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MINUTES OF THE
 TENNESSEE ADVISORY COMMISSION
 ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

3 May 2018

Meeting Called to Order

The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations met in House Hearing Room II of the Cordell Hull Building at 1:03 p.m., Chairman Mark NORRIS presiding.

Present 18	Absent 7
Mayor Tom Bickers	Mayor Ernest Burgess
Metropolitan Trustee Charles Cardwell	Ms. Christi Gibbs
Representative Mike Carter	Senator Thelma Harper
City Commissioner Betsy Crossley	Representative Antonio Parkinson
Deputy Commissioner Paula Davis	Mayor Larry Waters
Mayor Brent Greer	Senator Bo Watson
County Executive Jeff Huffman	Senator Ken Yager
Representative Harold Love Jr	
Mayor Kenny McBride	
Mayor Keith McDonald	
Regional Director Iliff McMahan	
Senator Mark Norris	
Representative Charles Sargent	
Vice Mayor Kay Senter	
Comptroller Justin Wilson ¹	
Representative Tim Wirgau	
Senator Jeff Yarbro	
Mr. Kenneth Young	

¹ Kristina Podesta represented Justin Wilson

1. Call to Order and Approval of the Minutes

Chairman Mark NORRIS called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m., dispensed with the calling of the roll, and requested approval of the minutes of the January 2018 meeting. Regional Director Iliff MCMAHAN moved approval, and Metropolitan Trustee Charles CARDWELL seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Commission and Staff Update

Policy Coordinator Matthew OWEN provided an update on several programs for improving broadband access and adoption. He explained that in February 2018, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) finalized the list of census blocks that will be eligible for its Connect America Fund Auction (CAF Auction), which will assist providers in expanding coverage by offering funding to offset the cost of deploying broadband infrastructure in unserved areas. The unserved census blocks in Tennessee eligible for the CAF Auction contain almost 13,000 homes and businesses and are home to more than 23,000 Tennesseans. Bidding for the auction's first round begins July 24, 2018. In response to Chairman NORRIS' questions about how the bidding process for the CAF Auction works and whether bids are placed by providers or other entities, Dr. OWEN said that providers bid to receive funding, and that he did not know the specific eligibility requirements for providers to participate in the program. [Note: Providers had to apply to participate in the CAF Auction. Applications were due March 30, 2018, but the FCC has not determined the final list of eligible bidders. In general, providers had to either (1) demonstrate two years of experience providing a voice, broadband, or electric distribution or transmission service and submit one year of audited financials or (2) submit three years of audited financials and a letter of interest from an eligible bank willing to issue a letter of credit for a specified amount.] Chairman NORRIS said that it would be beneficial if there were coordination so that providers that are competing for funding through the state's grant program are also competing for funding through federal programs like the CAF Auction. In response to Representative WIRGAU's question about the length of time providers would have to build out coverage to the locations in their winning bids, Dr. OWEN said that they would have to offer service to at least 95% of the locations within six years.

Next, Dr. OWEN discussed the state's broadband accessibility grant program. On January 26, 2018, the Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) announced that nine projects had been awarded funding in the program's first grant cycle. These projects will expand coverage to a total of at least 5,200 locations across 13 counties. Representative SARGENT noted that some projects that received funding from the first round of the state program appear to be for areas that are also eligible for the CAF Auction and asked how the FCC determined eligibility for its CAF program. Dr. OWEN responded that because the FCC based its determination on coverage data reported as of December 31, 2016, there is some overlap between areas where projects

received funding from the first round of state grants and areas that have been deemed eligible for the CAF Auction. He said that he did not know whether the FCC would consider the results of the first round of the state grant program when conducting the auction later this year or whether ECD would take the CAF Auction into consideration when assessing applications for the second round of the state grant program. The state budget passed by the General Assembly for fiscal year 2017-18 increased funding for the state's program by \$5 million to a total of \$15 million. Applications for the second round become available July 17 and are due October 11, with awardees expected to be announced in February 2019.

Dr. OWEN also provided information on the state's Broadband Ready Communities program and Broadband Adoption Working Group. Twenty-two communities across the state have been designated as broadband ready communities. The designation, consistent with recommendations in the Commission's 2017 broadband report, is intended to signal providers that these communities have adopted permitting and zoning procedures for streamlining the deployment of broadband infrastructure. Based on the discussions of the Broadband Adoption Working Group, ECD has released a webpage with links to a variety of resources for communities to use when planning to meet their local broadband needs or when developing programs for encouraging broadband adoption. Several of these resources were among those identified in the Commission's report.

