caucus at any time before that date.

**Commissioner Clem** asked after the election, but before the swearing in?

**Administrator Steelman** said yes, and I have talked to both parties.

**Chairman Walden** asked then the parties have from August 4 until Sept 1?

**Administrator Steelman** said they actually have until after that. The key date is September 14. That is the qualifying deadline.

**Commissioner Clem** asked then whoever ends up being the party's nominee then needs to go get their petition?

**Administrator Steelman** said no, when the parties caucus and select a nominee, the parties submit the names to us and they do not have to have petitions. One caveat – any individual who tries to caucus for a nomination, but does not receive the nomination becomes ineligible to run as an independent. The parties are required to give us the names of every individual who sought the nomination. That way if we get a petition from someone who is trying to run as an independent, we will know if they sought nomination at the caucus. I met last week with Terry Lee from the Democratic Party and have a meeting scheduled this week with Tony Sanders from the Republican Party.

#### **Red, Wine, and Food Petitions**

**Administrator Steelman** said as a point of information Red, Wine, and Food has notified us that they will try again in November to get a referendum passed allowing wine sales in grocery stores in the unincorporated areas of Hamilton County. This will include the cities of Lookout Mountain, Walden, and Ridgeside because they do not have option to hold their own referendum due to population size. If the county has a referendum, they are bound by the outcome of that referendum.

### Adjournment:

**Commissioner Clem** made a motion to adjourn.

**Secretary Summers** seconded the motion.

All approved.

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APPROVED:

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Jerry Summers Secretary

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Michael S. Walden Chairman

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Ruth Braly Commissioner

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Chris Clem Commissioner

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Kelvin Scott Commissioner