

2022 Hamilton County Republican Primary

Voter Guide

501(c)(3) - compliant and
nonpartisan

Republican Party Candidates for COUNTY Offices

County Primary Elections | 5/3/2022



**YOUR VOTE
MATTERS**

5/3/2022

Online Voter Registration/Record Updating available until 4/4/2022 at: <https://sos.tn.gov/elections>

Contact Church Voter Guides at: Info@VoteChattanooga.org | Updated 4/7/2022

For other Voter Guides and more information, please go to our website: www.VoteChattanooga.org

Church Voter Guides does not endorse or oppose any candidates for public office or any political party.

The Voter Guide Information contained in this document is provided for informational purposes only. It was obtained directly from the candidates and other sources, and we have done our best to convey it to you accurately, but nothing herein has been "fact checked". Utilize this Voter Guide at your own discretion. We take no responsibility for the factual nature of the content, or for publishing errors, etc. To the best of our knowledge, this Voter Guide is 501(c)(3) and officially nonpartisan, and thereby it does not support or oppose any candidate.

Hamilton County

2022 Republican Primary Voter Guide

for Republican Party Candidates for COUNTY

Offices

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Introduction to the Voter Guide

Church Voter Guides is an independent 501(c)(3) faith-based nonprofit organization. We serve the public by providing objective research and education on matters specifically of interest to Christians, primarily through the production and distribution of 501(c)(3)-compliant, nonpartisan voter guides.

Church Voter Guides does not endorse or oppose any candidates for public office or any political party.

Church Voter Guides, a Chattanooga nonprofit, initially started in Colorado Springs in April of 2021. *This new Voter Guide for the 2022 Republican Primary* is being distributed electronically only, both through our interactive website and by downloadable and printable PDF files. We have produced one Voter Guide for each seat that is: (1) conducting an election this year, and (2) for which at least one candidate in that election answered our Questionnaire. Our Voter Guides are being promoted through a wide-ranging network of area churches, faith-based non-profit organizations, mainstream and social media, and other means.

The purpose of our Voter Guides is to educate and inform voters of each candidate's positions on a variety of policy issues that they are likely to address if elected. As a Voter Guide designed to be distributed through Churches, we ask the candidates questions on topics that are of utmost interest to the Christian voter.

How to Get the Most Benefit from this Voter Guide

The core information in this Voter Guide comes directly from the County Primary Elections candidates themselves. We asked them questions, they answered (with a 120 word limit), and we have published their responses here. In order to understand and utilize this information to the fullest, so that you may vote in the most informed way, we suggest the following:

1. Pray and ask the Almighty for discernment. The Kingdom of God is all about truth, while politics is a system fraught with compromise. Make sure you consider the candidates' answers with a Heavenly mindset.
2. Ask yourself, "Did the candidate actually answer the question, or rather side-step it, or give a fluff, wishy-washy, and/or 'political' type answer that leaves you not really knowing where he/she truly stands on the issue?"
3. Learn more about the candidates running for Republican Party Candidates for COUNTY Offices including their positions on issues we did not cover in our questionnaire, by visiting their official campaign websites (if they have one.) The website URL for each candidate is listed in the Voter Guide.
4. Educate yourself more about the Christian/Biblical perspective regarding many of the subjects covered in our Voter Guide by reading topical articles on our website: www.VoteChattanooga.org
5. Use search engines to find additional information about each candidate, including written articles and videos, other voter guides, and even voting records for those who have served in public office before. You may even want to watch online recordings of the local Republican Party Candidates for COUNTY Offices meetings to see how incumbents conduct themselves and vote.
6. Reach out to the candidates themselves through the provided email addresses and other means, in order to ask them questions of personal importance to you. Please make sure to show great respect toward each candidate and his/her time, especially to those with whom you disagree. Running for office is hard, stressful, time-consuming work, and these are your fellow citizens who have lives, families, jobs...and feelings (just like you!)

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What makes a Voter Guide 501 (c)(3) - Compliant and Nonpartisan?

Federal tax law permits nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations to develop and distribute materials about political candidates' positions on issues, in order to educate voters impartially and on a nonpartisan basis; meaning that it is free from party affiliation, bias, or designation. The IRS states that 501 (c)(3) organizations may conduct any range of activities to promote voter participation and educate voters so long as it is nonpartisan. But, 501(c)(3) organizations are explicitly prohibited from supporting or opposing candidates for public office.

Some of the activities 501(c)(3) nonprofits *MAY* perform: Conduct or promote voter registration; educate voters on the voting process; distribute nonpartisan sample ballots, candidate questionnaires, and **voter guides**; organize "get-out-the-vote" activities; encourage and help people to vote; educate the candidates on issues important to their organization; and continue to do issue advocacy during an election.

So, first and foremost: **Church Voter Guides** does **NOT** endorse or oppose any candidates for public office or any political party.

Second, all of our staff and volunteers are required to act in a nonpartisan manner when working for or representing the organization and the creation of the Voter Guide.

Third, we do not edit, revise, or editorialize candidate responses to our Questionnaire. We do not even correct typos. **Candidate answers are published verbatim**, ensuring that their responses accurately represent their positions and perspectives on these issues. We then simply share this information through the Voter Guide, and you decide whom you believe to be the best candidate.

To be fair and impartial, we reached out by email, text, and phone when determined necessary, to all registered candidates running for Republican Party Candidates for COUNTY Offices throughout Hamilton County for their 2022 elections, inviting them to answer our questionnaire. Candidate information is presented in alphabetical order by **last name**. If a Candidate did not respond at all, or did not choose to participate, or did not choose to respond to certain answers in the questionnaire, then it is noted where applicable. If there were not enough candidates running, then we did not produce a Voter Guide for that seat.

Join Our Growing Grassroots Coalition of Citizens, Churches/Nonprofit Organizations, and Media Partners Committed to Promoting the Voter Guide throughout Our Region

Let's get the word out!

It's simple. Just share our website URL all around the Hamilton County region:

www.VoteChattanooga.org

Tell your friends and neighbors, post on social media, and ask your Pastors to promote it to your congregation (we'll even provide you /them with the announcement info and the slide deck.)

Please contact us for any reason, we'd love to collaborate with you: Info@VoteChattanooga.org

The "Small Print": The information contained in this document is being provided for informational purposes only. It was obtained directly from candidates and other sources, and we have done our best to convey it to you accurately, but nothing herein has been "fact checked". Utilize this Voter Guide at your own discretion. We take no responsibility for the factual nature of the content, or for publishing errors, etc. To the best of our knowledge, this Voter Guide is 501(c)(3)-compliant and officially nonpartisan, and thereby it does not support or oppose any candidate

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Offices

J U D G E

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Judge | Survey Question Index

- 1) **Purpose of Judges:** What do you view as the purpose and role of Judges?
- 2) **Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives:** What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Judge?
- 3) **Moral Values:** Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?
- 4) **Interaction with Personalities:** How do you deal with difficult people, including peers, lawyers, their clients or litigants?
- 5) **Legal Interpretation:** How would you interpret the Constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee within your jurisdiction?
- 6) **Personal Challenges:** For new judges, what challenges do you think you might encounter as you transition from a role as advocate to a new role as a judge? For incumbent judges, what have you learned during your term that will inform you going forward as a judge?
- 7) **Venue Challenges:** What challenges face the court you are running for, and how will you effectively overcome those challenges?
- 8) **Legal Representation:** If you observed a party in your courtroom being poorly represented by an unprepared or ineffective lawyer, how would you handle the situation?

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Circuit Court Judge Div. 2

(In alphabetical order)



MIKE DUMITRU



JIM EXUM

Independent Survey by





MIKE DUMITRU

Candidate Information

Email Address:	info@mikeforjudge.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Lawyer
Resident of Hamilton County:	Ten years total. We moved to Hamilton County in 2011, moved away for work in 2014, and returned in 2016.
Campaign Website:	https://www.MikeforJudge.com

1) Purpose of Judges: What do you view as the purpose and role of Judges?

