

Preamble

We, the people of Lincoln County, Tennessee, in order to perfect the structure of our county government, to insure that it is just, orderly, efficient, and fully responsible to the people of Lincoln County, and to secure the benefits of home rule and self-government for Lincoln County to the fullest extent possible under the Constitution of the State of Tennessee, do adopt this charter as the fundamental law for the government of Lincoln County.

"HOME RULE CHARTER"

The Constitutional Home Rule Charter presented herein sets forth the basic issue of home rule for Lincoln County, for it is in the true sense a constitution prepared by the citizens of Lincoln County for the operation of Lincoln County's government. The Charter will place in the hands of the people of Lincoln County the power to effectively operate its government without calling upon the Tennessee State Legislature in Nashville for changes.

Separation of Powers

The Constitutional Home Rule Charter provides for a separation of the county's legislative, executive, and judicial functions. The County Mayor, accountable to all of the voters, shall have the power to veto ordinances and resolutions as well as both the responsibility and the means at hand with which to operate an effective and efficient county government. The Legislative body is given legislative powers to adopt county ordinances and is so constructed as to be truly representative of all the people of Lincoln County.

Lincoln County Charter Highlights

The Lincoln County Charter exists to make the Lincoln County government more accountable and transparent as well as to give the citizens of Lincoln County a stronger voice in their county government. The following highlights some of the issues set forth in this charter:

1. The people of Lincoln County have the ability to amend any part(s) of this Charter , pursuant to the charter amendment process.
2. The citizens of Lincoln County will have term limits for county commissioners, the County Mayor.
3. The citizens of Lincoln County will be represented by one commissioner from each county district and one commissioner at large for a total of nine Commissioners within the bounds of Tennessee state law.
4. The county adopts recall elections, petitions, and referendums pursuant to TCA 2-5-151. Any action brought to the voters of Lincoln County by petition and referendum will be binding on the Lincoln County government.
5. Any new taxes and any tax increases will be approved by the voters of Lincoln County.
6. There will be staggered election terms for county commissioners.
7. The citizens of Lincoln County may speak at any county government meeting, including meeting of boards, commissions, and authorities, where county business is conducted.
8. The people of Lincoln County will have an ethics commission to investigate and guard against conflicts of interests, ethics violations, and other violations of the public trust.
9. All county meetings in Lincoln County will be open to the public and all county records will be made available both in written form and digital form via the Official Lincoln County Web Site.
10. Lincoln County will have multiple year operating and capital budgets for each Lincoln County department, office, or organization receiving tax payer funds.
11. Lincoln County will have a debt management policy that does not hinder the financial growth of the citizens, but follows the prosperity of the citizens.
12. Property Tax Freeze Act, TCA 67-5-705, adopted in Charter to have citizens 65 & older's county property tax rate frozen, who meet certain requirements.