

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE 
INSTITUTE for PUBLIC SERVICE

MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE

January 15, 2015

City of St. Joseph Tennessee
Joan Nelson
City Manager
409 North Main Street
St. Joseph, Tennessee 38481

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Ms. Nelson:

Responsive to your question regarding whether the vice mayor is able to officiate a wedding ceremony, it is the opinion of legal consultant Elisha Hodge that the vice mayor cannot legally perform a wedding ceremony based upon the language in Tenn. Code Ann. Section 36-3-301 which reads as follows:

(a)(1) All regular ministers, preachers, pastors, priests, rabbis and other spiritual leaders of every religious belief, more than eighteen (18) years of age, having the care of souls, and all members of the county legislative bodies, county mayors, judges, chancellors, former chancellors and former judges of this state, former county executives or county mayors of this state, former members of quarterly county courts or county commissions, the governor, the speaker of the senate and former speakers of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives and former speakers of the house of representatives, the county clerk of each county, former county clerks of this state who occupied the office of county clerk on or after July 1, 2014, and the mayor of any municipality in the state may solemnize the rite of matrimony. For the purposes of this section, the several judges of the United States courts, including United States magistrates and United States bankruptcy judges, who are citizens of Tennessee are deemed to be judges of this state. The amendments to this section by Acts 1987, ch. 336, which applied provisions of this section to certain former judges, do not apply to any judge who has been convicted of a felony or who has been removed from office.

Please let me know if you have further questions concerning this matter.

Very truly yours,



Jeffrey J. Broughton
Municipal Management Consultant

Cc: Elisha Hodge