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Authorities and Corporations

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Authorities and Corporations

Reference Number: CTAS-461

Information about the Solid Waste Authority can be found under Environment in the County Operations Topic.

Airport Authority Board of Commissioners

Reference Number: CTAS-481

A county legislative body may, by resolution, create an airport authority. If the county creates an airport authority, the county legislative body appoints at least five and no more than 11 commissioners to manage the affairs of the airport authority. After the initial appointments for one, two, three, four and five years to create staggered terms, the commissioners are appointed for terms of five years. T.C.A. § 42-3-103. Two or more counties or municipalities may form a regional airport authority. If such a regional airport authority is formed, the governing body of each participating local government by agreement appoints one or two commissioners to serve on the regional airport board. If each local government appoints one commissioner and this results in an even number, then the governor appoints an additional commissioner. If the method of each local government appointing two commissioners is chosen, then when the appointed commissioners convene, they appoint one additional commissioner, and if they cannot agree the governor makes the appointment. T.C.A. § 42-3-104. An additional method of forming a regional airport authority by three or more municipalities, counties and at least one political subdivision of another state is provided in § 42-3-104. Airport commissioners serve without compensation but are entitled to necessary expenses, including traveling expenses, incurred in the discharge of their duties. T.C.A. § 42-3-107.

Additionally, any county or counties may enter into an agreement for a joint action with other public agencies form a joint airport authority. T.C.A. § 42-3-202. If such joint action is taken a joint board is established pursuant to an agreement approved by the governing body of all participating governmental entities. The number of members, their terms and compensation, if any, are determined by the agreement. T.C.A. § 42-3-203.

Industrial Development Corporation Board of Directors

Reference Number: CTAS-483

After a certificate of incorporation has been issued by the secretary of state establishing an industrial development corporation for a county, the corporation is managed by a board of directors of any number not less than seven as established in the certificate of incorporation. The directors must be qualified voters and taxpayers of the county. T.C.A. § 7-53-301. The Attorney General has opined that "taxpayers of the county" includes individuals making payment of any type of tax--not just property tax. Thus, membership cannot be limited to only landowners within the county. Tenn. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 99-142.

The directors of a county-sponsored industrial development corporation are elected by the county legislative body for terms of six years except for the initial election of three groups of directors with terms of two, four and six years to create staggered terms. No director of a county-sponsored industrial development corporation may be an officer or employee of the county. T.C.A. § 7-53-301. County officials may serve on the board of directors of a joint industrial development corporation; however, county employees are not eligible to serve on joint corporation boards. T.C.A. § 7-53-104. Directors serve without compensation except for reimbursement of actual expenses incurred in performance of their duties. T.C.A. § 7-53-301. Directors are required to complete a conflict of interest statement acknowledging that they have received a copy of § 12-4-101. The statement must include acknowledgements that the director understands that they are required to refrain from voting on matters in which the director is directly interested and that the director must disclose any matter in which they are indirectly interested before voting on the matter. A sample conflict of interest statement is available on the Tennessee Ethics Commission's website.

Emergency Communications District Board of Directors

Reference Number: CTAS-482

A county legislative body may by resolution create an emergency communications district within all or a part of the territory of the county if the creation of the district is approved by the voters at a referendum election in the area proposed for the district. T.C.A. § 7-86-104. In most counties, if an emergency communications district is created, its board of directors consists of seven to nine members appointed by the county mayor subject to confirmation by the county legislative body for terms of four years, except for the initial terms of two, three and four years to create a staggered system. Requirements regarding membership on the board of directors in Shelby, Davidson, Knox and Hawkins counties are somewhat different due to exceptions made by narrow population class in the general law. T.C.A. § 7-86-105. This board manages the emergency communication system (911) within its area according to the powers given to it by general law at T.C.A. § 7-86-101 *et seq.*

Public Building Authority Board of Directors

Reference Number: CTAS-484

A county public building authority is formed when three or more people who are qualified to vote in the county apply to the county legislative body to incorporate a public building authority and the county legislative body approves the application. A public building authority is a public nonprofit corporation and an instrumentality of the county that may be used in the financing, construction, maintenance, leasing or disposition of public buildings and infrastructure. The board of directors of the public building authority is appointed by the county mayor subject to confirmation by the county legislative body in a number not less than seven who serve terms of six years except for the initial appointments to terms of two, four and six years to create staggered terms. A director of a county public building authority cannot be a county officer or employee. The directors serve without compensation except for reimbursement of expenses. A municipality may also form a public building authority. T.C.A. § 12-10-101 *et seq.*

Transit Authority Board

Reference Number: CTAS-486

Any county or municipality, or combination thereof, may establish a transit authority for public transportation. The county or county and other counties or municipalities creating the transit authority may create a board or other management entity and prescribe the qualifications and eligibility of members of such transit authority. T.C.A. § 7-56-101.

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