A judge's purpose is to serve as a neutral referee of legal disputes. A judge is the embodiment of the law and upholds the integrity of the rule of law in a dispassionate, but empathetic, way. A judge's primary job is to observe and decide. A judge must listen to the unique facts of every case, apply the law to those facts, and render a just decision. A judge also serves as a manager in the courtroom, both by setting the tone of the proceedings through his or her demeanor, and ensuring cases move along efficiently and fairly. In sum, a judge's role is to ensure that justice is administered civilly, effectively, and efficiently.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Judge?

I consider myself a generalist, having spent more than a decade litigating a wide variety of matters for individual and business plaintiffs and defendants in the state and federal courts of Hamilton County and neighboring counties. In those years of practice, I have developed a thorough understanding of the Rules of Civil Procedure, the Rules of Evidence, and the Local Rules of Court that govern every matter filed in Circuit Court. My primary initiative is to be an accessible judge, both to the lawyers and litigants in my courtroom, as well as the citizens of Hamilton County who want to learn more about the judiciary and the vital role it plays in our democratic republic.

3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Laws are created by legislators, who are representatives of their direct constituents. The people, through the legislature, must determine what principles guide their laws. A judge is merely the embodiment of those laws, and a judge must apply those laws fairly to all. That said, my world view is informed by my Christian values, which are an essential part of who I am. Micah 6:8 instructs us to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. A judge must be humble enough to understand that he or she must do justice without imposing his or her own values on those in the courtroom. I will always seek to do what I believe is just under the law, but my role is not to judge the law or the litigants based on my personal beliefs.

4) Interaction with Personalities: How do you deal with difficult people, including peers, lawyers, their clients or litigants?

Temperament is a judge's most important asset. I deal with "difficult" people with civility and as much patience as the circumstances allow. Litigation is an adversarial process often involving skilled attorneys zealously advocating for their clients without willingly making substantive concessions. And in addition to the obvious financial stress, litigation carries with it an incredibly emotional toll, often leaving a dark cloud hanging over the heads of those involved. This combination of factors does not always lend itself to civility and kindness. So it is imperative that the judge set and maintain a tone of civility throughout the course of the lawsuit, while simultaneously ensuring that all parties abide by the rules of procedure and ethics.

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5) Legal Interpretation: How would you interpret the Constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee within your jurisdiction?

I have a conservative judicial philosophy. We have three branches of government, and the judiciary is not the one responsible for legislating. Judges should make decisions based only on the facts and the law presented by each individual case and should try to rule narrowly. In that vein, I would interpret these sources in accordance with: (i) the words of the Constitution or other applicable statute itself; (ii) the stated intent of the duly-elected legislature; (iii) the principle of stare decisis; and (iv) common sense, which goes a long way.

6) Personal Challenges: For new judges, what challenges do you think you might encounter as you transition from a role as advocate to a new role as a judge? For incumbent judges, what have you learned during your term that will inform you going forward as a judge?

Candidly, the only people fully aware of the challenges I will face are those who serve and have served as Circuit Court judges. But after spending a significant amount of time speaking with several current and former judges to educate myself on this very issue, I believe the biggest challenge I will face is the drastic difference between advocating for one position and objectively analyzing several competing positions. But I feel that my work ethic and experience objectively analyzing cases during the litigation process leave me well-prepared to directly tackle these challenges.

7) Venue Challenges: What challenges face the court you are running for, and how will you effectively overcome those challenges?

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a litany of logistical problems for the judiciary, including halting all proceedings for a period of time. Our Circuit Courts therefore face a substantial backlog of cases that will require almost immediate attention on a compressed schedule. I am confident that my work ethic and ability to work with others will enable me to address that issue head-on, and I look forward to the opportunity to do so. Another challenge is the general apathy or distrust many citizens have when it comes to the judiciary. In addition to my time in the courtroom, I plan on meaningfully engaging my community—especially young people—off the bench to provide citizens with an insight into how our judiciary works and the valuable role it plays in our republic.

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8) Legal Representation: If you observed a party in your courtroom being poorly represented by an unprepared or ineffective lawyer, how would you handle the situation?

This is a very difficult and sensitive topic because it asks me to judge the competence or quality of another member of the bar. A judge's job is not to intervene in a lawsuit and provide legal counsel to parties before the court. That said, the judge's focus should always be ensuring fairness and producing a just result. Thus, if a lawyer (or a party representing himself or herself pro se) is causing harm to the rule of law or the lawsuit itself, a judge can step in and gently help guide the party to the proper procedural or statutory vehicle without favoritism. In such exceptional circumstances, I would exercise my discretion to work with counsel for both sides to ensure the existence of the most level playing field possible.

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JIM EXUM

Candidate Information

Email Address:	exumforjudge@gmail.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Attorney
Resident of Hamilton County:	28 years (1981-1986, 1999-Present)
Campaign Website:	https://www.ExumforJudge.com

1) Purpose of Judges: What do you view as the purpose and role of Judges?

Judges are to be neutral arbiters of the law. They hear proof and then apply the facts they hear to the law as written and come to a decision. However, just because judges make decisions, that does not mean such must be made without compassion and empathy. The best judges explain their decision so that all parties understand the reasoning. People want to be heard and know their position was considered. A decision should be rendered in a fair and honest manner but also in an understandable fashion. As a conservative republican, I do not subscribe to an activist court. Courts are to interpret the law and render decisions. A court is not there to impose its values on others.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Judge?

My practice focuses on family law and defense of the police. Family law matters comprise about 75% of this Court's caseload. I have had a significant family law practice for 10 years, and handled numerous divorce and child custody cases as a part of my work. I have the necessary experience to handle these matters from Day 1. I intend to have more non-jury days, if elected, as we need to ensure that family law matters are expedited and heard quickly. Having divorce and child custody issues linger for years is not helpful to anyone. Making resolution of these cases a top priority will encourage the parties involved to resolve their differences in a timelier manner.

3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Our laws are based on the precepts in the Ten Commandments. Therefore, God's law serves as the foundation of our judicial system. However, laws are made by man and we are all flawed. Romans 13 says that followers are to be subject to the laws of governing authorities. Although judges cannot rule according to our personal beliefs, my convictions and ethics are never absent in my professional life, nor would they be absent on the bench. Others should be able to see our faith in our attitude and treatment of others. My faith will be on display for others on the bench, as it is in my everyday life, through a level demeanor and kindness towards all.

4) Interaction with Personalities: How do you deal with difficult people, including peers, lawyers, their clients or litigants?

Such dealings are unavoidable and prayer helps. I take the approach of treating others as I would want to be treated. Attorneys have clients to represent and often we disagree. But that does not mean we have to be disagreeable. However, in dealing with an attorney who is difficult, I do not change, but lead by example. As for litigants, empathy is key. For family and police clients, I often cannot fathom the burden they carry. Divorcees are experiencing the end of a marriage and learning how to navigate a new reality for themselves and their children. The decisions they have to make are serious and I try to keep my patience, because they are under a terrible strain.

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5) Legal Interpretation: How would you interpret the Constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee within your jurisdiction?

I am a textualist and interpret laws as they are written. I am not a legislator and therefore it is not my job to create law or read into what a legislature may have meant. I may not agree personally with every decision I make but the decision I reach will be one that the law requires. Application of the law fairly as to all people is a hallmark of our justice system. As a conservative republican, I do not believe in an activist court that legislates from the bench. Voters elect people to make the law and judges are there to interpret and apply the law as written.

6) Personal Challenges: For new judges, what challenges do you think you might encounter as you transition from a role as advocate to a new role as a judge? For incumbent judges, what have you learned during your term that will inform you going forward as a judge?