Following Dr. OWEN'S update, Dr. LIPPARD informed the Commission that staff had made two minor, technical changes to one of the recommendations in the January 2018 report to ensure it was consistent with interpretations of the state's open records law. Staff also added clarifying language supporting the recommendation.

Turning to staff updates, Dr. LIPPARD recognized Deputy Executive Director Melissa BROWN for 20 years of state service and Senior Research Associate Bob MOREO for five years of service. Dr. LIPPARD concluded the updates by informing the Commission that Senior Research Associate Jennifer BARRIE had been asked by the Department of Human Resources to write an article for their leadership newsletter in recognition of her exceptional work on TACIR's professional development program.

3. Fiscal Year 2017-18 Accomplishments

Deputy Executive Director Melissa BROWN summarized the Commission's major accomplishments for the past fiscal year, which will be incorporated into the biennial report for fiscal years 2016-2017 and 2017-18.

4. Legislative Update

Senior Research Associate Nathan SHAVER reviewed legislative action during the second session of the 110th General Assembly on issues related to Commission studies.

The legislature passed or considered legislation on several issues related to the Commission's work, some dealing directly with findings and recommendations from commission reports. The General Assembly also passed seven pieces of legislation requiring studies by the Commission pertaining to the following issues: nontax-producing properties, small cell wireless facilities, criminal statutes of limitation, GPS monitoring as a condition of bail for domestic abuse offenders, creation of a food desert relief enterprises fund, credit to shipper's franchise and excise tax liability (Shelby County), and multi-school system counties. The General Assembly's legislative committees requested three additional Commission studies pertaining to the following issues: consolidation of municipal elections, state-shared taxes and local services, and the tobacco master settlement agreement.

In response to Representative Charles SARGENT's question on whether there is a certain end date to the annual payments the state receives from the tobacco master settlement agreement; Mr. SHAVER responded that there is no end date for the annual payments, which are required in perpetuity by the terms of the mater settlement agreement.

5. Work Program Amendment and New Research Plans

Deputy Executive Director Melissa BROWN presented three amendments to the calendar year work program for the Commission's consideration. The first amendment, adding the seven studies required by legislation enacted by the 110th General Assembly, passed unanimously. The first of those pieces of enacted legislation, Public Chapter 849, Acts of 2018, directs the Commission to study the effectiveness of Tennessee's statutes of limitation on the prosecution of criminal offenses. It must include, but is not limited to, information on the effectiveness of statutes of limitations on the prosecution of sexual offenses. Public Chapter 795, Acts of 2018, directs the Commission to study the potential overall effects of creating a grant and loan program administered by the department of economic and community development to encourage the financing and development of food desert relief enterprises that sell fresh food in low income, underserved areas of Tennessee. Public Chapter 693, Acts of 2018, directs the Commission to determine the amounts of non-tax producing property that exists in the state and make recommendations on how this property can better be used. Public Chapter 827, Acts of 2018, directs the Commission to study the implementation and effects of global position monitoring as a condition of bail for defendants accused of stalking, aggravated stalking, especially aggravated stalking, domestic abuse, sexual assault, or a violation of an order of protection. Public Chapter 952, Acts of 2018, directs the Commission to study the potential, overall effects of creating a franchise and excise tax credit for shippers with pickups or deliveries originating in, or destined to, any county having a population over nine hundred thousand (900,000) according to the 2010 federal census or any subsequent census. The legislation specifies the criteria that any potential franchise and excise tax credit must meet. Public Chapter 819, Acts of

2018 make changes to the laws governing the deployment of facilities for providing wireless telecommunications and broadband internet services in Tennessee. It directs the Commission to:

- study the Act's effect on the deployment of broadband and the Act's fiscal effect on local governments;
- identify best practices both from the perspective of stakeholders and from a review of other states;
- identify opportunities to advance other policy goals supported by the deployment of facilities for providing wireless broadband, specifically opportunities to advance the quality of transportation in Tennessee by utilizing technological applications, sometimes referred to as "smart transportation applications;" and
- recommend any changes to the law based on the findings of the Commission's study.

The last of the seven enacted pieces of legislation, Senate Joint Resolution 593, directs the Commission to study the overall effects on public education relative to the laws and regulations related to the sharing of resources among school districts located in the same county and the effect of the operation within a county of municipal or special school districts in addition to the county system.

