

Tennessee Trial Court Vacancy Commission
Application for Nomination to Judicial Office

1/17/23

Name: Matthew Jason Grosland

Office Address: Office of the Public Defender, 18th Judicial District, 150 West Main
(including county) Street, Suite 302, Gallatin, Sumner County, TN 37066

Office Phone: (615) 451-5833 Facsimile: (615) 451-5840

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED], Gallatin, Sumner County, TN 37066
(including county)

Home Phone: [REDACTED] Cellular Phone: (same)

INTRODUCTION

Tennessee Code Annotated section 17-4-301 et seq. charges the Trial Court Vacancy Commission with assisting the Governor and the People of Tennessee in finding and appointing the best qualified candidates for judicial offices in this State. Please consider the Commission's responsibility in answering the questions in this application questionnaire. For example, when a question asks you to "describe" certain things, please provide a description that contains relevant information about the subject of the question and, especially, that contains detailed information that demonstrates that you are qualified for the judicial office you seek. In order to properly evaluate your application, the Commission needs information about the range of your experience, the depth and breadth of your legal knowledge, and your personal traits such as integrity, fairness, and work habits.

This document is available in Microsoft Word format from the Administrative Office of the Courts (telephone 800-448-7970 or 615-741-2687; website www.tncourts.gov). The Commission requests that applicants obtain the Microsoft Word form and respond directly on the form. Respond in the box provided below each question. (The box will expand as you type in the document.) Review the separate instruction sheet prior to completing this document. Your complete application, including both the original and digital copies, must be received by the Administrative Office of the Courts on or before the deadline prescribed in the Notice of Vacancy. See section 1(g) of the application instructions for additional information related to hand-delivery of application packages.

THIS APPLICATION IS OPEN TO PUBLIC INSPECTION AFTER YOU SUBMIT IT.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND AND WORK EXPERIENCE

1. State your present employment.

I am currently employed as an Assistant Public Defender with the 18th Judicial District Office of the Public Defender in Gallatin, TN.

2. State the year you were licensed to practice law in Tennessee and give your Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility number.

I was licensed in 2013. BPR #031726.

3. List all states in which you have been licensed to practice law and include your bar number or identifying number for each state of admission. Indicate the date of licensure and whether the license is currently active. If not active, explain.

Tennessee, #031726, active, licensed in 2013.

4. Have you ever been denied admission to, suspended or placed on inactive status by the Bar of any State? If so, explain. (This applies even if the denial was temporary).

No.

5. List your professional or business employment/experience since the completion of your legal education. Also include here a description of any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law in which you have ever been engaged (excluding military service, which is covered by a separate question).

Assistant Public Defender

18th Judicial District (Sumner County), Gallatin, TN
July 2021 to Present, and May 2013 to February 2017

Owner

Grosland Mediation Services
2017 to Present

Owner

Grosland Law Firm
May 2017 to July 2021
Hendersonville, TN 37075

Associate Attorney

March 2017 to May 2017
DeSalvo Law Firm, Nashville, TN

Prior to Completion of Legal Education

Engineer/IT Manager

September 2003 to May 2013
Department of Recording Industry, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN

- Developed and authored several web applications for various departmental functions
- Co-authored grant proposals and program review documentation
- Served as Information Security Officer for the Department until 2012
- Served as technical liaison to software manufacturers
- Served as Chairman of the College of Mass Communications Technology Committee, member of the Marketing Committee, and brief term as Departmental Information Security Officer
- Managed the department website
- Managed the Mac and Windows computing environments
- Managed all student worker lab assistants, including interviewing, hiring, and scheduling, until 2008
- Consolidated digital assets and provided backup solutions for facilities and infrastructure
- Provided temporary onsite computer solutions for visiting industry professionals
- Secured pricing arrangements with audio software companies

Co-founder Codigita, LLC

October 2008 to present

- Expert witness consultation for criminal defense attorneys
- Retained EsquireBilling.com from J. Solutions, LLC, and further developed and maintained the service
- Information technology support for small businesses

Co-founder J. Solutions, LLC

August 2007 to October 2008

- Developed EsquireBilling.com
- Built custom web application solutions for small businesses
- Provided onsite information technology services for small to medium businesses

System Administrator

April 2000 – September 2003
Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Facilities, Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA

- Migrated an outdated inventory system to a modern database web application
- Windows 2000/XP Domain creation and maintenance, fileserver solutions, printing environments, client support

- Exclusive maintainer for the Macintosh environment
- Developed secure solutions for distributed resources such as scanner/printer mailboxes

6. Describe the nature of your present law practice, listing the major areas of law in which you practice and the percentage each constitutes of your total practice.

