



For Immediate Release:
From: Mary Ellen Miller
Date: December 12, 2022
423-335-7267

Teamwork Leads to New Home for Washington County Election Commission Offices

(Jonesborough, Tenn.) — The Princeton Arts Center will be home to the Washington County Election Commission in 2023 following a vote by the Washington County Commission Monday evening, to approve up to \$175,000 in renovation costs for the county owned building. State Representative Tim Hicks, Washington County Commissioner Richard Tucker, Election Commissioner Mike Elder and Election Administrator Dana Jones toured the facility. Their teamwork enabled the officials to determine best estimates of the cost to renovate.

“As far as the building bones, it’s in good shape,” said Hicks. “Does it need a little TLC? It sure does, but Commissioner Tucker and I looked it over and it can be ready for what they (election commission) will need.”

Hicks added that it is not a “forever place” but should be good for 5 to 10 years. “With the new voting machines coming in this spring and taking up more space, we have to be prepared,” he said.

Commissioner Richard Tucker said that some renovations such as adding an ADA compliant bathroom up front, will be needed. “My goal in touring the building and supporting the request to use the county-owned building is to have them (the Election Commission) in there for now and then continue to work toward getting them back to Jonesborough,” Tucker said. “I think it (Princeton Arts center) will be much better than what they have now, and we will be putting money into something we already own. Any money we put into it, we will get back out of it when they move.”

Election Commissioner Mike Elder, an engineer, helped with the process by providing architectural drawings of the center. “I did a quick sketch of the building that helped us solidify what the commissioners would be voting on and gave them something concrete to look at,” said Elder. He said that the additional space “is a critical necessity for 2024.” He said the Princeton Arts Center “will do what we need it to do for now.” He said that the county owned masonry building includes a secure interior room that is required by the Election Commission.

The Washington County Election Commission has been starved for space in its current location on the third floor of the Old Jonesborough Courthouse for some time. The move will provide the commission with space for both workers and voting machines as it gears up for the next presidential election in 2024.

Photo Caption:

Washington County Election Administrator Dana Jones, left, talks with Election Commissioners Phyllis Fox and Mike Elder as they performed random voting machine inspections prior to the November election. The commission, currently housed in the attic of the old Jonesborough courthouse, will receive 20 new, larger voting machines, funded by the state, this spring.

###