

2026 Hamilton County Democrat Primary Election

Voter Guide

501(c)(3) - compliant
and nonpartisan

County Commission Dist. 7

County Primary Election | 5/5/2026



www.VoteChattanooga.org

**YOUR VOTE
MATTERS**

5/5/2026

Online Voter Registration/Record Updating available until 4/6/2026 at: <https://sos.tn.gov/elections>

Contact Church Voter Guides at: Info@VoteChattanooga.org | Updated 4/6/2026

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 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 2026 Democrat Primary Election Voter Guide for County Commission Dist. 7

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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 2026 Democrat 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 County Commission Dist. 7 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 County Commission Dist. 7 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 County Commission Dist. 7 throughout Hamilton County for their 2026 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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**Hamilton County
2026 Democrat Primary Election
Voter Guide
for County Commission Dist. 7**

**County
Commission**

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County Commission | Survey Questions Index

- 1) **Purpose:** What do you view as the purpose and role of the County Commission?
- 2) **Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives:** What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as County Commissioner?
- 3) **Budget:** What would be your top three spending, savings, and economic development priorities?
- 4) **Constitutional Liberties:** As County Commissioner, 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?
- 5) **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 poor and homeless, and the elderly?
- 6) **Moral Values:** Should government laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why, or why not?
- 7) **Speed cameras:** How would you address the use of automated speed cameras within the county (including those in school zones)? What oversight and transparency measures should be required to maintain public trust? Do speed cameras contradict constitutional protections within drivers' rights such as due process and the right to confront one's accuser?
- 8) **Zoning/Planning:** What policies would you support to prevent and disclose potential conflicts of interest between developers and members of Hamilton County's zoning and planning committees, and how would you ensure that land-use decisions are made transparently, ethically, and in the best interest of residents rather than private interests?
- 9) **Managing County Growth and Infrastructure:** What strategies and/or resources does the county currently have to better pace growth in Hamilton County so infrastructure, roads and emergency services can keep up with development? How would you use these tools to address this issue?
- 10) **Planning for Unincorporated Areas:** Do you support having a separate planning commission for the unincorporated areas? Please explain your reasoning, and if applicable, what steps you would take.

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County Commission Dist. 7

(In alphabetical order)



Laura Bertrand

Independent Survey by





Laura Bertrand

Candidate Information

Email Address:	lauragoeshamilton@icloud.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Counselor
Years as resident of:	11 years
Military Background:	none
Campaign Website:	facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585033273237

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

The purpose of the commission is to improve the lives of the people who live in Hamilton County by focusing on thoughtful development, education for all people, infrastructure, maintaining the natural beauty, and focusing on the health of residents.

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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 County Commissioner?

As a counselor I spend all day listening to people, and what I have learned is that many of the problems they seek mental health treatment for would be better addressed by improving their physical health, their social relationships, and getting them more money. Therefore, my initiatives would revolve around better paying jobs and decreases to housing costs, creation of third spaces, and caring for the creation all around us.

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

Firstly, thoughtful developing of new homes with a focus on how that will impact our current infrastructure and have negative environment impacts. Secondly, would like to see more local businesses moving into my district specifically. Thirdly, work to increase the public's knowledge about the commission's purpose, resolutions, and agendas.

4) Constitutional Liberties: As County Commissioner, 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?

Our First Amendment rights are the cornerstone of freedom in this country, they set the precedent for what comes after them. More importantly, they are the ways in which our neighbors and constituents tell us what is important to them. As for the question of what I as a commissioner would do to protect them, is not infringe on them. I will also be available to the press and to petitions for the redress of grievances

5) 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 poor and homeless, and the elderly?

I believe the best ways to support the most vulnerable in our community is by listening to them about what they need. The homeless need homes that they can afford, currently housing in Hamilton County is swiftly outpacing people's earnings. Ergo, bringing down the cost of housing and other essentials would have a wide benefit decreasing homelessness, poverty, and human trafficking. However, better paying jobs and housing does not fix all the problems. As a commissioner I would advocate to help provide economic assistance to local leaders who feel called to these service needs while maintaining support for existing programs.

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

I would prefer to see the teachings of Christ as bedrock for our moral principles. This would include serving "the least of these", forgiveness, compassion, and mercy.

7) Speed cameras: How would you address the use of automated speed cameras within the county (including those in school zones)? What oversight and transparency measures should be required to maintain public trust? Do speed cameras contradict constitutional protections within drivers' rights such as due process and the right to confront one's accuser?

Honestly, I had not really thought about this until reading this question, I would need to do a lot more research and thought into it. My immediate reaction is anything that improves safety within school zones is a good thing, in other locations I need to think about it more.

8) Zoning/Planning: What policies would you support to prevent and disclose potential conflicts of interest between developers and members of Hamilton County's zoning and planning committees, and how would you ensure that land-use decisions are made transparently, ethically, and in the best interest of residents rather than private interests?

We need more discussion from the people affected by zoning policies to have opportunities to discuss it and voice their concerns. This could be done through more utilization of technology for planning purposes such as social media, using connection platforms for meetings, and surveys. I also think that our land usage should have consistent environment considerations so that erosion, street run off, and pollution to our air do not affect our communities. I do not have any connections with land developers or others in the construction field as conflicts of interest.

9) Managing County Growth and Infrastructure: What strategies and/or resources does the county currently have to better pace growth in Hamilton County so infrastructure, roads and emergency services can keep up with development? How would you use these tools to address this issue?

In district 7 there are many considerations for how to develop moving forward, as there is the rural space of Apison and the very developed East Brainerd (which is already a nightmare at 7:30am on weekdays). I think that we need to consider how to adapt our schools and roads before changing zoning rules while involving our emergency services into these discussions most specifically Tri-Community Fire and the Sheriff's Department.

10) Planning for Unincorporated Areas: Do you support having a separate planning commission for the unincorporated areas? Please explain your reasoning, and if applicable, what steps you would take.

I grew up in an unincorporated town. I do not think we need a separate planning commission, however, we do need more transparency and better communication with the people who live there. The needs of rural residents often get side tracked by the developers who do not consider how construction run off or explosive building will impact local farms.

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An advertisement for "HOW TO RUN FOR OFFICE AS A CHRISTIAN CONSERVATIVE". It features a blue checkmark icon with a red and white striped banner above it. The text includes: "Comprehensive Campaign Training with a Biblical Worldview", "For Current and Prospective Candidates, Campaign Consultants and Managers, Candidate Families, Pastors, Campaign Volunteers, and All Citizens who Wish to Serve Our Nation by Glorifying God through Government", "Winning Back America ... One Candidate at a Time!", and "www.RunForOffice.training". A photo of Pastor Bill Redmond is shown with the text "Instructed by Pastor and Former U.S. Congressman Bill Redmond".

Logo for "choices" featuring a heart icon inside a speech bubble. Below it is a blue bar with the text "Saving and transforming lives since 1985".

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Advertisement for "july 2 life .com" featuring a background image of the U.S. Capitol building. The text includes "july 2 life .com" in a colorful, cursive font, a small American flag icon, and "3 million letters to end abortion".

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