As an Assistant Public Defender, I am currently restricted by statute to representing criminal defense clients to whom I am appointed by the courts of Sumner County.

7. Describe generally your experience (over your entire time as a licensed attorney) in trial courts, appellate courts, administrative bodies, legislative or regulatory bodies, other forums, and/or transactional matters.

During my years in private practice, family law and criminal defense were the majority of my case load. I also successfully represented clients in areas of trademark/copyright, conservatorships, trade secret litigation, disability discrimination, corporate dissolution, and juvenile delinquent/unruly and dependent/neglected cases. My overall experience included trial courts, general sessions courts, and appellate courts, in the counties of Sumner, Davidson, Rutherford, Robertson, and Dickson. My family law practice included divorces, post-divorce proceedings, custody disputes, termination/adoptions, and paternity matters. My criminal defense experience runs the gamut from simple misdemeanors, to child rape, aggravated robbery, and first-degree murder.

8. Describe any matters of special note involving your practice in trial courts, appellate courts, and administrative bodies.

I was honored to sit as a Special Judge for the late General Sessions Judge Mike Carter in Sumner County. I won my first jury trial after the jury deliberated for only 20 minutes. I have created novel legal concepts that allowed cases to be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, particularly in the area of criminal law.

9. Describe any other legal experience, not stated above, that you would like to bring to the attention of the Commission.

I have been a Rule 31 listed mediator in General Civil, Family, and Domestic Violence, since 2017, and was proud to successfully mediate family law and estate cases. I also participated as a Judge in a local Mock Trial Competition.

10. List and describe all prior occasions on which you have submitted an application for any state or federal judicial position.

I have not previously applied for a judicial position.

EDUCATION

11. List each college, law school, and other graduate school which you have attended, including dates of attendance, degree awarded, major, any form of recognition or other aspects of your education you believe are relevant, and your reason for leaving each school if no degree was awarded.

Education and Training

Tennessee Rule 31 Certified Mediator: General Civil, Family Law, Domestic Violence

Florida Mediation Training, May 2021

Tennessee Domestic Violence Training Certified, December 2017

Tennessee General/Civil Crossover Certified, August 2017

Tennessee Rule 31/Family Law Mediation Certification, June 2017

The Nashville School of Law, Nashville, TN

Doctorate of Jurisprudence, December 2012, GPA 3.98, Class Rank 1; highest GPA in the school's 101-year history

Public Defender of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, Nashville, TN

Internship, December 2011 through January 2012

Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA

Masters of Music in Percussion Performance, 2002, GPA 3.92, Computer Science core curriculum

Concordia College, Moorhead, MN

Bachelor of Arts in Music, 1996, GPA 3.53, Magna Cum Laude

Attended from 1992-1993, Spring 1994-1996; transferred to St. Olaf College in the interim.

St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN

Attended from 1993-Fall 1994; transferred back to Concordia to complete music degree.

Awards and Highlights

The Founders' Award

December 2012, Nashville School of Law, Nashville, TN

Achieved highest GPA in the history of the school

The Cooper's Inn Honor Society

December 2012, Nashville School of Law, Nashville, TN

Henry Phillips American Inns of Court, Nashville, TN

August 2012 through 2014

Lead Counsel, 3rd and 4th Year Moot Courts

Nashville School of Law, 2011 and 2012

Philippa T. Thompson Memorial Scholarship recipient

December 2011, Nashville School of Law, Nashville, TN

Trustee & Faculty Scholarship recipient

January 2010 and 2011, Nashville School of Law, Nashville, TN

Publications

"Go Forth and Infringe No More." Entertainment Law COMMENT, King & Ballow Law Offices, Vol. 25, Number 5, May 2011

"Patience Isn't Always a Virtue." Entertainment Law COMMENT, King & Ballow Law Offices, Vol. 25, Number 4, April 2011

PERSONAL INFORMATION

12. State your date of birth.

██████████ 1973.

13. How long have you lived continuously in the State of Tennessee?

Nearly 21 years.

14. How long have you lived continuously in the county where you are now living?

Approximately 14 years.

