

Tennessee Trial Court Vacancy Commission
Application for Nomination to Judicial Office


1/17/23

Name: Jeffery S. Greene

Office Address: 321 E. Broadway, Newport, TN 38721
(including county)

Cocke County

Office Phone: 423-623-7271 Facsimile: 423-623-9052

Email Address: 

Home Address: 
(including county)

Cocke County

Home Phone: _____ Cellular Phone: 

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.

McSween, McSween, & Greene, PLLC
Attorney Town of Parrottsville
Attorney Town of Dandridge

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

2006 BPR# 025414

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 BPR#025414. Licensed Since October 19, 2006
License is currently active.

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).

Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility Hearing Committee
Special Master for Circuit Court
Attorney for Cocke County Partnership
Attorney for Cocke County School System

Attorney for Newport Utility Board

Attorney for Cocke County

Attorney for City of Newport

4th Judicial Districts Attorney Office (Intern) 2004

Prior to going to college, I had a video rental store in Jefferson City and Dandridge.

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.

Real Property & Title Work Issues 50%, Municipal Law 10%, Contract Law 17%, Probate 10%, Wills & Trust 10%, Guardian Ad Litem 3%

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.

My general experience as an attorney has been mostly in civil matters. I have practiced in Chancery Court, Circuit Court, Probate Court, Juvenile Court, Federal Court, Bankruptcy Court, and represented clients in administrative hearings before Federal ALJ's.

I have served as Special Master in Circuit Court on divorce cases involving division of assets.

I fill in as Cocke County Session Judge for when needed for arraignments and traffic court.

I represent the Town of Dandridge at their meetings and represent all their regulatory bodies, which include the Historic Planning Commission, Planning Commission and the Board of Mayor and Alderman. I assist in the writing of ordinances and resolutions. I am the Town prosecutor and prosecute all violations of Town code.

I represent the Town of Parrottsville at their meetings and with any legal issues that may arise. I assisted the Town of Parrottsville in establishing the Town Police Department and the Town Court system.

I represent Newport Utilities Board, Dandridge Water System and the Parrottsville Waste Water System and assist with any issues that may arise.

I represent the City of Newport and Cocke County as their property tax attorney, and I am responsible for filing the delinquent tax cases.

I am an Agent for First American Title Insurance and my office handles title work and closings.

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

I represented Coker County against Evergreen Paper in their fight regarding variances to their Wastewater Permit. The case was in Federal Court in the Western District of North Carolina. At that time Coker County was, and still is, working to clean up the Pigeon River. I worked with lead counsel in this case, the Southern Environmental Law Center, in opposing variances in the level of chemicals permitted in the Pigeon River and issues regarding color and clarity of the water. While not successful in completely stopping the variance, we were able to get agreements to reduce the quantity and level of pollution in the Pigeon River. Prior to the completion of their next permit request Evergreen closed the papermill.

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

I worked as an appointed attorney in Juvenile Court for many years and still have a few pending cases in which I am the Guardian Ad Litem. My time working as a GAL in Juvenile Court brought a new perspective to what it means to be an attorney and counselor. As GAL you do not just represent the legal interest of the client, but you are there to assist them through this difficult time in their life. Some of the children are small and you must look out for their best interest without much input from the child. In many cases the children are old enough to know that their parents have issues, and they need more than just legal advice. In those cases, we as attorneys and as their Guardian Ad Litem must put on our counselor hat and advise those kids as openly and honestly as we can. They have questions about their futures, about school, careers, and life in general and they have very few people to turn to with those questions. I felt privileged to be able to help those children and hope that a few kind words and positive advice helped at least one child make it through one of the hardest parts of their life. I have several kids that I was GAL for that are now grown and I receive thank you letters and cards from them about their careers and families and it always puts a smile on my face.

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

Federal Magistrate - 2014

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.

Appalachian School of Law, Grundy Virginia	2003 – 2006
Juris Doctorate, 2006	
Deans List: 2004, 2005	
Honors: Graduated in the top third of my class	
Vice President Federalist Society Vice President Republican Law Society	
Tusculum College, Greeneville, Tennessee	2001 - 2003
B.S. Organizational Management, 2003	
Walters State Community College	1984 – 1985
No degree	

PERSONAL INFORMATION

12. State your date of birth.

██████ 1966

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

58 years. I went to law school in Virginia but maintained my residence in Tennessee.

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

5 years in Cocke County but prior 25 years in Jeferson County which is also in 4th Judicial District.

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

Cocke County

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.

N/A

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

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 have had one formal board complaint filed against me in 2017. It was filed regarding an easement issue from a real estate closing that I worked on. The complaint alleged a conflict of interest because my office had also handled the closing (at a different time) on the adjoining lot. Complaint was dismissed by the board without a hearing.

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)?