The most difficult part will be taking off the advocacy hat and assuming the role of a neutral. Both sides to a case often present compelling arguments. Deciding what is in the best interests of the parties and that which comports with the law is the daily obligation of the court. I am prepared to handle such matters and render decisions in a fair and legally sound manner. However, I often face such challenges in my practice advising clients of what is in their best interests and how to navigate troubling waters. Through the Lord's guidance and a sense of humility, I trust I will be able to effectively perform my duty.

7) Venue Challenges: What challenges face the court you are running for, and how will you effectively overcome those challenges?

The biggest challenge is the COVID backlog of cases. There are many family law and jury trials that must be heard as the pandemic halted these matters. I will have more non-jury days to hear family matters, and will utilize technology to hear out-of-town witness testimony so matters may be expedited. Zoom has made matters easier to hear when witnesses may not be geographically available. Further, I am a proponent of Scheduling Orders to keep litigation on track. Every party should have expectations of each other and of the Court. A schedule creates a covenant amongst the Court and the parties to keep litigation moving efficiently towards an end. This reduces cost and time parties must spend litigating a matter.

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8) Legal Representation: If you observed a party in your courtroom being poorly represented by an unprepared or ineffective lawyer, how would you handle the situation?

I have unfortunately seen this happen. It is always best to recess the hearing and take the attorneys back into chambers to discuss the situation. There is never a need to embarrass an attorney or a party in court in front of others. Demeanor in this job is key and remaining even-handed and empathetic when faced with ineffective counsel requires the utmost care and consideration. Parties should be represented well and it is often obvious when an attorney is not up to the task. A discussion amongst the parties away from others is best. Judges and attorneys are only people. At the end of the day, we are all seeking the best outcome for the parties under the law.

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Criminal Court Judge Div. 3

(In alphabetical order)



AMANDA DUNN



BOYD PATTERSON



REBECCA STERN

Independent Survey by





AMANDA DUNN

Candidate Information

Email Address:	amanda@amandadunnforjudge.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Attorney
Resident of Hamilton County:	18
Campaign Website:	https://www.AmandaDunnforJudge.com

1) Purpose of Judges: What do you view as the purpose and role of Judges?

Criminal Court Judges hear all felony cases, and some misdemeanor cases, that are prosecuted in Hamilton County. The role of the Criminal Court Judge is to preside over jury trials and day to day court operations with impartiality and fairness to all parties. I take seriously the role of enforcing the Constitutional rights of all parties who

2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Judge?

I am a trial lawyer, and have tried cases in every Circuit and Criminal Court in Hamilton County, as well as Juvenile Court and the Federal Court. During that time, I have represented a number of people who would be considered persistently and seriously mentally ill. I am passionate about the Mental Health Court, which is presently supervised by Judge Poole, and believe this accountability court can provide significant services for those defendants who qualify to reduce the number of reoffenders and decrease the number of mentally ill being housed in our local jail.

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3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

I am a Christian and live my life by the Ten Commandments. As a judge, I would not be in a position to create laws, ordinances, and regulations. I also recognize the division of church and state created by the United States and Tennessee Constitutions. I will strive to enforce all laws created by our Tennessee General Assembly and believe our legislature has thoughtfully crafted the laws to incorporate the fundamental beliefs of most Tennesseans.

4) Interaction with Personalities: How do you deal with difficult people, including peers, lawyers, their clients or litigants?

After over 17 years as a lawyer, I understand that most people are dealing with daily struggles I know nothing about. I believe that if you asked any member of the bar, whether a defense attorney or a prosecutor, they will tell you that I treat every person I encounter with respect and kindness. We can all be challenged by difficult personalities, but maintaining your dignity and treating the other person with dignity is the key to effective communication with “difficult” personalities.

5) Legal Interpretation: How would you interpret the Constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee within your jurisdiction?

I will interpret the Constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee in accordance with the state and federal Supreme Court interpretations that have become common law.

6) Personal Challenges: For new judges, what challenges do you think you might encounter as you transition from a role as advocate to a new role as a judge? For incumbent judges, what have you learned during your term that will inform you going forward as a judge?

Being a new judge will be a tremendous challenge. I have no doubt that I will encounter a situation, a case, or a defendant each day that will challenge my understanding of the law or how to apply the law in a just fashion. There is no question that all judges are concerned with “doing the right thing” in each case, and I believe I will face that same challenge every day. I also feel that the desire to do what is just will drive me to continue working hard and learning every day.

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7) Venue Challenges: What challenges face the court you are running for, and how will you effectively overcome those challenges?

All courts in Tennessee were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly after courts were closed for a significant period of time by the Supreme Court of Tennessee. I anticipate that despite every effort of my predecessor to resolve cases, there will be some backlog of cases that need to be tried or otherwise resolved. I plan to work with the prosecutors and defense attorneys to determine the most effective way to move the oldest cases toward a swift resolution.

8) Legal Representation: If you observed a party in your courtroom being poorly represented by an unprepared or ineffective lawyer, how would you handle the situation?

If it appeared to me that a lawyer was struggling, it would be my preference to speak with that attorney in private with the approval of opposing counsel. As I noted above, I recognize that all of us deal with daily struggles that can affect how we work or communicate, and lawyers are no exception. I would never embarrass a lawyer in front of his or her client or the public sitting in a courtroom. However, I also recognize the constitutional right of every defendant to effective assistance of counsel, and want to ensure those constitutional rights are upheld every single day.

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BOYD PATTERSON

Candidate Information

Email Address:	boyd@boydpatterson.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Attorney
Resident of Hamilton County:	42 years. 1973-1994 (elementary, middle, high school, college; Hamilton County). 1995-2000 (graduate school in Georgia; law school in Pennsylvania). 2000-present (law practice;
Campaign Website:	https://BoydPatterson.com

1) Purpose of Judges: What do you view as the purpose and role of Judges?

Old Testament judges served the tribes of Israel as fair administrators of justice and as leaders. Likewise, I will serve Hamilton County citizens inside the courtroom by administrating justice fairly, to all parties. While I am the only candidate endorsed by three police unions and the sheriff, I will remain fair to defendants. Tennessee law provides that non-violent, non-repeat offenders sincere about changing their lives for the better, should get a chance to do so through probation. Tennessee law also provides that violent, repeat offenders can go to the penitentiary. As criminal court judge, I will follow the law. I will also take a leadership role outside the courtroom in educating citizens about the issues driving criminal behavior.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Judge?

Three areas of special interest: gangs, jury trials and innovation. As Gang Task Force Coordinator, I partnered with agencies that helped at-risk youth make better decisions and reject gangs. As both a prosecutor and defense attorney, I tried over 50 jury trials, published litigation articles and wrote an evidence book. Regarding innovation, I helped establish three new courts in Hamilton County (Juvenile Drug Court, Youth Court, Mental Health Court), developed an iPad app for jury selection, designed computer programs that identified gang members in court and created an online network of child abuse prosecutors across the state. As criminal court judge, I would remain a resource to citizens, lawyers and innovators in all three areas.

3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Some of the Ten Commandments serve as cornerstones of the criminal justice system. Murder, theft and bearing false witness in court all carry criminal penalties. Unruly delinquents can be disciplined in juvenile court for not honoring their parents' wishes. While other Commandments may not be represented in criminal law, the freedom to adhere to those Commandments should remain protected as religious freedom. Likewise, we must protect the freedom to not follow Commandments unaffiliated with the justice system. Although failing to follow them may eventually cause bigger problems, church should remain separate from state. If the laudable motivation to provide for one's family morphs into "coveting" to the point of stealing from others, the justice system would then apply.

4) Interaction with Personalities: How do you deal with difficult people, including peers, lawyers, their clients or litigants?