Amendment two, which passed unanimously, added two studies that were referred by committees and subcommittees of the General Assembly. House Bill 2265 by Sexton and Senate Bill 2146 by Gardenhire, as amended, would require legislative bodies of municipalities to change the date of municipal elections to coincide with the August or November general election beginning in 2022. Ordinances that change the election date must provide for the extension of the terms of elected officials of the municipality, but not term may be extended for more than two years beyond its regular expiration date. The House bill was referred to the Commission, while the Senate version was referred to summer study. But the chairman of the Senate State and Local Government Committee said it was their intention that the Commission conduct the study. Mayor BICKERS asked why the research plan for the elections study is only focusing on municipal elections. Both Mayor BICKERS and Representative WIRGAU said that county and municipal elections should be researched as part of this study. Chairman NORRIS said the study could be comprehensive as long as the original mandate of the public act requesting the study is met. Senator YARBRO said that beyond the issue of turnout vs dollars spent on elections are the issues of ballot fatigue and drop-off issues.

Senate Bill 1989 by Stevens and House bill 2154 by Hawk directs the Commission to study the Tennessee Department of Revenue's use of state law to exclude an escrow compliant non-participating manufacturer or brand family, or both, owned by the non-

participating manufacturer in Tennessee. The Commission is also required to determine the necessity for any such enforcement action by the Tennessee Department of Revenue either under the provisions of the master settlement agreement or for the purpose of limiting an adverse impact to state revenues.

Amendment 3 adds one study that was referred to the Commission by the House, Finance, Ways and Means Committee. House Bill 971 by Sargent and Senate Bill 1075 by Watson, as amended by the House Finance, Ways and Means Subcommittee, would revise the distribution of local government revenue generation by the 2.25 percent local sales tax imposed on the sales price on the sales made in this state by dealers with no location in Tennessee. The Commission was directed by the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee to address the following questions:

1. What are the duties of cities mandated by law?
2. What are the duties of counties mandated by law?
3. What funds go from the state to cities to comply with the law?
4. What funds go from the state to counties to comply with the law?

During the meeting, members directed that the study address several issues of concern to state and local governments and expand its scope to provide a comprehensive review of the revenue sources and service requirements of cities and counties. Representative SARGENT requested that the study include information about the streamlined sales and use tax, out-of-state sales and use tax, which includes internet sales, and the state shared portions of the state sales tax. He added that the proportion of counties' and cities' populations relative to their shares of revenue, and the debt of fast-growing counties, should be considered. Representative SARGENT also asked that the Executive Director of the County Mayor's Association be interviewed as part of the research for the project. Mayor MCDONALD requested that the study include the distribution and use of all funds of the state and cities, rather than state-shared taxes alone. He asked that the study review the services that cities and counties are required to provide either by the state constitution or under state law.

Mayor BICKERS concurred with having a comprehensive approach to the study and said we have to conduct an analysis of the revenue system of the state and look at the public policy issues behind the different revenue sources and try to development recommendations that both cities and counties think is fair and equitable.

Representative LOVE said he wants the study to consider the effect of changes on Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County. He said that although some think there wouldn't be changes because of the metro form of government, there could be because of satellite cities that could lose revenue that would go to the county for education purposes. After discussion of establishing a due date for the final report, Chairman NORRIS said the commission would work toward a report for the January 2019 meeting

and that we would not specify whether it is a preliminary or final report. Commission members agreed.

Chairman NORRIS discussed a request by Senator Nicely to update a section of its 2007 report, *Trust But Verify*, that addresses two topics related to a voter-verified paper audit trail. He said the topic could be addressed with a staff report. Dr. LIPPARD said the project would be completed but would have to be worked in around projects with imminent due dates.

6. Fiscal Capacity for the Fiscal Year 2018-19

Senior Research Associate Michael MOUNT presented the annual update on TACIR's fiscal capacity index and background information about the index and education funding in Tennessee. He provided an update of Tennessee's 95 counties' 15-year fiscal capacity trends and the effect of the Tennessee Virtual Academy on the fiscal capacities of both Union County and the state's other 94 counties. Michael MOUNT reviewed the commission's recommendation in its 2018 report on payment in lieu of tax agreements that "TACIR's fiscal capacity calculation should be updated to include current IDB assessment amounts rather than the 1993-1995 PILOT payments data currently used." He noted this revision would require a change in state law or a recommendation by the BEP Review Committee and approval by the General Assembly.

