

COALITION FOR A BETTER MEMPHIS
Shelby County Clerk Candidate Questionnaire
Election Date: May 6, 2014

**AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THIS FILE CAN BE RECEIVED BY SENDING AN EMAIL
TO peggy@bettermemphis.org**

Name: John H. Freeman

Section 1: Qualifications and Background (1 question)

Section 2: Vision and Strategies (2 questions)

Section 3: Improving the System (1 questions)

1. QUALIFICATIONS AND BACKGROUND

1. How does your education, and experience in personnel and technology systems management qualify you for this position?

A good part of my college experience was in Computer Management. I then spent seven (7) years in government administration, and for the last eighteen (18) years have been project coordinator on several projects.

My education and experience have provided me with the ability to quickly assess a situation and determine several efficient outcomes. During my time in the Congressional Offices, I resolved staff and public issues on a daily basis.

I believe my experience in government and public service over the last 22 years qualifies me to hold this office. I worked for five (5) years as Field Director for Congressman Harold Ford and two (2) years at District Director for Congressman Harold Ford Jr. In those positions, I was involved in tracking the outcomes of literally thousands of constituent service cases. I worked for four (4) years as an aid to Country Mayor AC Wharton, and eight (8) months working Mayor Joe Ford on government efficiency projects ranging from more efficient government services to their implementation. My seven (7) years of service with County

SHELBY COUNTY CLERK CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: JOHN H. FREEMAN

Government in the Mayor’s Office, General Services and Corrections has given me extensive experience dealing with all branches of government, the County Commission, and the State Legislature. So I will bring these experiences to the County Clerk’s office in order to strengthen the level of customer service and efficiency to the taxpayers.

2. VISION AND STRATEGIES

- 1. How efficient and technologically up-to-date is our present system of record keeping and fee collection in the Shelby County Clerk’s office?**

A majority of the technology in the County Clerk’s Office is good and serves its purpose due to a committed staff. However, technology is constantly changing and there are more efficient ways to maintain records.

The office adds services when they can and to be more efficient, but the website is awkward to navigate at times and not easily accessible by the public.

- 2. Based on your awareness of voter concerns, what should be the Shelby County Clerk’s priorities be during the next four years?**

I believe the voters are more concerned about Shelby County Government in general, than about the County Clerk’s Office. However, I believe they want to see that their taxes are not raised and to some extent, where their tax dollars are going, which means they want to have more convenient and efficient services to get their needs accomplished in a timely manner.

Thus, whatever the Clerk’s Office can do to be more available without increasing fees is a priority. The Clerk’s Office needs to be more accessible for getting renewals and duplicate IDs or Driver’s Licenses. Currently, you can only go to the Main Office, which is downtown and has very limited parking and inconvenient hours (closes at 4:15 p.m.).

The Office needs to work in tandem with the Tennessee Department of Safety and other Clerks’ Offices to offer more services to the residents of Shelby County. For example: develop a pilot program to bring the office to the community through mobile services.

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There should be more direct access to the website. The user should be able to find documents and get their questions answered, and if not, they should be directed to an office and/or staff to assist them.

The main goal is to provide more convenient services to the residents of Shelby County. A taxpayer should not have to take time off from work to get government services.

3. IMPROVING THE SYSTEM

- 1. How will you ensure honest, effective and efficient operation of office of the Shelby County Clerk?**

There will be checks and balances for all functions in the office. The goal is to be as transparent as possible.

The Clerk's Office is there to serve the residents of Shelby County. The integrity of the office is important to maintain the public's trust of everyone being treated fairly and equally for their needs.

All staff and the public will be advised of the consequences of special favors or any other transactions that are outside of the established functions of the office. There will be weekly staff meetings with executive staff to review policies for the office and address any concerns, and bi-weekly or monthly meetings with other staff members to address more specific concerns and improvements.

The staff will be encouraged to ask questions if they are unsure of something, and to bring other questionable matters immediately to the attention of their supervisor. The priority is to provide convenient, efficient and transparent services.

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