Trial lawyers deal with difficult people every week. The first step: listen to the "difficult" person. He/she may be correct. If so, perhaps you can simply agree. If you need more information, continue to listen and gather information. If the problem does not involve you, perhaps you can point the person in the right direction. If the problem does involve you, separate aspects of the problem upon which you can agree from aspects in dispute. When communicating your position, stay professional without getting personal. Remain patient throughout the interaction. If all this fails, you may have to disengage and return to the discussion later.

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5) Legal Interpretation: How would you interpret the Constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee within your jurisdiction?

Criminal court judges must follow precedent. Legal issues often undergo in-depth analysis by appellate courts. Accordingly, I would interpret the Constitution and laws using clear judicial precedent as a guide. In novel cases without clear precedent, a balance of originalism, textualism and moral reasoning usually proves fitting. The original intent of the framers provides a solid foundation when examining novel issues. Originalism also reduces the risk of judicial advocacy. When the foundational concepts of freedom and democracy need greater context, examining specific tracts of Constitutional text provides guidance. Finally, moral reasoning allows criminal court judges to consider the specific needs of victims, defendants and greater society when facilitating a fair and just result.

6) Personal Challenges: For new judges, what challenges do you think you might encounter as you transition from a role as advocate to a new role as a judge? For incumbent judges, what have you learned during your term that will inform you going forward as a judge?

The most helpful guidance in transitioning from advocate to judge flows from the examples set by other judges. Practicing law in several different courts across multiple jurisdictions provided numerous role models. Additionally, all of the Hamilton County judges related to criminal law who were in place when I started practicing law have retired. The judges who subsequently filled those slots also provided beneficial examples of transition. Work ethic, patience and respect for everyone in the courtroom overcame all obstacles related to their transitions from advocates to judges. Additionally, I enjoy maintaining a student's perspective, which facilitates openness to different viewpoints and humility.

7) Venue Challenges: What challenges face the court you are running for, and how will you effectively overcome those challenges?

In addition to the criminal court docket, the office I seek presides over Mental Health Court (MHC). MHC supervises non-violent defendants who, due to a mental condition, keep getting caught up in the system. As a former counselor with two degrees in psychology, I recognize the prevalence of mental illness in criminal court. In 2015, I helped set up MHC and later served as a member of the team. If elected, I will establish a subdivision of MHC that exclusively serves military veterans. Due to trauma related to their service, many veterans suffer from PTSD and substance abuse. Veterans were there for us when we needed them. If veterans need help, we should be there for them.

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8) Legal Representation: If you observed a party in your courtroom being poorly represented by an unprepared or ineffective lawyer, how would you handle the situation?

The adversarial process requires competency on both sides. Fortunately, most attorneys develop reputations that help judges discern their competency before cases proceed very far. If an attorney appears inexperienced or unprepared, I would investigate if the shortcomings can be remedied. Simply asking the attorney certain questions could spur better representation. In pretrial matters, consultation with a more experienced colleague may provide the attorney with the understanding needed to proceed. Defendants often recognize shortcomings in his/her lawyer's performance. If the attorney seems unable or unwilling to improve, granting the defendant's motion for new counsel may result. If the shortcomings surface at trial, I would make inquiries at sidebar. If the situation is truly beyond repair, declaring a mistrial could be necessary.

Independent Survey by





REBECCA STERN

Candidate Information

Email Address:	sternjudge2022@gmail.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Attorney
Resident of Hamilton County:	65
Campaign Website:	https://SternJudge.com

1) Purpose of Judges: What do you view as the purpose and role of Judges?

To fairly preside over any cases brought before the Court, to know and apply the law as it exists at the time and to make sure justice is done.

2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Judge?

I believe in using problem solving courts, like drug courts and mental health courts to address non-violent criminal defendants. I established the Hamilton County Drug Court in 2005. If elected I will preside over the Hamilton County Mental Health Court.

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3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Yes.

4) Interaction with Personalities: How do you deal with difficult people, including peers, lawyers, their clients or litigants?

I try to understand where they are coming from and why they are being difficult. I try to remain calm and not let my own feelings prevent me from being fair and treating those people with respect.

5) Legal Interpretation: How would you interpret the Constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee within your jurisdiction?

Strictly.

6) Personal Challenges: For new judges, what challenges do you think you might encounter as you transition from a role as advocate to a new role as a judge? For incumbent judges, what have you learned during your term that will inform you going forward as a judge?

I was previously a Criminal Court Judge but am not an incumbent in this race. So I'll answer the second question. That each criminal defendant that comes before me has their own unique background and that that should be taken into consideration in handling their cases.

7) Venue Challenges: What challenges face the court you are running for, and how will you effectively overcome those challenges?

I would be presiding over the Mental Health Court. It is always a challenge to deal with mentally ill criminal defendants. I will try to find out what is the best mental health treatment for each participant and attempt to oversee that treatment.

8) Legal Representation: If you observed a party in your courtroom being poorly represented by an unprepared or ineffective lawyer, how would you handle the situation?

I would ask to speak to the attorney and the opposing attorney, express my concerns and possibly try to find a more experienced and competent attorney to assist.

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Hamilton County
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C o u n t y M a y o r

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County Mayor

(In alphabetical order)



MATT HULLANDER



SABRENA SMEDLEY



WESTON WAMP

Independent Survey by





MATT HULLANDER

Candidate Information

Email Address:	info@matt4mayor.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Business Owner / Family Foundation Founder
Resident of Hamilton County:	48
Campaign Website:	https://www.Matt4Mayor.com

1) County Mayor's Purpose: What do you view as the purpose and role of the Hamilton County Mayor?

I believe that Hamilton County's next mayor will need to provide strong leadership to keep the momentum going that we currently enjoy. As the only business guy in this race, I've had hundreds of employees and more importantly, made payroll for over two decades. I am a strong fiscal conservative and my path has always been led by faith and family. If I am fortunate to be elected, I will be guided by my life verse: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." - Proverbs 3: 5-6

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Hamilton County Mayor?

Number one is safety. You can't learn, work or live a fulfilling life if you aren't safe. Also, The County's sewer system is limiting our ability to grow. I am prepared to provide additional funding from the American Relief Program (ARP) that will assist WWTA customers. I believe that in order to move forward above ground, we have to fix what's below it. We're going to take a hard look at the County's roads and ditches, especially in the north end of the County. Within my first month of taking office, I will be implementing a plan for trash pickup. It will be easy to implement and cost effective. My other top priorities include: Job Growth Education Veterans and Leadership.

3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Absolutely. If more would follow the basics provided to us, we'd have a true culture shift across every sector of society. I am 100% pro-life and a strong supporter of the Second Amendment.

4) Budget: What would be your top three spending, savings, and economic development priorities?

My top priorities for spending will be on Safety, Infrastructure and Job Growth. I will take a detailed look at the budget to find areas where we can save, areas that need additional investment to continue their success and areas that frankly, are no longer necessary. I look for ways to invest in success and don't plan to invest in mediocrity.

5) Covid Recovery: Has the COVID situation created problems that the County Mayor can mitigate, specifically regarding businesses, schools, healthcare systems, and other vital services?

This is easy for me. There should be no mandates. This is a decision that should be made by individuals and families.

6) Protecting Life: What legal means, if any, would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our county, including the lives of the unborn, the trafficked, the homeless, and the elderly?

I proudly marched with Tennessee Right to Life in January. I am 100% pro-life and will do all I can to make sure no county funding goes to anything to hurt the unborn. As Mayor, I will fight to keep planned parenthood OUT of Hamilton County.

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7) Business/Jobs: How should the commission handle development of housing, zoning and infrastructure in northern Hamilton County?