15. State the county in which you are registered to vote.

Sumner.

16. Describe your military service, if applicable, including branch of service, dates of active duty, rank at separation, and decorations, honors, or achievements. Please also state whether you received an honorable discharge and, if not, describe why not.

I have no military service background.

17. Have you ever pled guilty or been convicted or are now on diversion for violation of any law, regulation or ordinance other than minor traffic offenses? If so, state the approximate date, charge and disposition of the case.

No, nor have I been charged with any.

18. To your knowledge, are you now under federal, state or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute or disciplinary rule? If so, give details.

No.

19. Please identify the number of formal complaints you have responded to that were filed against you with any supervisory authority, including but not limited to a court, a board of professional responsibility, or a board of judicial conduct, alleging any breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by you. Please provide any relevant details on any such complaint if the complaint was not dismissed by the court or board receiving the complaint. You may wish to request a report from the appropriate supervisory authority (or authorities) for a complete history.

I believe I have received only 2 CAP letters (Consumer Assistance Program), and to the best of my knowledge they were dismissed as being without merit. I have not been able to get written confirmation from the BPR, but was advised that if I did not hear from them within 45 days of my response, I could consider the matters dismissed. CAP letters occur more often in appointed criminal cases and rarely, if ever, result in formal complaints.

20. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities or creditors within the last five (5) years? If so, give details.

No.

21. Have you ever filed bankruptcy (including personally or as part of any partnership, LLC, corporation, or other business organization)?

No.

22. Have you ever been a party in any legal proceedings (including divorces, domestic proceedings, and other types of proceedings)? If so, give details including the date, court and docket number and disposition. Provide a brief description of the case. This question does not seek, and you may exclude from your response, any matter where you were involved only as a nominal party, such as if you were the trustee under a deed of trust in a foreclosure proceeding.

No.

23. List all organizations other than professional associations to which you have belonged within the last five (5) years, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in

such organizations.

I have donated considerable time to youth hockey organizations over the last 5 years, as a volunteer coach and as a play-by-play announcer. Organizations include the Nashville Junior Predators, Southeast Selects, Hendersonville Hat Tricks, the Nashville Flyers, and the Music City Marauders.

24. Have you ever belonged to any organization, association, club or society which limits its membership to those of any particular race, religion, or gender? Do not include in your answer those organizations specifically formed for a religious purpose, such as churches or synagogues.
- If so, list such organizations and describe the basis of the membership limitation.
 - If it is not your intention to resign from such organization(s) and withdraw from any participation in their activities should you be nominated and selected for the position for which you are applying, state your reasons.

No.

ACHIEVEMENTS

25. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you have been a member within the last ten years, including dates. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such groups. List memberships and responsibilities on any committee of professional associations which you consider significant.

Sumner County Bar Association (on and off since 2013); TN Bar Association until approximately 2018. TN Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers 8/2013-12/2018, 9/2021 to present.

26. List honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received since your graduation from law school which are directly related to professional accomplishments.

15-year State service award from the Public Defender's Conference. Henry Phillips American Inns of Court 2013-2014.

27. List any public office you have held or for which you have been candidate or applicant. Include the date, the position, and whether the position was elective or appointive.

I have not held public office.

ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS

28. What are your reasons for seeking this position? *(150 words or less)*

Since sitting as Special Judge for Mike Carter, I have wanted to be a judge. Analysis, dedication to the rule of law, and the ability to remain neutral and detached, are among my strongest attributes. My goals are to ensure parties in my court know they will be heard and treated fairly under the law, and that attorneys know the rules of the justice system will be adhered to.

29. Describe the judgeship you seek (i.e. geographic area, types of cases, number of judges, etc. and explain how your selection would impact the court. *(150 words or less)*

I am seeking the new Circuit Court Judicial position in Sumner County. There are currently two Circuit Court judges in Sumner County (one civil, one criminal) and one Chancellor. According to the Chancellor, the new judgeship would likely be a hybrid of both criminal and family law cases, presumably to offset the increasing trial backlog in both circuit courts. My experience as a family law practitioner and criminal defense lawyer is ideally suited to assume this position. My experience in various other areas of law will also provide flexibility for caseload assignment. My desire and ability to be a good steward of the law of the State of Tennessee, to best serve my community, will ensure that whatever role is given to this judgeship will be fulfilled.

