

April 1, 2026

Commissioner Gary Deaton  
Madison County Commissioner

Commissioner Deaton,

I am responding to your letter dated March 31, 2026, where you shared your opinion about my political campaign for re-election as Madison County Mayor in your official capacity as County Commissioner, distributed publicly via official letterhead, while utilizing county funded resources and staff.

While it was stated the letter was written in a "spirit of respect", distributing this grievance so publicly says otherwise. I am sure a private conversation would have cleared up this misunderstanding. A public response is required to ensure that the citizenry is truthfully informed.

Simply stated: I love our county and have been honored and blessed to serve as its mayor. I am extremely proud of what our county has accomplished over the past 4 years while in office.

As you have stated, "the role of the County Mayor is defined by state statute as the chief administrator and financial official of the county". To be clear to our residents: County Mayors throughout the State of Tennessee promote the accomplishment and benefits of their own County. As Mayor, I am the primary promoter of our County. I give an annual "State of the County" address to several local organizations where I share our numerous successes. I consistently tell our story to state and federal officials, as well as to industries and businesses who are seeking to invest in Madison County.

That is my role, and I will commit to continue to do this with enthusiasm, focus, and positivity. It's an honor to promote these achievements as often as I can, and we have great momentum.

To be abundantly clear, while I do have the opportunity to represent the accomplishments of our County to many people, the County's success over the last four years is due to the hard work of the incredible and dedicated county employees and our passionate elected officials. This includes the department heads, County Commission, the Mayor, and many others. It is a team effort.

Promoting our county is not about what any individual has done, but rather about what "we" have done. I share this not to lessen the role of what any individual has contributed, but to ensure that the public has a complete and accurate understanding of the incredible accomplishments of the last four years.

**That message is more important than who gets the credit.**

Please accept this as an honest, clear, and truthful response to clarify the misunderstanding of previous communications. All messaging communicated has been and will continue to be 100% true.

**I invite you to join me in celebrating with other county officials, employees, and residents to recognize the great things happening in Madison County.**

I'm running to be re-elected as Mayor of Madison County and will continue to promote what has been accomplished during my administration - the last four years in which I have served as Mayor. It has been a very successful four years for the County, and I look forward to playing my part to make the next four even better.

Thank you for your many years of service.

AJ Massey  
Madison County Mayor