One of the first things I will be looking at as Mayor is the Regional Planning Agency. We need to work on a plan to promote appropriate growth. That means planning that is easy for both developers and neighbors to navigate toward reasonable solutions. As for northern Hamilton County and especially McDonald Farm, we have to get it right. As Mayor, I know we have a unique opportunity. This 2100 acre tract will provide us opportunities for development and environment to live together. I believe the unique topography offers opportunities to those who want to enjoy all of the beauty of the area while also providing a solid foundation for growth that will be done- - over the coming years.

8) Homelessness/Vagrancy: How can the Commission address any increase in the homeless/vagrant population in our county in ways that best serve all Hamilton County residents?

This is a huge burden on the City and the County. I applaud efforts by the Chattanooga Housing Authority that provides programming and vouchers for area homeless veterans. There are other cities and counties who have effective programs in place and I can't wait to meet with colleagues in developing a strong strategy for Hamilton County.

9) Constitutional Liberties As a Mayor, what measures will you champion to protect the individual Constitutional liberties of all Hamilton County residents, such as freedom of speech, peaceable assembly and exercise of religion?

Following a difficult summer two years ago that involved riots and destruction in downtown, we've learned the importance of following the law. As Mayor, I will work hand in hand with law enforcement to make sure people enjoy their freedoms without breaking the law. It's a vital piece of our country's history and one of our own as well. Everything we do should be guided by the US Constitution and laws governing our state.

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SABRENA SMEDLEY

Candidate Information

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Occupation/Vocation:	Broker/Realtor & Owner Of Pure Barre Fitness
Resident of Hamilton County:	Lifelong Resident
Campaign Website:	https://www.SabrenaForMayor.com

1) County Mayor's Purpose: What do you view as the purpose and role of the Hamilton County Mayor?

The Mayor of Hamilton County must provide moral, responsible leadership for county government including all associated departments, agencies, and offices. The annual budget is the principal tool used to address the needs of residents, community leaders, and county officials. It is imperative that input from all sectors be visible in a transparent budget that fully promotes a vibrant, successful community. The office of Mayor in itself doesn't have much statutory authority, but as the head of county government, it is a position with tremendous leadership potential. Ultimately, the job is all about strong leadership, and that's why it's so vitally important to elect someone who is really ready for the job and running for all the right reasons.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Hamilton County Mayor?

I hear some say it's important for the County Mayor to have a business background, others say it's important to have experience in government. I say, why not both? I've founded a successful small business, built up another, raised a family, earned an MBA, and have twice been elected by my colleagues as Chairman of the County Commission. If elected Mayor, I will be the strongest possible advocate for our first responders who keep us safe. Equally important is a strong education budget with a school system that listens to our parents, and finally, I will fight for better long term planning to meet infrastructure needs and prepare for responsible growth, which includes road paving, water, and wastewater improvements.

3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

God gave us the Ten Commandments as a guide for right living. This is how I strive to conduct myself as a public servant and will continue to do so if elected Mayor. Everything government does should be based on the only objective grounding for moral truth, which is the revealed Word of God in the Bible. That said, although the Bible certainly addresses the role and responsibilities of leaders, it isn't an instruction manual on good government. Discerning how to apply biblical principles in the gray areas is why I pray for "the wisdom of Solomon, the favor of David, and the grace of Esther" who was raised up "for such a time as this."

4) Budget: What would be your top three spending, savings, and economic development priorities?

The conservative philosophy I have applied in both business and government is that leadership means stewardship. If elected Mayor, I will prioritize funding for public safety, education, and infrastructure including road paving, school facilities, water, and wastewater treatment. Outside of these priorities, we must look very closely at spending requests and ensure they meet our community's needs without imposing unnecessary taxes on our citizens. Our County has seen tremendous economic growth over the last decade, and I believe the hard work in front of us all is long term planning to get the basics right to be prepared for responsible, balanced growth.

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5) Covid Recovery: Has the COVID situation created problems that the County Mayor can mitigate, specifically regarding businesses, schools, healthcare systems, and other vital services?

The COVID-19 pandemic sparked challenges and disruptions that none of us have experienced before. Unfortunately, those challenges were politicized with liberal agendas to the point that information from public health officials could not be trusted. I learned about the important role local government plays in responding to a crisis when a tornado hit my district. That crisis management experience has helped prepare me for future contingencies and reinforced the importance of maintaining the public's trust. As County Mayor, I will do everything in my power to keep our economy and schools open during a crisis by supporting our health care workers and educators, and providing clear, factual information so people can make the best decisions for themselves and their families.

6) Protecting Life: What legal means, if any, would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our county, including the lives of the unborn, the trafficked, the homeless, and the elderly?

We are blessed to have a state legislature second to none on protecting the unborn, and I fully support those efforts. Public funding should never go to those who take unborn lives. I believe our local law enforcement agencies are vigilant in protecting the weakest in our society, guarding against human traffickers and those who would abuse our elderly. The "homeless" situation I believe to be the biggest single symptom of our moral failing as a society. We have a duty to help folks through better drug abuse treatment programs and "bootstrap" programs to help those who want to help themselves, but we should never enable bad behavior or become a magnet for lifestyle homelessness.

7) Business/Jobs: How should the commission handle development of housing, zoning and infrastructure in northern Hamilton County?

In the fight against annexation, which I helped lead, folks were upset about being taxed without representation and the disrespect for the most important investment most of us will ever make – our homes. Similarly, all future growth must respect our existing neighborhoods. Hamilton County has designated through its growth plan where development should occur and infrastructure should only be extended to previously designated growth areas. Zoning must follow these principles, protecting residential zones and allowing more intensive uses only where growth areas have been designated. It may be past time we revisit our urban growth plan given the boom of the past decade, again, respecting the needs of our residents.

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8) Homelessness/Vagrancy: How can the Commission address any increase in the homeless/vagrant population in our county in ways that best serve all Hamilton County residents?

The challenge of homelessness requires balancing compassion and common sense. We can't become a destination for lifestyle homelessness by subsidizing bad behavior. Of course we all want to help folks from our community who have fallen into hard times. That starts with the body of Christ. "If we are the body, why aren't his hands reaching?" Local government's role should be to provide leadership in the community to help our citizens give a hand up to those who truly need it, not a taxpayer-funded handout for those refusing help. That could include expanding drug courts and vocational education programs to give people a second chance, helping them back on their feet and off the streets.

9) Constitutional Liberties As a Mayor, what measures will you champion to protect the individual Constitutional liberties of all Hamilton County residents, such as freedom of speech, peaceable assembly and exercise of religion?

The Constitution isn't optional during a crisis. If anything, government should be constitutionally limited, especially to guard our liberties during the toughest of times. As the late Justice Scalia said, "The Constitution is not a living organism, it's a legal document. It says what it says and doesn't say what it doesn't say." I know firsthand what it was like to have my own small businesses shut down. I will never do that to my fellow citizens. As your next Mayor, I will always fight to keep our houses of worship, our schools, and our businesses open, and for your right to express your opinions in government meetings and through peaceful assembly.

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WESTON WAMP

Candidate Information

Email Address:	weston@westonwamp.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Entrepreneur; Founder, Millennial Debt Foundation
Resident of Hamilton County:	Went to UT in Knoxville, but have lived and voted in
Campaign Website:	https://www.WestonWamp.com

1) County Mayor's Purpose: What do you view as the purpose and role of the Hamilton County Mayor?

The job of County Mayor is defined under Tennessee state law as the chief financial officer and fiscal agent of each county – beyond that the job description is vague. Ultimately, it is a leadership position with specific

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financial responsibilities. In Hamilton County, 64% of the county budget is public education, meaning that the County Mayor has an incredibly important role in ensuring stewardship of taxpayer dollars within the department of education, as well as setting priorities for the construction and renovation of school facilities. By tradition, the County Mayor in Hamilton County is involved in virtually every aspect of economic development and appoints members of various boards from Erlanger to the WWTa to the Regional Planning Commission.

