



**Republican Party of
Rutherford County**

— May 2026 —

**Republican Primary
Voter Guide**



A very common misconception is that the Republican Party is a publicly funded entity. However, the Republican Party is a private organization. The only funds that the Republican Party of Rutherford County receive are from local donors like you. We do not receive any government funding, no money from the TN Republican Party (TNGOP), or from the Republican National Committee (RNC). 100% of our donations come from our Memberships and fundraisers and the money stays here in Rutherford County.

Please consider donating today to help fund initiatives like our Voter Guides, debates, leasing and maintaining our Headquarters, etc. We appreciate your support!

In Liberty,
Daniel Gammon, Chairman



***Republican Party of
Rutherford County***



***Republican Women of
Rutherford County***



***Rutherford County
Young Republicans***



Republican Candidates on the May 5th Ballot

**In order by last name*

** (I) notates an Incumbent*

<u>Circuit Court Clerk:</u> Melissa Harrell (I), Jeff McKinney	<u>Commissioner Dist. 14:</u> Wayne Irvin (I)
<u>County Clerk:</u> Lisa Duke Crowell (I)	<u>Commissioner Dist. 15:</u> Shawn McGowan
<u>Commissioner Dist. 01:</u> David Gammon, Jamie Knight	<u>Commissioner Dist. 16:</u> Phil Dodd (I)
<u>Commissioner Dist. 02:</u> Steve Percy (I)	<u>Commissioner Dist. 17:</u> Terry Hodge
<u>Commissioner Dist. 03:</u> Rick Hall (I)	<u>Commissioner Dist. 18:</u> Allen McAdoo (I)
<u>Commissioner Dist. 04:</u> Brian Burns, Robert Peay, Jr. (I), Michael Rodgers	<u>Commissioner Dist. 19:</u> No Republican Candidate
<u>Commissioner Dist. 05:</u> No Republican Candidate	<u>Commissioner Dist. 20:</u> Trey Gooch (I)
<u>Commissioner Dist. 06:</u> Eddie Arnold, Jonathan Beverly (I)	<u>Commissioner Dist. 21:</u> Jeff Lloyd, Clarence Santini
<u>Commissioner Dist. 07:</u> Michael Kusch (I)	<u>County Mayor:</u> Randy Allen, Joe Carr (I), Craig Harris
<u>Commissioner Dist. 08:</u> John Gaessler, Bill Tollett	<u>Murfreesboro City School Board:</u> Barbara Long (I)
<u>Commissioner Dist. 09:</u> Joshua James (I)	<u>RC School Board Zone 1:</u> Chuck Isbell, Tammy Sharp (I)
<u>Commissioner Dist. 10:</u> Phil Wilson (I)	<u>RC School Board Zone 4:</u> Katie Darby (I), Clarissa Smith
<u>Commissioner Dist. 11:</u> Anthony Johnson (I)	<u>RC School Board Zone 7:</u> Frances Rosales (I), Julie Wishing
<u>Commissioner Dist. 12:</u> Carl Boyd (I)	<u>Sheriff:</u> Kenneth Barrett, Trey Mansfield, Steve Spence
<u>Commissioner Dist. 13:</u> Brian Stoll	



Circuit Court Clerk

District: All of Rutherford County

Length of Term: 4yrs

Candidate(s): Melissa Harrell (I), Jeff McKinney

The Rutherford County Circuit Court Clerk is responsible for maintaining dockets, preserving records, and handling administrative matters for civil, criminal, and family-related cases (including divorce and child custody). They act as the public-facing hub for filing documents, processing payments, and issuing subpoenas or summons in accordance with Tennessee law.

Key responsibilities include:

- **Records Management:** Retaining and filing documents for Circuit, General Sessions, and sometimes specialized courts.
- **Case Administration:** Preparing dockets, issuing subpoenas, summons, and handling child support or divorce filings.
- **Financial & Public Duty:** Processing fees, fines, and acting as a public liaison for court information.

They also ensure the proper administration of oaths to witnesses and jurors.



Candidate Name: Melissa Harrell (Incumbent)

Background: I am the current Rutherford County Circuit Court Clerk and a lifelong resident of Rutherford County. I am a graduate of Riverdale High School and the proud mother of two sons, Colby and Corey, who were raised here with strong values of hard work, responsibility, and respect for the law.



Before being elected in 2014, I owned and operated a professional business for more than 24 years, where I gained hands-on experience in budgeting, management, and customer service. Since taking office, I have led the Circuit Court Clerk's Office with integrity, efficiency, and fiscal discipline. I am proud to be the only Rutherford County Circuit Court Clerk in more than 30 years to receive clean annual financial audits from the State Comptroller's Office—clear proof that taxpayer dollars are being managed responsibly.

