

2026 Hamilton County Republican Primary Election

Voter Guide

501(c)(3) - compliant
and nonpartisan

County Commission Dist. 2

County Primary Election | 5/5/2026



www.VoteChattanooga.org

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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 Republican Primary Election Voter Guide for County Commission Dist. 2

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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 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 County Commission Dist. 2 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. 2 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. 2 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 Republican Primary Election
Voter Guide
for County Commission Dist. 2**

**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. 2

(In alphabetical order)



Chip Baker



Brad Wardlaw

Independent Survey by





Chip Baker

Candidate Information

Email Address: chipbaker58@gmail.com
Occupation/Vocation: Management
Years as resident of: 34
Campaign Website: chipbakercommission.com

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

As the legislative body of the County, our job is to work closely with the executive office to oversee the budget and operations of Hamilton County. With over 40 years in management, I bring a strong business acumen to the Commission, where others do not. Having run hospitals, events, and now teaching management, I bring a strong business perspective.

As a County Commissioner, not only do I oversee the business aspect of the County but I am also a problem solver. When my constituents have issues, my job is to get them resolved. This is a great strength of mine.

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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?

I have spent 40 years in management. With a Master's in Hospital Administration, I spent the first 20 years of my career in that field. My last position, in that field, was the Administrator of Children's Hospital at Erlanger. I changed careers in 1999 and ran the Riverbend Festival (and other events) for the next 20 years. For the past 7 years, I have taught management to our future community leaders. These experiences have allowed me to use my management expertise to lead our County with over a \$1 billion budget. We have a myriad of issues and opportunities (e.g. safety, schools, infrastructure) that allow me to use these skill sets to proactively help Hamilton County

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

I have a strong relationship with the Chamber of Commerce. The greatest opportunity to assist them would be with Enterprise South, Broad Street and the Bend developments. We have spending needs in infrastructure such as roads (\$150 million) and sewers (\$500 million). A better plan needs to be developed by our executive arm. Savings can be achieved through better economies of scale. A current opportunity is how we coordinate between the hotel/motel tax dollars and how we leverage these with opportunities with the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Board, Convention Center and all associated attractions. This will allow us to better market our community for business and visitors, allowing our hotels and attractions to flourish

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?

Constitutional liberties are paramount to our way of life. We must maintain these liberties in all forms, including freedom of speech, appropriate assembly, and religious freedom. There can be no compromise. For instance, before each Commission meeting, we have a prayer, that anyone has the opportunity to do. I support Sheriff Garrett and what he is doing to keep our community safe. I was integral in the development of Hamilton County jail (eliminating for profit Core Civic) with both Sheriffs Hammond and Garrett.

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 was the Administrator of Children's Hospital at Erlanger. My wife, Karlette, and I have 4 children. There is nothing more important than for us, as adults, to protect them. They look to us to take care of them and provide for them. The elderly, similarly, are due our respect and need us to do anything possible to honor their lives. They blazed the trail for us and are worthy of anything we can do to assist them. I worked with Senator Corker on their emphasis on trafficking. Lastly, I have a strong relationship with the City of Chattanooga and the Chattanooga Foundation on how we take care of the homeless population.

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

I am a Christian and believe in the Ten Commandments. To me, it starts with honoring my father and mother who were the best role models I have ever had. I hope and pray that I have been even half of that to our children. I think Karlette and I did pretty well in that category, though! Even though there might be government restrictions, in most cases, it is still possible to let the Ten Commandments prevail in everything we do.

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?

Speed cameras, if done right, can have a positive effect on speeding, particularly in school zones. I live on Signal Mountain and there is a speed gun on Shackelford Ridge Road. Now, this is not an official one but it does show how fast you are going. Does it make an impression on me? Absolutely. Due process is paramount, with official speed cameras, so if this is not the case then corrections should be made to follow due process.

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?