Mayor HUFFMAN asked several questions about the amount of state and local Basic Education Program (BEP) funding: what amount, if any, was not spent in fiscal year 2016; whether leftover money reverts to the state general fund and who decides; and whether \$4.5 million was diverted to the Early Childhood Education Program? Executive Director LIPPARD said that staff would follow-up after the meeting to provide answers. [Note: Maryanne DURSKI, Executive Director of Local Finance, Tennessee Department of Education, said that, before minimum funding, the state share for the 2017-18 BEP is \$4.5 billion and the local share is \$2.4 billion. Chris FOLEY, Chief Financial Officer, Tennessee Department of Education shared a Tennessee Comptroller's Office review of the BEP of the year in which funds would have reverted to the state general fund were transferred to state voluntary pre-k/early childhood programs (<http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/Repository/RE/BEP%20Report%202017.pdf>) The report, which was the Comptroller of the Treasury's verification of the Basic Education Program Calculation, noted that the state had appropriated nearly \$50 million more for the BEP than would be distributed to school districts for fiscal year 2017-18. The excess was primarily due to budgeting projected increases in school enrollment significantly higher than actual and historical figures. In fiscal year 2015-16, part of the excess funding was transferred to the early childhood education program—\$4.5 million. Mr. Foley said that money can also revert to the state General Fund and that the authority to move funds is established by the legislature with oversight and

execution of all fund transfers granted to the Department of Finance and Administration.]

Chairman NORRIS adjourned the meeting at 3:24 p.m.



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 TENNESSEE ADVISORY COMMISSION
 ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

4 May 2018

Meeting Called to Order

The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations met in House Hearing Room II of the Cordell Hull Building 8:37 a.m., Vice Chairman Larry Waters, presiding.

Present 17	Absent 8
Mayor Tom Bickers	Mayor Ernest Burgess
Representative Mike Carter	Metropolitan Trustee Charles Cardwell
City Commissioner Betsy Crossley	Ms. Christi Gibbs
Deputy Commissioner Paula Davis	Senator Thelma Harper
Mayor Brent Greer	Senator Mark Norris
County Executive Jeff Huffman	Representative Antonio Parkinson
Representative Harold Love Jr	Representative Charles Sargent
Mayor Kenny McBride	Senator Bo Watson
Mayor A. Keith McDonald	
Regional Director Iliff McMahan	
Vice Mayor Kay Senter	
Mayor Larry Waters	
Comptroller Justin Wilson ¹	
Representative Tim Wirgau	
Senator Ken Yager	
Senator Jeff Yarbrow	
Mr. Kenneth Young	

¹ Kristina Podesta represented Justin Wilson

7. Food Deserts (Public Chapter 795, Acts of 2018) – Information Presentation

The Commission heard from Dr. Jackie YENERALL, a population health economist with the Office of Health Policy in the Tennessee Department of Health, as part of its study of the benefits and costs of establishing a grant and loan program meant to encourage greater access to food in low-income and underserved neighborhoods.

Dr. YENERALL said that academic research on the topic of food access and health outcomes started in the 1990s when researchers noticed that obesity and risk for cardiovascular disease varied across neighborhoods. They began studying areas of low food access and found such areas tend to be in neighborhoods that have low-income residents or a higher prevalence of African-American residents. Researchers studied whether living in a food desert influenced an individual's dietary quality and health outcomes, shifting the focus from neighborhood food access to household food access. She said that not all individuals living in a food desert have low income and some have access to a car.

Dr. YENERALL said that conclusions are mixed on whether increasing access leads to healthy eating or positive health outcomes. There are four primary studies in the US that have looked at grocery store intervention. Two saw a change in diet and health outcomes, though one was not a healthy change, and the other was unable to attribute change to the new supermarket. She said Americans on average travel beyond their nearest grocery store to shop. A United States Department of Agriculture (study found that the average distance to a supermarket for an individual was 2.1 miles from a home, but the average distance traveled was 3.8.)

Mayor Tom BICKERS asked what defines a healthy food retailer. Dr. YENERALL said it is a supermarket, superstore, or some place that people are likely to be able to purchase fruits and vegetables—corner stores, convenience stores, and gas stations are not generally considered to be healthy food retailers. Representative LOVE asked what role food swamps—areas that have more than the expected number of fast food restaurants, corner stores, and similar retailers—play in incentivizing corner stores to not offer fresh fruits and veggies. Dr. YENERALL explained that because people prefer shopping at superstores, small retailers are hesitant to put fresh food on shelves because it is perishable. However, the Healthy Food Financing Initiative has offered grants to small retail stores to offer fresh fruits and vegetables in their store or to provide them with refrigeration.