2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Hamilton County Mayor?

Our "Hamilton First" agenda is the comprehensive set of proposals in the race for County Mayor, and it can be read in its entirety at westonwamp.com. My experience spans business, public policy and education, as both a public school parent and a member of the Tennessee Board of Regents. The Board of Regents governs Tennessee's 40 community and technical colleges. My proposals range from a Mayor's Parent Council to empower parents to a Mayor's Apprenticeship Initiative, which would provide paid apprenticeships with local companies to students as they finish their diplomas. Lastly, our proposal to create the Mayor's Volunteer Corps would galvanize communities of faith to serve disadvantaged schools with a focus on addressing student hunger and early childhood reading.

3) Moral Values: Should governmental laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Government laws, ordinances and regulations should first and foremost follow the principles of the U.S. Constitution. Our country's founding is deeply connected to Judeo-Christian morals. That "certain unalienable rights" are given by a Creator is central to understanding the American experiment. However, we were founded as a pluralistic society and the Ten Commandments should guide the personal behavior of all Christians.

4) Budget: What would be your top three spending, savings, and economic development priorities?

Under Mayor Coppinger's leadership, Hamilton County Government has been run very efficiently, which has contributed to the county being the highest bond-rated county in Tennessee and having the lowest tax rate in 70 years. Without a tax increase, implementing performance pay for our teachers and modernizing our

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most dilapidated school facilities would be priorities for me. Along the same lines, my priorities in economic development would be to increase career training and vocational education opportunities to better develop our workforce. I have proposed the creation of a world class, “open enrollment” middle/high school near downtown, in partnership with the City of Chattanooga, that would spur economic development and job creation for a generation to come.

5) Covid Recovery: Has the COVID situation created problems that the County Mayor can mitigate, specifically regarding businesses, schools, healthcare systems, and other vital services?

We have learned many difficult lessons during the pandemic. Never again should some people’s jobs be deemed “essential” and others “non-essential.” Likewise, mandates have undermined trust in public health institutions. Masking schoolchildren is one of the worst policies of my lifetime. It is inexcusable and shameful that our children, who were at little to no risk from the virus, bore the brunt of many of the government’s misguided policies.

6) Protecting Life: What legal means, if any, would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our county, including the lives of the unborn, the trafficked, the homeless, and the elderly?

I am 100% pro-life and will use the office of County Mayor to advocate for our youngest and oldest citizens, especially our most vulnerable citizens, the unborn.

7) Business/Jobs: How should the commission handle development of housing, zoning and infrastructure in northern Hamilton County?

The north part of Hamilton County is very special to me. Many of my family members live between Soddy Daisy and Bakewell. The Sale Creek community is unlike any other in Hamilton County. When considering development in the north end of the county, the Commission should be respectful of the distinctly different way of life that has caused many families to remain in those communities for generations. Development opportunities at McDonald Farm should be considered patiently and, in the meantime, the land should be opened for recreational and agricultural use by the people who bought it – the citizens of Hamilton County.

8) Homelessness/Vagrancy: How can the Commission address any increase in the homeless/vagrant population in our county in ways that best serve all Hamilton County residents?

Homelessness is primarily an issue in the City of Chattanooga. In recent years, when the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County cooperate, big things are possible. If the City cannot get its downtown homelessness issues under control, the Commission could explore ways that it could bolster efforts to provide dignity through housing and job training and, if necessary, mental health treatment to those in need.

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District Attorney

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- 4) **Biggest Problem/Solution:** How would you improve the rules/ policies/ procedures of how non-violent domestic abuse cases are handled?
- 5) **Drug Laws:** Do you support creating an option to charge low-level drug possession as a misdemeanor rather than a felony? Why or why not?
- 6) **Rehabilitation & Prevention:** What programs and policies would you implement as District Attorney to reduce crime and increase public safety in the county?
- 7) **Juvenile Justice:** What would you do to reduce the number of juveniles - particularly Latino and African American youth - who are brought into the criminal justice system? What policies would you put in place to ensure fair and unbiased use of prosecutorial discretion in juvenile court?
- 8) **Victims Protection:** What legal means, if any would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our County, including the unborn, the trafficked and the elderly?
- 9) **Budget/Financial Role:** As District Attorney, how would you optimize, direct, and/or inspire your office to improve its process, efficiency, and effectiveness to maximize your resources to prosecute cases?
- 10) **Constitutional Liberties:** As a District Attorney what measures will you champion to protect the Constitutional liberties of all Hamilton County residents including guaranteeing due process and each of The Bill of Rights?

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11) Citizens' Duty/Grand Jury: The grand jury is one of the unheralded tools the people have to monitor and correct waste and corruption in our government. What is your understanding of the grand jury system? What can the district attorney do to motivate and empower the members of our grand jury to investigate and explore goings on in all levels of our local government? Refence Antonin Scalia's Opinion - United States v. Williams, 112 S.Ct. 1735, 504 U.S. 36, 118 L.Ed.2d 352 (1992)

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District Attorney

(In alphabetical order)



NEAL PINKSTON



COTY WAMP

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NEAL PINKSTON

Candidate Information

Email Address:	nealpinkston@nealpinkston.com
Occupation/Vocation:	District Attorney
Resident of Hamilton County:	19
Campaign Website:	https://www.NealPinkston.com

1) District Attorney's Purpose: What do you view as the purpose and role of the Hamilton County District Attorney?

Tennessee's Constitution established local District Attorneys to represent the government in prosecuting crimes. A DA's fundamental role is two-fold: to prosecute the guilty and to protect the innocent by ensuring truth and justice prevail. As Hamilton County's top law enforcement officer, I am responsible for overseeing a staff of 27 prosecutors who handle more than 50,000 criminal cases each year. Additionally, the DA is responsible for keeping crime victims informed throughout the court process.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Hamilton County District Attorney?

I've prosecuted thousands of violent criminals during 19 years as a prosecutor, including ten death penalty cases. As DA, I created a Cold Case Unit to review the county's 200 unsolved homicides. I created TARGET, a multi-agency unit to combat gangs and illegal guns. This led to the dismantling of one gang and the weakening of others. I created a Digital Forensics Unit. Electronic evidence is now a component of almost every crime and being able to analyze it is crucial to a successful prosecution. When re-elected I will continue my focus on violent crimes. Not every initiative we try will work but I will keep trying until we find what works best to keep our community safe.

3) Moral Values: Should government laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

As a Christian I follow the Ten Commandments and believe Jesus' teaching that the two most important are to love God and your neighbor. As a prosecutor my focus is criminal law, which does follow the Ten Commandments. I believe the historic rise in violent crime is a direct result of our society's departure from God's Word, primarily manifested through the breakdown of families. As a prosecutor, I see daily the devastating impact of not following God's word.

4) Biggest Problem/Solution: How would you improve the rules/ policies/ procedures of how non-violent domestic abuse cases are handled?

Unfortunately, we don't meet a victim of non-violent domestic abuse until that person has already become the victim of a violent abuser. My office has Victim Witness Coordinators who work hard to help these victims, not only as they navigate the system, but also by connecting them with the help and resources they need to remove themselves from abusive situations and become empowered to cut ties with the abuser.

5) Drug Laws: Do you support creating an option to charge low-level drug possession as a misdemeanor rather than a felony? Why or why not?

Tennessee law already classifies low-level drug possession as a misdemeanor. There are appropriate exceptions when simple possession can become a felony charge, such as when an adult gives drugs to a minor or when an individual possesses drugs on or near school property.

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6) Rehabilitation & Prevention: What programs and policies would you implement as District Attorney to reduce crime and increase public safety in the county?