Yes. I filed Chapter 13 bankruptcy in 1998, which was prior to me entering college or beginning law school. At the time I had closed my business and had a newborn child. Filing is what gave me the opportunity for a fresh start. I seized on that opportunity to complete my bachelor's degree and then went on to law school. I took what could have been a negative in my life, learned from it, and used it to create a positive future for me and my family.

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.

Yes:

1. Renz vs. Abbott - Cocke County Chancery Court 2016-CV-46
This case was regarding the same easement issue that the Board complaint was filed about. The issue was an easement that burdened the Renz lot for the benefit of the Abbott lot. The original Defendant's included the developer, and the neighboring lot owner. McSween, McSween and Greene, PLLC was added as a Third-Party Defendant later because we were the title company. The case was settled and dismissed.
2. Rienhart vs. Greene and McSween, McSween and Greene, PLLC
Hawkins County Circuit Court CC-22-CV-48
This case involves an easement for lake access in which the neighbor claims an easement to access the lake across the purchaser's lot. My office is the title company that handled the closing and title work. The Defendant's include myself, my office and in a separate complaint the Seller. The case is still open.

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.

Kiwanis Club of Newport - Board of Directors 2008 to 2012 - President 2010 - 2011

Cocke County Planning Commission – 2022 - Current

Tennova Hospital (Cocke County) Advisory Board – 2024 - Current

Treasurer Newport Bar Association – 2008 - Current

City of Newport Fire Department Civil Service Board - 2011 - Current

Tennessee Promise 2016 – 2021

Clark Cemetery Board - Current

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.
- a. If so, list such organizations and describe the basis of the membership limitation.
 - b. 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.

Tennessee Association of Property Tax Professionals – 2016 to current

American Land Title Association – Office a member since 2006

Tennessee Bar Association – 2006 to current

Newport Bar Association – Treasurer - 2008 to current

Federalist Society – 2006 to current

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.

Lawyers of Distinction 2023 in Real Estate Law

2019 Newport Plain Talk Choice Award, Best Attorney

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.

Cocke County Delinquent Tax Attorney – Appointed 2011

City of Newport Delinquent Tax Attorney – Appointed 2011

ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS

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

I am seeking the position of Circuit Court Judge because I believe that I can make a difference. I have spent the last 18 years as an attorney working and living in the 4th Judicial District. I grew up in Dandridge, my family is from Cocke County, where I now reside, and my mom and step-dad lived in Sevier County. I have seen a need for a Civil Judicial Position in the 4th district for several years. I believe that I would be able to immediately step into the position and assist the existing Judges with their current workload. I am experienced in most civil issues, have an even temper and calm demeanor.

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 Circuit Court judgeship for the 4th Judicial District. This District currently has four circuit court judges and one chancellor. My selection to the newly created judgeship, which will handle the civil docket, would impact the court and the district by allowing our current circuit court judges to focus on criminal trials. Currently the judges only have a few days per month to hear civil cases as their criminal dockets take up most of the courts' calendar. My selection to this position would allow for civil cases to proceed at a quicker pace and will allow the other judges to focus on the criminal docket.

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)*

Yes, that is the essence of being a Judge. Sometimes the law conflicts with your personal beliefs or with what you consider common sense. That does not give you the right to substitute your own personal beliefs for the rule of law. In a recent case I represented a widow that did not file for her elective share for more than 90 days after her husband passed away. The issue was that her mother-in-law produced a will more than 90 days after he passed. At trial, the Court agreed that the will was produced more than 90 days after his death but, absent fraud, the widow had waived her right to elective share. I disagree with this statute because a surviving spouse in an intestate estate must elect against a will they may not know exists, within 90 days from the death

of their spouse, or be forever barred. That said, it is the way the statute is now written and the way it must be enforced until it is changed.

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. Carter Moore – 4 th Judicial District, Circuit Court Judge – [REDACTED]
B. Jimmy Dunn – 4 th Judicial District, District Attorney – [REDACTED]
C. Rex Henry Ogle – 4 th Judicial District, Circuit Court Judge – [REDACTED]
D. Rob Mathis – Cocke County Mayor – [REDACTED]
E. George Gantte – Mayor Town of Dandridge – [REDACTED]

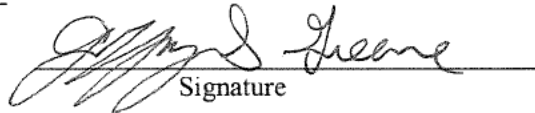
AFFIRMATION CONCERNING APPLICATION

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 4th 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: June 7th, 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.

Jeffery S. Greene

Type or Print Name

Jeffery S. Greene

Signature

June 7th 2024

Date

025414

BPR #

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

TN Dept. of Commerce & Insurance

License # 788761 - Title Insurance Producer