This is a big opportunity. Land rights should be respected but so should the rights of the community. Are sewers available? What about roads and schools? There needs to be a balance between smart development and overdevelopment. There needs to be a better dialogue between developers, realtors, public works (including roads and sewers), the school system, and the community. This does not happen but should be paramount in all development discussions. The County is funded primarily through property taxes so development needs to be done correctly.

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?

We have \$150 million in roads needs and \$500 million in sewer needs. There needs to be a better coordinated effort between builders, roads, sewers, schools, fire, EMS, police/sheriff to make sure that we have all the needed services to sustain the growth we need to remain a strong community. I set up a meeting last year with the RPA, Chamber, Realtors, Homebuilders, Public Works, Schools Administration and others to address this. This cannot be solely driven by the Commission as all other entities need to want to be at the plate. I will not let this need be exhausted by those who do not see the need or care.

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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.

About 80% of the Regional Planning Committees decisions are based on the City of Chattanooga needs. When looking at their Board composition, they are heavily represented by the development/sales/architect community. The Board composition should be more balanced. With only 20% of their decisions based on unincorporated Hamilton County needs, the Board should be more representative of that market. A separate planning commission would help with that disparity.

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Brad Wardlaw

Candidate Information

Email Address:	bdwardlaw@gmail.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Property Management/Home Improvement Contractor/Septic System Installer
Years as resident of:	45
Campaign Website:	bradforhamilton.com

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

I believe the primary role of the commission is to serve as a steward and a backstop for the citizens. Commissioners are entrusted with making decisions about how public money is spent, a responsibility that demands careful, transparent, and disciplined leadership. Every dollar should be used wisely, so that taxpayers never have to question our intent or our judgment.

The commission also serves as a safeguard for the community. In many cases, we are the last line of defense when it comes to decisions that impact people's daily lives—including spending, development, or critical infrastructure. That means we have a duty to slow things down when needed, ask hard questions, and make sure the long-term impact is fully considered.

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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 commissioner, my initiative would focus on strengthening long-term planning and making sure we are investing in the infrastructure and services needed to support our future—without passing the burden on to the next generation.

I'm committed to ensuring development follows infrastructure. That means using our planning tools the right way and making decisions that prevent overcrowded schools, strained roads, and overextended emergency services.

I believe in protecting taxpayer dollars by prioritizing spending that directly benefits the public. That includes holding departments accountable, reducing unnecessary bureaucracy, and making sure funds are allocated where they make the most impact.

We must ensure our Sheriff's Department and volunteer fire services are properly supported, especially as our county continues to grow.

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

Savings: We must take a hard look at spending and eliminate anything that isn't directly benefiting the public. That includes holding top-heavy school administration more accountable and making sure resources are getting to the classroom, not lost in bureaucracy.

Spending: We must invest where it truly matters. Volunteer fire departments currently receive .3% of the budget, yet they respond to a majority of calls across the county. With continued growth in unincorporated areas, they need sustainable, reliable funding. Public safety isn't optional, it's essential.

Economic Policy: Strong schools and well-planned infrastructure are the foundation for economic growth. If we plan ahead and invest wisely, we position our county to attract jobs and opportunities. If we don't, we risk falling behind.

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?

I believe that the constitution gives all citizens liberties that shouldn't be taken away or silenced. I will always agree that people have the right to speak and be heard by their elected officials as that is a main role in effective governing. Being able to keep religious freedoms and faiths is critical and should always be available to all. These are core principles I would never waiver on.

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 support real senior tax relief—from immediate relief to a full phase-down program—so that no senior is ever taxed out of their home. Protecting those who have spent a lifetime building our community should be a priority.

We must also fully support the Sheriff's Department to ensure public safety remains strong across our county. Safety is a fundamental responsibility of government, and it's not something we can afford to compromise.

At the same time, we need to take a smarter approach to homelessness. That means looking at the root causes rather than just spending money without a plan. If we don't address the underlying issues, we won't achieve lasting results.