As DA I've taken great steps to keep our community safe. Each year my staff and I successfully prosecute thousands of offenders. Additionally, the Cold Case Unit I created works to take killers off the streets and my TARGET Unit focuses on gang violence and illegal guns. I've partnered with Drug Recovery Courts and Mental Health Courts to address non-violent offenders. I've designated prosecutors to focus on violent crimes and juvenile matters who work directly with law enforcement. As DA I will continue this hard work by building on these accomplishments for the benefit of Hamilton County.

7) Juvenile Justice: What would you do to reduce the number of juveniles - particularly Latino and African American youth - who are brought into the criminal justice system? What policies would you put in place to ensure fair and unbiased use of prosecutorial discretion in juvenile court?

It is our obligation to ensure everyone who breaks the law, young and old, is treated fairly. Whenever possible we provide rehabilitation to juveniles to deter future criminal behavior. To accomplish this we evaluate every case on its own merits and then work hard to identify each child's individual needs. Anger management, drug treatment, and counseling are some of the services offered to non-violent offenders. All prosecutors are to be impartial and fair. Our goal is to ensure we do all we can to achieve rehabilitation so these children do not carry criminal behavior into adulthood and are instead able to reach their potential.

8) Victims Protection: What legal means, if any would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our County, including the unborn, the trafficked and the elderly?

I support any legal means to protect our most vulnerable. State law mandates a multi-agency team review each instance of child abuse. My office recently helped craft the duties of a similar team designed to address cases of elder abuse. My office fully supports Tennessee law regarding the unborn and we have shifted some resources to give more focus to victims of human trafficking as those numbers have surged. As DA I take very seriously my duties to both prosecute criminals and protect the innocent, particularly the most vulnerable among us.

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9) Budget/Financial RoleAs District Attorney, how would you optimize, direct, and/or inspire your office to improve its process, efficiency, and effectiveness to maximize your resources to prosecute cases?

When I became DA I reviewed every expense my office incurs. As a result, we shrank our annual budget by nearly \$300,000. I changed the way we present our budget request to the county, providing a line item for each expense so taxpayers know where every dollar is going. I'm currently moving our office files to a digital case filing system and when possible we provide evidence in a digital format. These moves are saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in manpower, paper, ink, and the use of office copy machines. This has streamlined the process of providing discovery (evidence) to defendants. These changes were invaluable during the pandemic as it allowed staff to work from home.

10) Constitutional Liberties: As a District Attorney what measures will you champion to protect the Constitutional liberties of all Hamilton County residents including guaranteeing due process and each of The Bill of Rights?

As DA I am ethically obligated and personally committed to protecting the Constitutional liberties of every citizen in Hamilton County. As a prosecutor it is not my goal to "win" at the expense of a defendant's rights. In fact, it is my duty to ensure the guilty are vigorously prosecuted and the innocent are protected with equal zeal. Often victims are frustrated by the great effort we take to ensure the rights of offenders are protected. We work hard to ensure victims are aware of their rights as well. Each citizen of Hamilton County should have the ability to safely exercise their Constitutional rights.

11) Citizens' Duty/Grand Jury: The grand jury is one of the unheralded tools the people have to monitor and correct waste and corruption in our government. What is your understanding of the grand jury system? What can the district attorney do to motivate and empower the members of our grand jury to investigate and explore goings on in all levels of our local government? Refence Antonin Scalia's Opinion - United States v. Williams, 112 S.Ct. 1735, 504 U.S. 36, 118 L.Ed.2d 352 (1992)

As a bedrock of our justice system the Grand Jury reviews almost every felony charge we prosecute. The Grand Jury has the ability and the obligation to ask questions of law enforcement and prosecutors to ensure corruption is uncovered. As Justice Scalia wrote, if evidence exists in a case that would take away probable cause the Grand Jury should hear it. In fact, I believe all evidence should be freely disclosed and it is my office policy that we share every piece of evidence we have, even information that's not required by law to be disclosed.

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COTY WAMP

Candidate Information

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Occupation/Vocation: General Counsel, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

Resident of Hamilton County: Born and raised in Hamilton County, left for 7 years for college and law school and then came back!

Campaign Website: <https://www.CotyWamp.com>

1) District Attorney's Purpose: What do you view as the purpose and role of the Hamilton County District Attorney?

The District Attorney is the Chief Law Enforcement Officer of the Judicial District. The District Attorney prosecutes every person in the county who commits a criminal offense. First and foremost, the District Attorney should seek truth and justice. The District Attorney is tasked with protecting victims of crime and protecting the most vulnerable members of our community. At this time in Hamilton County the District Attorney should focus on combatting violent crime, cracking down on criminals who sell heroin and fentanyl, and protecting our children from abuse at all costs. The DA controls our criminal justice system and that person must accept that responsibility and lead with dignity and integrity.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Hamilton County District Attorney?

We must focus on gang and violent crime, heroin and fentanyl dealers, and child abuse (including child sex abuse). Gang and violent crime rates have increased under the leadership of our current District Attorney. Heroin and fentanyl dealers are not receiving the punishment that they deserve. And child victims are being overlooked. I will create a Gang and Violent Crime Unit that works directly with the Chattanooga Police Department. I will also restore the position of a Child Sex Abuse Prosecutor who will focus only on serious child abuse cases. The Child Sex Abuse prosecutor will work full-time out of the Children's Advocacy Center office so that they can be involved in investigations from beginning to end.

3) Moral Values: Should government laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Absolutely. Not all of the Ten Commandments can be made applicable to criminal justice, but many of them can and should be. Particularly, the Ten Commandments instruct that believers shall not murder, steal, make idols, and shall not bear false witness against neighbors. These are commandments that the criminal justice system should replicate. Moral principles should play a role in how our District Attorney chooses to prosecute and prioritize. As a believer, I hope that all of our local elected officials would answer "yes" to this question.

4) Biggest Problem/Solution: How would you improve the rules/ policies/ procedures of how non-violent domestic abuse cases are handled?

There is no such thing as non-violent domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is inherently violent. Under my leadership, there will be additional resources within the DA's office to ensure victims of domestic violence are taken care of while the case is pending and connected with the the Family Justice Center for additional resources. I will have a victim-witness coordinator in my office who will work only with victims of domestic violence. I am committed to placing a dedicated prosecutor in the same office space as the Children's Advocacy Center and Family Justice Center so that those organizations have constant support from my office.

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5) Drug Laws: Do you support creating an option to charge low-level drug possession as a misdemeanor rather than a felony? Why or why not?

We need to stop shaming the addicts and instead, send the dealers to prison. Those dealing the most dangerous drugs, heroin and fentanyl, are murdering our young people at unacceptable rates. One hundred and nine (109) people died of a drug overdose in Hamilton County in 2021 alone. That's more than three times as many deaths than from homicide. Low-level drug possession is already charged as a misdemeanor, and it should remain that way. Misdemeanor users who are in possession of illegal substances will be prosecuted, but I do not think that jail is the best place for addicts. We need to identify more resources for addicts, and crack down on dealers.

6) Rehabilitation & Prevention: What programs and policies would you implement as District Attorney to reduce crime and increase public safety in the county?

A Gang and Violent Crime Unit in the DA's Office. The Chattanooga Police Department needs additional resources to combat violent crime. I will contribute resources by funding a Unit that acts as a direct connection between the Police Department and the DA's Office. To ensure serious offenders are handled appropriately once the case makes its way to court, the Unit will have a dedicated prosecutor that also works with the major crime divisions of the Police Department. I will also hold Assistant District Attorneys accountable when it comes to plea reductions and/or dismissals on serious offenses. Every offense cannot be negotiable. It's time to draw hard lines in the sand on violent felonies.

7) Juvenile Justice: What would you do to reduce the number of juveniles - particularly Latino and African American youth - who are brought into the criminal justice system? What policies would you put in place to ensure fair and unbiased use of prosecutorial discretion in juvenile court?

