

**SUMNER COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, April 10, 2025, 4:00 p.m.**

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

**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

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

**II. APPROVE AGENDA**

Chairman Ehmling made the suggestion for the following Agenda modifications: 1) Add the SCEC reorganization after item II; 2) Call for an Executive Session with Attorney Tom Lee, via cell phone, after item VI.; and 3) Move V.A. and V. B. to follow V. C. Commissioner Hulsey made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Commissioner Fussell and the motion passed 5 – 0.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**IV. APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion by Commissioner Fussell, seconded by Commissioner Hulsey to approve the March 11, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes and the motion passed 4-0-1 with Commissioner Hulsey abstaining.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Commissioner Hulsey seconded by Commissioner Fussell to suspend the regular meeting and enter Executive Session at 4:06 p.m. and the motion passed 5 – 0. AOE called Attorney Tom Lee via cell phone and the Executive Session ensued. The Executive Session ended at 4:34 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hulsey and seconded by Commissioner Collins to conclude the Executive Session and reconvene the regular meeting. The motion passed 5 – 0.

- Chairman Ehmling exited the meeting at 4:41 p.m. due to a prior commitment. Commissioner Fussell transitioned to Acting Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

## **V. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATOR**

#### **- FACILITY UPDATE**

AOE stated that the County Commission had voted on and approved to submit to the SCEC a proposal to move the SCEC to the rear of the Archives Building (Warehouse portion.) SCEC Attorney Tom Lee was in receipt of the proposal and spoke to CC Attorney Ross Pepper. AOE to prepare points to present to SCEC Attorney Tom Lee for preparation of a response letter to CC Attorney Pepper.

#### **- BUDGET UPDATE**

AOE stated that the SCEC hearing before the budget committee would be held April 30, 2025, at 10:45 a.m. and all commissioners were welcome to attend. AOE expressed concerns that the budget committee and CC, based on past behavior, could cut the budgeted amount for Convenient Vote Centers, and immediate action would need to be taken because there are not sufficient locations within the current 24 defined districts for an additional 9 precincts that are now required due to the Sumner County population increase. AOE stated that at a budget meeting on February 10, 2025, Commissioner Boyt directed Finance Director Lawing to provide budget benchmarks from Rutherford County to AOE and the budget committee for review. AOE stated at that time that Rutherford County was not an appropriate county to utilize as a benchmark, as they had already implemented Convenient Vote Centers, and was not a true “apples to apples” comparison. Finance Director Lawing did not provide said benchmarks for the March 17, 2025 budget committee meeting and the matter was deferred. AOE stated that no benchmarks had been provided to date (April 10, 2025) for the upcoming April 14, 2025 budget meeting, and assumed the benchmark matter would once again be deferred.



- **EXECUTIVE ORDER UPDATE**

AOE stated that no response had been received following the letter submitted (as directed by the SSEC) to the State of Tennessee Division of Elections regarding funding issues created by the additional felony and citizenship requirements now placed at the individual county level. Furthermore, there have been no other directives regarding the citizenship verification process.

- **OTHER**

No further report.

Motion by Commissioner Hulse, seconded by Commissioner Shepherd to accept the AOE report as submitted, and the motion passed 4 – 0.

**C. INSPECTION – APPEAL PROCESSED VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS**

There was one appeal. ABW had inadvertently marked “Yes” to the “Have you been convicted of a felony?” declaration question. An appeal form was mailed to the voter who completed the form that they had not been convicted of a felony. After the Commissioners reviewed the documentation, a motion was made by Commissioner Shepherd, seconded by Commissioner Hulse to accept the voter registration application of ABW and the motion passed 4 – 0 to appropriately register the voter to vote.

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

Commissioners inspected 52 voter registration applications out of 518 new registration applications with no discrepancies noted. Commissioners present signed the report to be submitted to the State Division of Elections.

**REPORT FROM ELECTION COMMISSIONERS**

**A. CHAIRMAN**

No report from Acting Chairman Fussell.

**B. ELECTION COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Collins advised that the SCEC staff had made tremendous progress in scheduling statutorily required high school registration drives by contacting the principals directly, as opposed to contacting the Director of Schools and other management members. This appears to be good practice to keep in place going forward.


Commissioner Shepherd noted that a vote had not been taken during the prior SCEC reorganization discussion regarding the Chairman and Secretary positions. Motion by Commissioner Hulsey seconded by Commissioner Collins to elect M. Allen Ehmling as Chairman and Denise D. Shepherd as Secretary to serve the 2025 – 2026 Election Commission term, and the motion passed 4 – 0.

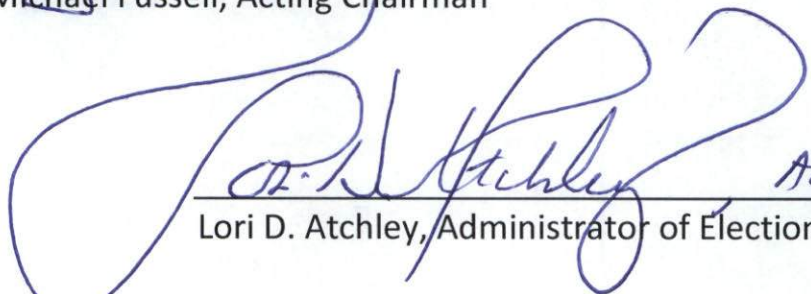
## VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Hulsey to adjourn the meeting and the motion passed 4 – 0. The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

  
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M. Allen Ehmling, Chairman

  
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Denise D. Shepherd, Secretary

  
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J. Michael Fussell, Acting Chairman

  
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Lori D. Atchley, Administrator of Elections AOE

### ABBREVIATION LEGEND:

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

SCC: Sumner County Commission  
SCM: Sumner County Mayor  
ES: Executive Session