

## Identifying Potential Recruits

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Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal 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 municipal 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 MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee  
Municipal Technical Advisory Service  
1610 University Avenue  
Knoxville, TN 37921-6741  
865-974-0411 phone  
865-974-0423 fax  
[www.mtas.tennessee.edu](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)

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Municipal boards should always have persons in mind that might be recruited for board service in the event of a vacancy. There need not be an official roster of such persons, but each elected official should be capable of recommending a replacement for his and other's seats.

Even better would be for the board to develop a succession plan – a short resolution that outlines the process the board will follow in filling the vacancy and enumerates the minimum qualifications needed for appointment. The resolution should not (in fact, cannot) force the board to automatically limit the scope of the search, but should encourage an aggressive recruitment in the community.

Cities can often find good candidates to fill board vacancies among the following groups:

- **Former members of the board.** People with prior service on the board might be enticed to come back for a limited time. The board should look for persons who served with distinction and otherwise left their positions with a good reputation. Avoid the appointment of former officials who left under a cloud or whose re-election was overwhelmingly rejected by the voters.
- **Former members of other local governments.** There may be a former county commissioner or school board member in your community who would be willing and able to fill in for a resigning official. Such persons may not be as familiar with municipal issues and processes as former members of the board, but they probably understand the legislative process and how to function in a public capacity.
- **Community leaders.** Try to get recommendations from the local chamber of commerce, civic organizations, educational institutions, neighborhood groups, professional associations, churches and the like. Ask if they know someone who might make a good replacement.
- **City commissions.** There may be persons on the city's planning and zoning commission, board of adjustment, historic preservation committee, park board, etc. who have gained experience in city affairs and who understand how local government works.
- **Graduates of community leadership programs.** Some cities have organizations and programs designed to identify and develop future community leaders. These programs often involve education on local government and issues. If your community has such a program, it would make perfect sense to solicit interest from recent graduates.

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