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

I believe in the Ten Commandments. I also believe our laws should be grounded in broadly shared moral principles like honesty, respect for life, personal responsibility, and respect for others' property—values that are reflected in the Ten Commandments.

The role of government is not to enforce religion, but to protect the rights and freedoms of all citizens. We live in a broad and diverse community. People have many different beliefs so our laws must apply equally to everyone.

Also personally I believe if we followed the golden rule better, we would be in a much better place. Society is seeming to lose respect for other's opinions which must change so that real progress can be made.

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?

I do not support the use of speed cameras. There is a significant difference between issuing a ticket to a vehicle and holding an actual driver accountable. Questions about accuracy, identification, and whether the correct vehicle was cited only add to those concerns.

When it comes to school zones, our focus should be on real safety, not convenience. We should make every effort to have trained law enforcement officers present during arrival and dismissal times. Protecting children should be a top priority, not a budgetary tradeoff.

At the end of the day, enforcement should be fair, reliable, and centered on keeping people safe—not just issuing tickets.

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?

I believe public trust is everything when it comes to zoning and land-use decisions, and that starts with strong transparency and accountability standards.

I would support stricter disclosure requirements.

There must be clear recusal policies. The public should never question whether a decision was influenced by personal gain.

I also support making the process more transparent for citizens. Residents deserve time to review and respond.

Accountability matters. We need consistent oversight and a willingness to enforce these standards, not just talk about them.

We also must ensure we have people with the right skill sets reviewing these plans. Industry knowledge is critical to properly evaluate developments and understand their long-term impact.

Then the commission must use best judgment when approving.

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?

The challenge isn't a lack of tools. The problem is actually using them.

If elected, I would focus on enforcing a clear principle: development must follow infrastructure. That means using these tools to slow down projects when roads, schools, and emergency services can't support them yet. Hamilton County needs to push our Nashville legislative body like other Tennessee counties have in order to use those additional tools for improving growth.

We should be proactive not reactive. The commission has had every opportunity to do that but time and time again they haven't. When we actually use our power as commissioners, we can manage growth responsibly, protect our communities, and avoid passing today's problems on to the next generation.

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 do support the recent move to a county-only RPA, and I've been saying for some time that we needed it. Now that it's in place, we have a responsibility to make sure it operates the right way—with a clear philosophy that development should follow infrastructure, not outpace it.

At the same time, I think it's important to be honest about past decisions. Blaming the RPA for every issue overlooks the role commissioners have played. Many of these developments came before the commission, and stronger judgment should have been exercised instead of simply approving them.

This is an opportunity to reset expectations—focusing on thoughtful planning, accountability, and making decisions that truly serve the long-term interests of our community.

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An advertisement for a training program. It features a blue checkmark icon with a red and white striped banner above it. The text reads: "HOW TO RUN FOR OFFICE AS A CHRISTIAN CONSERVATIVE". Below this, it says "Comprehensive Campaign Training with a Biblical Worldview" and lists the target audience: "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". A photo of Pastor Bill Redmond is shown with the text "Instructed by Pastor and Former U.S. Congressman Bill Redmond". The slogan "Winning Back America ... One Candidate at a Time!" is written in a script font. At the bottom, the website "www.RunForOffice.training" is displayed in red and blue.

The logo for "choices" features a blue heart icon inside a speech bubble shape, followed by the word "choices" in a lowercase, blue, sans-serif font. Below the logo is a blue banner with the text "Saving and transforming lives since 1985" in white.

- ♥ VISIT TEAM.CHOICESCHATTANOOGA.ORG
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- ♥ GET INVOLVED!



An advertisement for "july 2 life .com". The text "july 2 life .com" is written in a colorful, cursive font. To the right is a small American flag icon. Below the text, it says "3 million letters to end abortion" in a bold, sans-serif font. The background is a photograph of the United States Capitol building.

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