Mayor Keith MCDONALD asked about the logic behind defining a rural food desert as low income people living further than 10 miles from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or grocery store. Dr. YENERALL said it is generally assumed that people in rural areas have greater access to a vehicle, where car ownership is around 80%. However, the 10 mile threshold is not based on any research indicating that behavior

changes for individuals at that distance in rural areas. Mayor BICKERS said that in East Tennessee some people grow their own food yet still do not eat healthy, and asked whether this is an issue of access or should the focus be on changing behavior.

Representative Jeff YARBRO asked if someone is raised with limited access does that mean their behavior is unlikely to change when they gain more access. Dr. YENERALL said for some households, access is going to be their greatest issue. Finding households with the most constraints and addressing their issues gets us closer to making sure everyone has a choice to make a healthy decision. She said that people have a strong preference for large supermarkets. Even when you live in a low-access area, people still try to shop at a supermarket once a week. Behavior change is also a time issue. The time cost of going to the store, purchasing and preparing the food, and then knowing what to do with it is something people have been trying to address through educational campaigns.

Representative Mike CARTER asked whether anyone is looking at using food trucks to deliver fresh food to people. Dr. YENERALL said that the Chattanooga Health Department runs a program that takes fruits and vegetables into underserved communities. She said there is a lot of fear as these low income households go to make their purchases, concerning whether the food will last throughout the week or whether their kids will eat it. If the healthy food was cheaper it may encourage them to try it. She explained that any solution must include the affordability component.

Mayor BICKERS asked whether any research has been done on working with farmers to get food into the hands of those who need it. Dr. YENERALL said that is one possible solution, but she knows of no evaluation of this in the literature. Some people have focused on making farmers markets more affordable. Dr. YENERALL said that farmers are a great resource.

Senator Ken YAGER asked what Tennessee local health departments are doing about food choices, noting that health departments see a lot of children through the immunization program and most are likely low income. Dr. YENERALL said that the Office of Primary Prevention has healthy development coordinators across the state that do outreach to help with educational campaigns—also issuing grants to help promote health like building parks for physical activity. These interventions are expensive and the lack of resources may be constraining. She said the grants have been used to do things such as build walking trails and put water dispensers in schools that fill water bottles.

Mayor BICKERS asked whether there have been any studies that looked at the health cost savings when you have healthier children with healthier diets. Dr. YENERALL said she was not aware of any study looking at that for food access.

8. Consolidation of Municipal Elections (Senate Bill 2146 and House Bill 2265)— Information Panel

In response to the legislative request for TACIR to study the effect of requiring municipalities in Tennessee to change the date of municipal elections to coincide with the August or November general election beginning in 2022, the Commission heard from a panel of speakers sharing their views on the consolidation of elections as well as answering questions from Commission members:

- Jill Burgin, Mayor, City of Brentwood
- Mark Goins, Tennessee Elections Coordinator, Office of the Tennessee Secretary of State
- Ron Littlefield, Senior Fellow with the Governing Institute and Lead Analyst on its City Accelerator Initiative, Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners
- Chris Norman, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor and City Administrator, City of Dickson
- Phillip Warren, Wilson County Administrator of Elections and President, Tennessee Association of County Election

Mr. Mark GOINS said consolidation of elections might make more sense for small to medium size cities, but maybe shouldn't be mandatory for larger cities. He discussed results from a survey he conducted of county election commissions. Of the 34 out of 40 county election administrators that responded to the survey, 73% favor consolidation, 18% do not favor it, and about 10% had no opinion. Larger counties generally do not favor it because they are concerned with the number of different ballot styles involved. Survey respondents noted advantages to consolidation include significant cost savings for municipalities, increased voter turnout, easier poll worker recruitment, more efficient use of resources, and simplification of deadlines and registration dates. The disadvantages include additional printing costs and precincts, complicated or confusing ballot types, increased campaign costs, increased difficulty communicating about candidates and issues, confusion about non-partisan and partisan races, and ballot fatigue. Mr. GOINS suggested talking to the cities that have and haven't consolidated and looking at turnout, cost, date, and competitiveness of races. He is aware of 71 municipalities in 40 counties that have stand-alone elections. Since 2010, when the law authorized election consolidation without having to change the city's charter, 23 cities have consolidated their city elections to coincide with county elections.

