

**COALITION FOR A BETTER MEMPHIS**  
**Shelby County Clerk Candidate Questionnaire**  
**Election Date: May 4, 2010**

Name: LA'KEITH MILLER

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**Section 1: Qualifications and Background (1 question)**

**Section 2: Vision and Strategies (2 questions)**

**Section 3: Improving the System (1 questions)**

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<b>1. QUALIFICATIONS AND BACKGROUND</b>
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- 1. How does your education, and experience in personnel and technology systems management qualify you for this position? (Please answer in the space below and attach a resume.)**

**I have worked for public and private universities in business operations and financial management capacities for more than twelve years. I have experience managing multimillion dollar budgets with extensive experience in cash management, staff supervision, and budget preparation. I have been traditionally trained in financial management and administration. I can immediately identify weaknesses in internal controls and can identify where changes are needed. While working in administrative positions at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Crichton College, and Middle Tennessee State University I have assisted with internal and external audits. As an Accounting Manager at Middle Tennessee I was on the team responsible for the implementation of the new large scale Banner Financial System. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from Tennessee State University and a Master's and Specialist Degree in Higher Education Administration from Middle Tennessee State University. As a Business Manager at the University of**

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**Tennessee Health Science Center I manage a \$16 million dollar maintenance and operations budget. I am also responsible for the authorization of expenses, authorizing hires, contract management, budget management, fleet management, management of payables and receivables, and management of the administrative staff. As the Director of Accounting at Crichton College, I was responsible for the day to day business and financial operations for a college with 900 students. This included cash management, budgeting, banking, staff supervision, and development of long term strategic planning. I have learned and worked with four different large scale financial systems. I can have an immediate impact in the Clerk's office and hit the ground running.**

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## **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?**

**The Shelby County Clerk's office has done a very poor job of record keeping as demonstrated in the last quarter of 2009 when the office was late sending out notifications of expired motor vehicle registration. This can be solved by upgrades to the information systems in the Clerk's office. This type of oversight should have never happened and could be easily solved. There are methods that would not have to involve a massive upgrade if cost is the problem. There are several database systems that are inexpensive that can give alerts when it is time for renewals.**

**I have found the fee collection system for motor vehicle registration to be downright archaic. We should not have to stand in line for hours to renew our registration. I believe that there are steps that I can take that could help with this problem. Within the City of Memphis there should be satellite locations located closer to the vehicle inspection facilities. These sites would only renew motor vehicle registrations. This would help with the long lines and difficulty in parking at the central locations. After waiting in line for hours, we should not have to drive many miles away from the testing centers just to renew our motor vehicle registration. I am anxious to see the collection methods for the other divisions and find where improvements can be made.**

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

**The first issue should be to root out any problems remaining from the prior administration. This could be done by having an audit conducted by the State Comptroller's Office. With all due respect to the District Attorney's Office, a thorough financial audit should be conducted by an outside entity that does these types of audits all of the time. If there are additional concerns raised by the audit, I will deal with them immediately. I would not want to continue the ethical business of the County Clerk's Office with doubt that there may be others that were involved in scandal that are still working there.**

**The second priority would be to provide the strong leadership that it takes to establish an environment intolerant of corruption. This is what the office was missing to begin with. Many of the problems would not have occurred if there was strong leadership.**

**The third priority would be to improve the services by integrating new technologies. Walking into the Clerk's office should not be a walk back in time. We should soon develop a mechanism for online payment of motor vehicle registration so that we don't have to stand in line for hours.**

**The fourth priority is to provide courteous service in an efficient and productive manner. No one wants to be in line waiting to pay for a sticker. We should at least greet the customer with a smile to show that we really do care about them. They may have already waited in line for hours at an emissions testing center. I want the customer's experience to be pleasant and swift.**

**Finally, I will serve as a Clerk that Shelby County residents can count on to be an excellent steward of their money. I will always be aware that we are handling the peoples' money. And as difficult as times are for everyone, there should be a heightened sense of fiduciary responsibility.**

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**3. IMPROVING THE SYSTEM**

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

**I will first have an independent audit conducted by the State Comptroller's Office. This will help to identify problems that may not have been discovered previously. I will personally use my experience in financial management to periodically review transactions to ensure that the proper forms and support have been turned in to the office. I will all also learn how to do every job in the Clerk office so that I will know for myself the difficulties that are faced by employees. This will also help me to find areas for improvements in technology. I will provide leadership that makes clear that corruption will not be tolerated. It will be known very early that if an employee is involved in illegal activities they will be terminated. Also, the Shelby County Clerk Office will do everything in its powers to assist authorities. I will also look at the practices of other Clerk offices in Tennessee and in other states to determine what the best practices are. I want to incorporate ideas and strategies that will make the Office more friendly and efficient.**

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