30. Will you uphold the law even if you disagree with the substance of the law (e.g., statute or rule) at issue? Give an example from your experience as a licensed attorney that supports your response to this question. *(250 words or less)*

There can be no other answer than yes. Variations of the word “impartial” appear in 3 of the 4 Canons of Judicial Conduct. Judges enforce the law impartially, as referees must. They cannot line-item veto laws they disagree with, nor can they create laws to suit their wishes.

I will not hesitate to uphold the laws of this State, even if I personally disagree with them.

In my current role as an advocate, the law obligates me to zealously advocate for all of my clients and maintain confidentiality. I did so even if a client verbally abused or insulted me, and I ensured that opposing counsel was unaware of their treatment of me.

Additionally, upholding the law begins with understanding it.

Criminal sentencing laws are complex and ever-changing. For example, mandatory consecutive sentence rules, statutory parole eligibility, mandatory fines/fees, no double-usage of pre-trial jail

credits on consecutive sentences, are all potentially detrimental to criminal defendants.

I have refused to convey settlement offers, demanded by clients, where the resulting disposition would violate sentencing laws to my client's benefit. I have reminded opposing counsel of these rules during plea negotiations, where settlement offers they made would violate those rules. I may disagree with these rules, especially in the role as a zealous advocate, but I still upheld them.

As a Judge, the role changes from advocate to referee, but the duty to follow applicable laws does not change.

REFERENCES

31. List five (5) persons, and their current positions and contact information, who would recommend you for the judicial position for which you are applying. Please list at least two persons who are not lawyers. Please note that the Commission or someone on its behalf may contact these persons regarding your application.

A. Attorney Lindsey Ralston Reeder, Partner, Phillips Ralston Law, [REDACTED], Gallatin, TN 37066. Ph: [REDACTED]

B. Attorney Patti Garner, Owner, Garner Law Firm, PLLC, [REDACTED], Hendersonville, TN 37075. Ph: [REDACTED]

C. Attorney Vince Wilcox, Professor, Trevecca Nazarene University, [REDACTED], Franklin, TN 37067. Ph: [REDACTED]; Email: [REDACTED]

D. Casey Davis, Executive Director, Greater Muhlenberg Chamber of Commerce, [REDACTED] (cell), [REDACTED] (office)

E. Phil Knisley, Owner, [REDACTED] Hendersonville, TN; Ph: [REDACTED]

AFFIRMATION CONCERNING APPLICATION

Read, and if you agree to the provisions, sign the following:

I have read the foregoing questions and have answered them in good faith and as completely as my records and recollections permit. I hereby agree to be considered for nomination to the Governor for the office of Judge of the Circuit Court of the 18th Judicial District of Tennessee, and if appointed by the Governor, agree to serve that office. In the event any changes occur between the time this application is filed and the public hearing, I hereby agree to file an amended questionnaire with the Administrative Office of the Courts for distribution to the Commission members.

I understand that the information provided in this questionnaire shall be open to public inspection upon filing with the Administrative Office of the Courts and that the Commission may publicize the names of persons who apply for nomination and the names of those persons the Commission nominates to the Governor for the judicial vacancy in question.

Dated: April 4, 2024.



Signature

When completed, return this questionnaire to John Jefferson at the Administrative Office of the Courts, 511 Union Street, Suite 600, Nashville, TN 37219.



**TENNESSEE TRIAL COURT VACANCY COMMISSION
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS**

511 UNION STREET, SUITE 600
NASHVILLE CITY CENTER
NASHVILLE, TN 37219

**TENNESSEE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
TENNESSEE BOARD OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT
AND OTHER LICENSING BOARDS**

WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I hereby waive the privilege of confidentiality with respect to any information that concerns me, including public discipline, private discipline, deferred discipline agreements, diversions, dismissed complaints and any complaints erased by law, and is known to, recorded with, on file with the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, the Tennessee Board of Judicial Conduct (previously known as the Court of the Judiciary) and any other licensing board, whether within or outside the State of Tennessee, from which I have been issued a license that is currently active, inactive or other status. I hereby authorize a representative of the Trial Court Vacancy Commission to request and receive any such information and distribute it to the membership of the Commission and to the Office of the Governor.

Matthew Grosland

Type or Print Name

Signature

4/4/2024

Date

031726

BPR #

Please identify other licensing boards that have issued you a license, including the state issuing the license and the license number.
