

## **“Elections 101”**

One of the duties of a probate judge is to serve as the chief election official for all elections held within the county. Alabama law states that the probate judge, sheriff and circuit clerk are charged with ensuring that all elections are carried out with accuracy and integrity. With election buzz getting stronger each week, I thought this would be a good time to offer a crash course in ‘Elections 101’.

Elections occur in every even numbered year in Henry County. They fall into three general categories: (1) Primary Election, (2) Runoff Election and (3) General Election. Primary and Runoff Elections are primary functions of the county committees. The chair of the Henry County Republican Committee is Chris Capps. Mr. Capps has served as chair for 23 years. His contact numbers are 334-678-7994 or 334-596-3399. The chair of the Henry County Democratic Committee is Sherri Johnson. Ms. Johnson is in her first year of service in this capacity and may be reached at 334-727-0801. She replaces Winston Griggs, who served in this position for 35 years.

The Primary Elections will be Tuesday, March 5, 2024. They are actually two separate elections and are held in each voting location on the same day and administered by the same staff. The Runoff Elections, if needed, will be held six weeks later on April 16, 2024. Runoff Elections occur when there are more than two candidates running for the same office within the same party and none of the candidates receive 50% of the total plus one vote. When this is the case, the two candidates with the most votes participate in the runoff. If there are only two candidates in a race, no runoff is necessary.

The General Election will be held on November 5, 2024. It is the final election of the year and each race will match the Democratic nominee (Primary or Runoff winner) vs. the Republican nominee (Primary or Runoff winner). Write-in ballots ARE counted in the General Election but ARE NOT allowed in Primary or Runoff Elections.

There are fourteen voting locations in Henry County. One of my first goals eleven years ago was to gradually dispense of the old portable voting houses. They had served their time and were a challenge for the almost 100 poll workers who serve during our elections - especially for senior citizens who comprise the majority of our election clerks. Most of our voting precincts are now located in churches throughout Henry County. Our clerks will now have the use of indoor restroom facilities, will serve in a comfortable and safe environment and will no longer be concerned with leaving into a darkened area three hours after sundown following the November election. We are grateful to those churches that have become a part of the election process. We will address the location in all voting precincts in the next few weeks. Other information may be obtained from the Board of Registrars at 334-585-6080.

If you are interested in being a candidate, qualifying opened for the Democratic party on September 29 and will end November 9. Republican party candidates may qualify any day between October 16 and November 9. A candidate’s first contact should be to either Ms. Johnson or Mr. Capps. They will provide you with the amount of the qualifying fee as well as other information vital to all candidates. More information may be found at [www.sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes/candidates](http://www.sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes/candidates). This site serves as the primary instruction manual for all candidates. We encourage you to also visit our new website at [henrycountyal.com](http://henrycountyal.com) and click on ‘Probate’. With March 5<sup>th</sup> now just 152 days away, election prep is already underway. I encourage you to exercise your freedom to vote as well as to consider seeking an office of public service. We look forward to your participation.

### Thirty Day Review:

- Citizens with last names beginning with 'U', 'V', 'W', 'X', 'Y' or 'Z' are reminded that your tag renewals (as well as all business licenses) are to be renewed in October.
- Sept. 8 – ADAH records webinar
- Sept. 12 – Wallace College Foundation Board meeting
- Sept. 13 - #911 Board meeting in Headland
- Sept. 14/15 – ACCA Board workshop and retreat – Lake Martin
- Sept. 19 – HCYLP 'Leadership Day' at Troy University
- Sept. 21 – August Administrative and Commission meetings
- Sept. 22 – Wiregrass Chapter of Leadership Alabama Luncheon - United Way in Dothan
- Sept. 25 – HCHR Board meeting – Henry County Nursing Home
- Sept. 26 – Site visit from Homeland Security re: 'Elections Security' Training
- Sept. 28 – SEARP&DC Board and annual meeting – Enterprise
- Sept. 29 – Wiregrass Forum breakfast – Ozark
- Sept. 29 – first day to qualify to run on the Democratic ballot (see info above)
- Oct. 4/5 – APJA Elections Conference - Tuscaloosa

### Dates to Remember:

- Oct. 9 – Columbus Day holiday
- Oct. 12 – HCYLP Board meeting – Headland
- Oct. 12 – Wallace College 'An Evening on the Savannah River' auction/dinner – Dothan
- Oct. 16 – first day to qualify to run on the Republican ballot (see info above)
- Oct. 18 – HCYLP 'Agriculture Day' – various farming related stops in Henry County
- Oct. 19 – October Administrative meeting – Herndon Building – 10:00 AM
- Oct. 19 – October Commission meeting – Annex Building – 1:00 PM
- Oct. 19 – HudsonAlpha Elected Officials Focus meetings – Wiregrass Foundation
- Oct. 25/26 – ACCA Legislative workshop – Montgomery