Our juvenile justice system should be focused on rehabilitation and giving juveniles opportunities to exit the criminal justice system and never return. However, if I'm elected, the exception to that will be teenagers, specifically 16 and 17 year olds, who put a gun in their hand and seek to harm others. Juvenile crime rates are increasing. Gangs prey on vulnerable teenagers to do their dirty work. To deter this, my office will petition juvenile court to transfer 16 and 17 year olds who commit violent crimes to be tried in Criminal Court as adults. Deterrence is the word that we need to use more often for the next decade. We have to deter juveniles from committing serious offenses.

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8) Victims Protection: What legal means, if any would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our County, including the unborn, the trafficked and the elderly?

Of course those that prey on our most vulnerable deserve the harshest sentences. However, it's not just the laws that must exist in order to secure harsh sentences for these offenders... the prosecutors handling the cases have to prioritize these offenses and refuse to negotiate on them. Although there are legislators that consistently attempt to enact legislation that protects unborn children, it is devastating that the legislation never makes its way to the Governor's desk. I want to see legislation signed into law that makes it a criminal offense for women to ingest illegal narcotics while pregnant.

9) Budget/Financial RoleAs District Attorney, how would you optimize, direct, and/or inspire your office to improve its process, efficiency, and effectiveness to maximize your resources to prosecute cases?

When elected, I will immediately cut down on wasteful spending by eliminating positions that my opponent has needlessly created. This will include the position he created for his wife. I will also immediately begin implementing electronic discovery so that attorneys for criminal defendants are given evidence in a timely and efficient manner that holds all parties accountable. I intend to re-structure the office by implementing vertical prosecution. This structure will create efficiency by causing prosecutors to take a closer look at cases in General Sessions court and ensure that serious cases do not fall through the cracks. Most importantly, I intend to inspire my office by supporting, encouraging, and listening to the people who work for me.

10) Constitutional Liberties: As a District Attorney what measures will you champion to protect the Constitutional liberties of all Hamilton County residents including guaranteeing due process and each of The Bill of Rights?

As a former public defender in Hamilton County I understand, on a unique level, the importance of constitutional rights and due process. Justice does not always mean that there will be a conviction. Justice does not always mean that the bad guy goes to jail. Because even the bad guy has unalienable rights. If the rights of just one criminal defendant are not protected, then our whole system is in jeopardy. As a prosecutor in Bradley County, if I believed the constitutional rights of a criminal defendant had been violated, I dismissed the case without hesitation. District Attorneys across the country should first and foremost uphold the constitution and protect the liberties that make this nation great.

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11) Citizens' Duty/Grand Jury: The grand jury is one of the unheralded tools the people have to monitor and correct waste and corruption in our government. What is your understanding of the grand jury system? What can the district attorney do to motivate and empower the members of our grand jury to investigate and explore goings on in all levels of our local government? Refence Antonin Scalia's Opinion - United States v. Williams, 112 S.Ct. 1735, 504 U.S. 36, 118 L.Ed.2d 352 (1992)

Tennessee law gives a lot of authority and power to the Grand Jury. As District Attorney, I will be present each time a new Grand Jury is empaneled. There should be more of an emphasis on the Grand Jury as a body of "inquirers" than simply a body that determines whether there is probable cause for an indictment. The Grand Jury is designed to be a body of citizens that has the authority and ability to dig into local government and determine what is working and what isn't. They're then called to report their findings. If utilized to the fullest extent the law allows, the Grand Jury has the ability to hold all of local government accountable to the people.

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Hamilton County
2022 Republican Primary Voter Guide
for Republican Party Candidates for COUNTY
Offices

Sheriff

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Sheriff | Survey Question Index

- 1) **Sheriff's Purpose:** What do you view as the purpose and role of the Hamilton County Sheriff?
- 2) **Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives:** What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Hamilton County Sheriff?
- 3) **Moral Values:** Should government laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?
- 4) **Constitution as a Sheriff:** What does the term "Constitutional Sheriff" mean to you and how is a Tennessee county sheriff positioned?
- 5) **County Citizen:** If an agency of the Federal Government violated the due process rights of a citizen in Hamilton County, what would you do?
- 6) **Government Overreach:** DHS just issued a document on February 7th 2022 "Summary of Terrorism Threat to the U.S. Homeland". The number 1 threat example they give is. "... there is widespread online proliferation of false or misleading narratives regarding unsubstantiated widespread election fraud and COVID-19. Grievances associated with these themes inspired violent extremist attacks during 2021."

Please explain why you agree or disagree with the statement made by DHS.
- 7) **Government Responsibilities:** Explain how the Sheriff is an integral part of protecting the lives and liberty of citizens of Hamilton County.

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AUSTIN GARRETT

Candidate Information

Email Address:	austingarrettsheriff@gmail.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Chief Deputy Of The Hamilton County Sheriff's Office
Resident of Hamilton County:	Austin Garrett moved to Hamilton County in 1993
Campaign Website:	https://AustinGarrettSheriff.com/

1) Sheriff's Purpose: What do you view as the purpose and role of the Hamilton County Sheriff?

As the constitutionally elected Sheriff, it is my duty to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of law enforcement services to the citizens of Hamilton County.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as a Hamilton County Sheriff?

I have 29 years of Law Enforcement experience which includes command and executive level responsibilities. 25 years of service at the CPD, retiring as a Lt in command of the special operations. During my time as chief deputy, we have cast vision and are transitioning to intelligence led law enforcement philosophy in the deployment to personnel and resources. This approach is one I will continue to lead as Sheriff as it contributes to the efficient and effective delivery of law enforcement services. My focus is on the overall reduction of crime and enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Hamilton County.

3) Moral Values: Should government laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Yes. Our country was established on Judeo Christian values which are reflected and forward in our constitution. Laws, ordinances, and regulations which stand with the constitution hold in the moral principles of the Ten Commandments.

4) Constitution as a Sheriff: What does the term "Constitutional Sheriff" mean to you and how is a Tennessee county sheriff positioned?

As Sheriff you are sworn to uphold our laws and defend both the US and Tennessee constitution. It is clear in the oath in which every sheriff is sworn by that I will be a sheriff who abides by the constitution. My power and authority rest in the constitution.

5) County Citizen: If an agency of the Federal Government violated the due process rights of a citizen in Hamilton County, what would you do?

Follow the law. I would follow the US constitution and the Tennessee Constitution. I consider one of the highest responsibilities as sheriff is to be ethical, moral, and legal.

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6) Government Overreach: DHS just issued a document on February 7th 2022 "Summary of Terrorism Threat to the U.S. Homeland". The number 1 threat example they give is. "... there is widespread online proliferation of false or misleading narratives regarding unsubstantiated widespread election fraud and COVID-19. Grievances associated with these themes inspired violent extremist attacks during 2021."

Please explain why you agree or disagree with the statement made by DHS.

If the elected body of the state of Tennessee or the United States passes a law that holds up to the constitution, I will obey the law.

7) Government Responsibilities: Explain how the Sheriff is an integral part of protecting the lives and liberty of citizens of Hamilton County.

It is important to note that the sheriff is elected by the people and answers to the people. The Sheriff is the highest elected Law Enforcement Officer. As sheriff, it is my job to be fair and balanced when discharging duties and protecting the rights of the citizens of Hamilton County.

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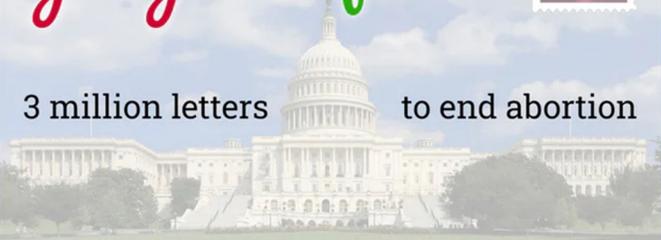
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