Why am I running and what qualifies me? As a Conservative Republican and the current Circuit Court Clerk, I believe government should be limited, efficient, and accountable to the taxpayers it serves. I am running for re-election to continue modernizing office operations, improving customer service, and ensuring the Clerk's Office remains fiscally sound.

Under my leadership, the office has consistently operated under budget while responsibly generating revenue for the county—helping reduce pressure for property tax increases. Since the last election, my office has efficiently collected and turned over more than \$18,171,187.44 to the county, demonstrating careful stewardship of taxpayer dollars and a strong commitment to transparency and accountability.

What do I see as the biggest challenges? One of the most significant challenges facing the Clerk's Office is the State's planned implementation of a new statewide court system, which will require another major software conversion. As the current Clerk, I have successfully led the office through three prior system conversions, ensuring continuity of operations, data security, and minimal disruption to the public. My experience positions our office to manage this transition efficiently and cost-effectively.

In addition, state laws and court procedures continue to evolve. As a member of the Court Clerks Legislative Board, I work with state leaders to ensure Rutherford County remains compliant while advocating for practical, common-sense policies that respect local government and promote efficient court operations.

What goals would I like to accomplish? My priorities are simple and conservative: maintain clean audits, operate within our means, modernize responsibly, and provide dependable, professional service to the public. I am committed to running the Clerk's Office like a well-managed business—focused on accountability, results, and respect for taxpayers—while supporting the fair and orderly administration of justice.



Candidate Name: Jeff McKinney
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Facebook: facebook.com/electjeffmckinney
Instagram: Instagram.com/electjeffmckinney



Background: My name is Jeff McKinney, and I am proud to call Rutherford County home. I have been a Rutherford County resident for most of my life. This community means everything to me. I have been married to my wife, Amy, for over 10 years. We have two wonderful chocolate labs - Bryant and Maggie. My family originally moved to Murfreesboro to start the Boys and Girls Club of Rutherford County where my dad, Steve McKinney, worked as the Executive Director for 20+ years. I attended Central Middle School and Oakland High School where I graduated in 1992. I am a proud United States Army Veteran, having served as a Combat Medic. I spent five years working in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office and am currently employed by the District Attorney's Office. I am a lifetime member of Disabled American Veterans as well as a member of The American Legion Post 141.

Why am I running and what qualifies me? I am not a politician. I am just a hardworking person who cares deeply about serving others. It is truly my desire to make a real difference for our community. During my time working in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office, I experienced firsthand how critical the role of the Circuit Court Clerk's Office is to our judicial system, our local attorneys, law enforcement, and most importantly, the citizens we serve. I was able to personally identify areas where improvement, leadership, accountability, and support for the employees are desperately needed. That experience led me to pursue this role, as I am confident that I can address the gaps necessary to ensure the Circuit Court Clerk's Office operates at its best.

What do I see as the biggest challenges? One of the biggest challenges for the employees in this office is the lack of respect, accountability, and dependable leadership. Our employees deserve a leader who values their work, listens to their concerns, holds every employee to the same fair standards, and is willing to collaborate with them, leading by example. Another serious issue in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office is the extremely high employee turnover rate, which was unheard of under previous Circuit Court Clerks' tenures. Constant employee turnover disrupts the flow of daily operations, increases training costs, and slows down service to the public. Most importantly, it hurts employee morale and places extra strain on the remaining staff. Addressing these challenges requires a leader who will be present, dependable, transparent, and committed to supporting each and every employee while delivering excellent service to our community. Strong leadership matters.



(Jeff McKinney continued...)

What goals would I like to accomplish? My goal is to rebuild a Circuit Court Clerk's Office that serves our community with integrity, efficiency, professionalism, and compassion. First, I want to create a positive, respectful workplace where the employees feel valued, supported, and empowered. When employees are respected and are equipped with necessary training, overall morale will improve, the department turnover rate will decrease, and service to the public will improve. Second, I will restore accountability and dependable leadership. That means consistently being present, accessible, and leading by example. Finally, my goal is to restore pride in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Why I chose to run as a Republican.

I chose to run as a Republican because... I chose to run as a Republican because the values of the Republican party align with my personal views and beliefs. If elected, I look forward to serving the citizens of Rutherford County.



County Clerk

District: All of Rutherford County

Length of Term: 4yrs

Candidate(s): Lisa Duke Crowell (I)

The Rutherford County Clerk is an elected, four-year constitutional officer serving as the clerk to the county legislative body and handling public records. Responsibilities include issuing marriage licenses, business licenses, notary commissions, motor vehicle registrations, and county beer permits, along with managing probate records (wills) and various taxes.