Mayor Jill BURGIN and Mr. Chris NORMAN agreed that cities should be able to choose their election dates as the law already allows. Mayor BURGIN said Brentwood has elections on different dates than general elections, and the majority of the seven-

member city commission has never expressed interest in changing the election date primarily because local issues would get lost in county, state, and national general election discussions. When elections are consolidated, costs could increase for candidates because they are competing with more candidates for attention, and it could be confusing to mix partisan and non-partisan races in the same election. She said consolidating might result in cost savings for the city and better turnout, but not necessarily more informed voters on local issues.

Mr. NORMAN said the City of Dickson's mayor and city council and the Dickson County election administrator oppose the bill. He said that data from four Dickson County municipalities that chose to change their elections after the law passed in 2010 does not show a pattern of increased voter turnout, and that City of Dickson leaders chose not to consolidate because they believe that ballots would be even more confusing and voter education more challenging. Mr. NORMAN believes turnout is ballot-driven, not date-driven—people don't care about when they vote, they care about the candidates and issues, especially in mayoral races, and whether the candidate is running opposed or not. He said cost is not a driving factor, and turnout doesn't seem to be very affected by consolidation in Dickson County. The 2010 law allows cities to change their mind one time to go back to their previous election schedule if the new one is not working. Counties that have more than one state house district have to provide the appropriate number of different ballot styles, adding to the complexity of the ballot. He said the bottom line is encouraging people to vote and changing the way we vote to make it easier. Turnout is the goal. The greatest thing we have done is early voting, and there are other things we can do such as easing restrictions on absentee voting, allowing registration on election day, and online voting.

Mr. Phillip WARREN said all three cities in Wilson County—Lebanon, Mt. Juliet, and Watertown—have chosen to consolidate municipal elections with general elections. Ballots can be complex because of differing boundaries for cities, school districts, and voting districts, and school boards also have their own elections. From an administrative standpoint consolidation can save work and cost. Voters can't skip a ballot—they have to at least look at every page, although they don't have to vote for everything, and he thinks every county's equipment can set ballots up this way. He believes most voters make informed decisions and questions whether ballot fatigue is real or significant. Although consolidation has worked well in Wilson County, it might not in every county.

Mr. Ron LITTLEFIELD, mayor of Chattanooga from 2005 to 2013, and who previously served on the city council, supports the bill requiring consolidation because he thinks it will lead to greater participation, and the best representative government is one where the most people participate. He said he is less worried about ballot fatigue than he is

about low turnout because of too many elections. The cost of elections is insignificant to this discussion because it is very small relative to the size of government budgets.

Mayor MCDONALD asked whether there was a fiscal note on the bill. Representative WIRGAU responded the fiscal note for the original bill was not significant, and after it was amended, the effect on local governments was a \$100,000 decrease. Mr. GOINS said a larger municipality might have additional cost if it has many ballot styles or has to open up an additional precinct.

Mayor BICKERS asked why shouldn't it be as local as possible and let the people decide how to engage in the process. Mr. LITTLEFIELD responded that he is not in favor of preemption, but he still favors the bill. He doesn't see this idea as a serious preemption, but rather as the state setting a realistic standard for when elections should be held statewide.

Mayor BICKERS asked why the same standard shouldn't be applied not just to cities, but to the county primaries too, and why not have elections only in August and November? He suggested that the Commission report could provide data for cities to help them make the decision to consolidate or not. Mr. LITTLEFIELD said changing the time of the election is not simple. He thinks there are still stand-alone elections because of political inertia—a lack of political will and time. Senator YARBRO thinks the fact that 23 cities have changed their elections since the law was passed in 2010 speaks against the idea of inertia. Turnout is not the only issue. The questions we are trying to answer are: What is democracy and what should it look like? Who gets to decide? What measures will we use to evaluate whether this is working?

9. Multiple School System Study (Senate Joint Resolution 593)—Update

Senior Research Associate David KEISER presented an update on the study directed to TACIR by Senate Joint Resolution 593 by Senator HAILE to study the overall effects on public k-12 education of the laws and regulations related to the sharing of resources and the operation of multiple school systems located in the same county.

Mayor Keith MCDONALD reminded the commission that sometimes people shop in neighboring cities and it's difficult to determine who is spending their money in one jurisdiction over another. The city of Bartlett raised their property taxes to help pay for local needs at their schools while Memphis chose not to raise their taxes. The commission should remember when focusing on debt issued for school capital projects that staff look into how local property taxes are spent on paying off the debt used for local schools.

Dr. LIPPARD noted that a lot of the information gather for the State-shared Tax Study will also be used for the Multiple School System Study.

Vice Chairman WATERS adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for September 6-7, 2018.