Key duties and functions of the Rutherford County Clerk include:

- **Licensing and Registration:** Issuing motor vehicle titles and registrations, marriage licenses, business licenses, pawnbroker licenses, and notary public commissions.
- **County Commission Support:** Serving as the secretary to the County Commission, which includes keeping official minutes and records of the commission and the Rutherford County Beer Board.
- **Record Management:** Maintaining public records, including county records, and handling probate of estates (wills) and conservatorships/guardianships.
- **Tax Collection:** Collecting various taxes, such as hotel/motel/campground taxes and business taxes.
- **Other Services:** Assisting with passport applications and conducting marriage ceremonies.

The office serves as a central hub for residents to handle motor vehicle registration, notary services, and various county-level legal and business records.



Candidate Name: Lisa Duke Crowell (Incumbent)

Background: My name is Lisa Duke Crowell, and I am running for re-election of Rutherford County Clerk. I moved to Murfreesboro in 1972 and have proudly called Rutherford County my home ever since. I have been married to my husband, Jeff, for 24 years. Together we have a combined family of 3 wonderful adult children: Kenny and his wife Crystal, Kevin and his wife Marla, Morgan and her husband Martin. We also have 8 amazing grandchildren: Kloey, Colby, Malayna, Cameron, Charlotte, Shelby, William and Sophie, ranging in age from 26 years old to 5 years old. I also have the privilege of still enjoying my parents Faye and Jim Martin.



I attended Riverdale High School, Boro Barber Academy and the Nashville School of Real Estate. I began my Real Estate career in 2002 until I took office on September 1, 2010.

Since taking office as the Rutherford County Clerk, I have earned several achievements including:

- Tennessee County Clerk of the Year 2023-2024
- Leadership Rutherford Class of 2016
- Certified Public Administrator Class of 2017
- Certified County Finance Officer Class of 2022
- Local Government Leadership Program Class of 2022
- Served as the Tennessee County Clerk's Association Legislative Chairman from 2019 - 2023
- Served as Secretary/Treasurer for the Tennessee County Clerk's Association 2023 – 2024
- Served as the Legislative Chairman for the County Officials Association of TN 2022 – 2023
- Currently serving as the President for the Tennessee County Clerk's Association Fun Fact or

Hobby: I enjoy Zumba when time allows, I also like to read, draw, paint, walk, and volunteering at church and most of all I love spending time with my family and friends.

Why am I running and what qualifies me? I have a vision of what the Rutherford County Clerk's Office should be, which includes a friendly and knowledgeable team. We have been diligently working toward that vision. This work includes adding multiple kiosks to 2 of the County Clerk's office locations, adding a third County Clerk's office location in the Blackman area of Murfreesboro with an outdoor kiosk that serves the public with renewal availability 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I continue to see improvements that need to be implemented, and I work toward those goals for the betterment of the County Clerk's Office, it's future, the services to the public, and our team.



(Lisa Duke Crowell continued...)

I chose to run as a Republican because... I have believed in the values and standards of the Republican principles for more than 30 years. I strive to bring those principles to the County Clerk's office in the way we operate the office. Taking pride in values that the Republican party represents and passing those values on for generations to enjoy all while providing my constituents transparent, ethical, professional and friendly service.



Register of Deeds

District: All of Rutherford County

Length of Term: 4yrs

Candidate(s): Heather Dawbarn (I)

The Rutherford County Register of Deeds, is responsible for creating, preserving, and providing public access to legal records, primarily focusing on property transactions, deeds, liens, and mortgages. The office ensures accuracy in real estate ownership, manages fee-based recording, and utilizes modern technologies like e-filing and digitization to maintain secure, transparent records.

Key Responsibilities in Rutherford County

- **Recording Legal Documents:** The office records, indexes, and preserves essential documents, including warranty deeds, quitclaim deeds, deeds of trust, mortgages, liens, plats, and power of attorney.
- **Public Record Access:** The register serves as the custodian of property records, offering a transparent and efficient system for public access.
- **Property Tax Base Support:** The records filed are essential for defining the local government's property tax base.
- **E-Filing and Digital Transformation:** Modernizing the office through digital document preservation, in-sourcing, and electronic filing (e-filing).
- **Fee Management:** Processing recording fees, handling overages by keeping them in the office account, or issuing refunds



Candidate Name: Heather Dawbarn (Incumbent)

Phone: (615) 898-7870

Email: Heatherrdawbarn@aol.com



Background: My name is Heather Dawbarn and I have been married to Jake Robinson for 40 years. We have 2 beautiful married daughters, Sydney (Lucas) and Whitney (Walker). God added to our blessings with 4 precious grandchildren, London (12), Jude (2.5), Madeline (19 months) and Peter (2 months.) We've lived in Smyrna, Murfreesboro and now Rockvale since 2003.

Both our daughters and their families live in Murfreesboro, so Rutherford is our home place!

Why am I running and what qualifies me? I am running for reelection to the office of Register of Deeds. I was first elected to this office in 2010 which made me the first Republican to ever hold the seat in Rutherford County. My goals then and now are to make and preserve a record of instruments required or allowed by law to be filed or recorded. These records provide public notice of property ownership, liens, contracts and other transactions that affect the public interest. Each term has revealed new technologies and strategies for improving the services provided by the Register's office and opportunities to influence much needed legislation. Working within organizations such as the Tennessee Association of Registers and the County Officials Association of Tennessee has allowed me to showcase Rutherford County's forward leadership within the State and share our success with other Registers across the state.

What do I see as the biggest challenges and what goals would I like to accomplish? The biggest challenge facing the Rutherford County Register's office is our growth. Utilizing a strategy of innovation combined with strong staff development through a vigorous cross training program, the Rutherford County Register's office has become a recognized front runner across the state. Realizing our constituents had growing concerns in regard to property fraud, we worked alongside our software vendor in creating a fraud alert system. Property owners in Rutherford County may go to mylandalert.com and register for a free service which notifies an individual if anything in their name is recorded within the Register's office.

I chose to run as a Republican because... I chose to run as a Republican because I believe in limited government which is accountable to the citizens. In taking my oath, I commit to uphold the constitutions of Tennessee and the US, with integrity without prejudice, partiality or favor.



Trustee

District: All of Rutherford County

Length of Term: 4yrs

Candidate(s): Teb Batey (I)

The Rutherford County Trustee is an elected official serving as the county's treasurer, responsible for collecting property taxes, managing and investing county funds, and dispersing revenue to local departments. Key duties include acting as the county bank, administering state-sponsored tax relief programs for elderly/disabled residents, and managing cash flow for government, education, and highway departments.

Key responsibilities of the Rutherford County Trustee include:

- Tax Collection: Acting as the primary agent for collecting all state and county property taxes, with taxes typically due by the first Monday in October.
- Financial Management: Serving as the county treasurer by handling all receipts and disbursements for operating departments.
- Investment of Funds: Investing idle county funds to generate interest.
- Tax Relief Programs: Administering the state's tax relief program and the senior tax freeze for qualified residents.
- Record Keeping: Maintaining accurate records of tax payments and performing daily reconciliation of accounts.



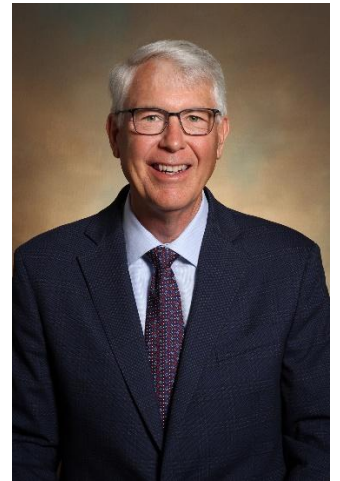
Candidate Name: Teb Batey (Incumbent)

Phone: (615) 642-4391

Email: teb@miltoncoc.org

Background: My name is Teb Batey. My wife Kari and our three children, Houson, Kate, and Taylor, live on our family farm in the Milton Community.

We attend the Milton Church of Christ where I preach most Sundays. I am a proud graduate of Middle Tennessee Christian School, David Lipscomb College earning a degree in Finance & Economics, and MTSU earning a Master's Degree in Business Administration.



Why am I running and what qualifies me? The responsibility of being an effective elected official requires two things: 1) to serve the community unselfishly and 2) to perform your duties with commitment and competency. I believe my background in customer service, business management and training in finance is beneficial to the citizens of Rutherford County. I am running again for the Office of Trustee because I love coming to work every day to serve my community and I want to continue the improvements I have envisioned for the Trustee's office.

What do I see as the biggest challenges? The biggest challenge is to implement beneficial technologies while continuing to provide personal service to our citizens. The world continues to lose personal contact. While technology allows the Trustees Office to be more accessible, convenient and efficient, I continue to care about the individuals and desire to serve and communicate in very personal ways.

What goals would I like to accomplish? I want to be innovative in making the Trustee's Office convenient and for the Trustee's Office to be the most helpful place to do business.

I chose to run as a Republican because... I believe in the ideals of individual freedom and less, but effective, government. I support the principles of the Republican Party.

