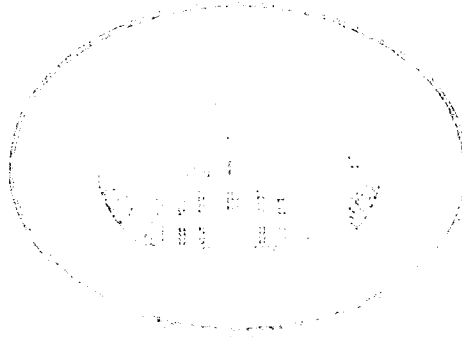


Child Support (870)541-5304
Civil Records (870)541-5306
Criminal Records (870)541-5307



Real Estate (870)541-5309
Domestic (870)541-5312

Lafayette Woods Sr., Circuit Clerk
Jefferson County Circuit Clerk
Post Office Box 7433
Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71611

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Jefferson County Quorum Court
101 E. Barraque Street, Quorum Court Chambers
Pine Bluff, AR 71601

Re: Notice of Retirement

Dear Justices:

It has been a long and difficult decision, but I am writing to inform you that I will be formally retiring effective October 1, 2020. I sincerely apologize for the abrupt timing of this announcement. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, I have decided after giving considerable thought to this significant decision that I retire in order to focus more on my personal health and family.

For the last twelve (12) years, it has been both an honor and privilege to have served as the Jefferson County Circuit Clerk. I am deeply appreciative of the citizens of Jefferson County, Arkansas that elected me and afforded me the honor to serve. I'm also appreciative of the numerous opportunities to improve the overall operation of the Office of the Circuit Clerk; all made possible by the staff members and unique culture at Jefferson County.

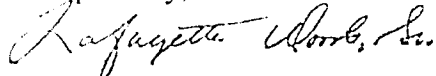
As a leader and public servant, I have long believed that developing a leadership pipeline for any office is vital. Nothing could be more vital to the long-term success of the Office of the Circuit Clerk and Jefferson County as a whole than the choice and cultivation of its future leader. That is why after being elected to the Office of the Circuit Clerk in 2008, I appointed Mrs. Flora Cook-Bishop to serve as my chief deputy clerk. In this role, Mrs. Bishop displayed an excellent working knowledge of the Office of the Circuit Clerk and court system. She displayed good administrative aptitude and ability to deal effectively with people.

Mrs. Bishop has been employed with the Office of the Circuit Clerk since 1988; serving under three former Jefferson County Circuit Clerks and being appointed twice by the Jefferson County Quorum Court to serve out the remaining terms of two former circuit clerks following the declaration of a vacancies during their terms. It is natural that she would have an interest in succeeding me as the next Jefferson County Circuit Clerk, which I support wholeheartedly. However, given Mrs. Bishop's interest and intent to seek the Office of the Circuit Clerk in the next election, section (a)(E) of Arkansas Code Annotated § 14-14-1320. Filling Vacancies in Elective Offices states in part, "A person appointed to fulfill a vacant or unexpired term of an elective county office shall not be eligible for appointment or election to succeed himself or herself.

As such, I would take this opportunity to recommend Mrs. Barbara Collins a suitable candidate to fill my vacated position with the powers granted by the Quorum Court pursuant to A.C.A. § 14-14-1320. Mrs. Collins has been employed with the Office of the Circuit Clerk since 2010. With duties of the Office of the Circuit Clerk involving acting as a liaison to the public in regard to judicial matters and serving as the custodian of court records, Mrs. Collins has the immediate skillset that I believe is needed serve. Moreover, Mrs. Collins has the ability to deal effectively with people, good organizational skills, and physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position. She possesses great character, coupled with a superior ability to guide and motivate people in positive yet compelling way.

Again, I am eternally grateful for the support of the citizens of Jefferson County and members of the Jefferson County Quorum Court during my tenure as Jefferson County's Circuit Clerk. Because of our shared accomplishments, I will always consider myself blessed to have served. I wish Jefferson County the best, as I pray continued growth and success.

Respectfully,



Lafayette Woods, Sr.
Circuit Clerk

LW/

cc: Jefferson County Judge Gerald Robinson
Prosecuting Attorney Kyle Hunter, 11th Judicial District West
Judge Alex Guynn, 11th Judicial District West-First Division
Judge Rob Wyatt, 11th Judicial District West-Second Division
Judge Bill Benton, 11th Judicial District West-Third Division
Judge Leon Jamison, 11th Judicial District West-Fourth Division
Judge Jodi Dennis, 11th Judicial District West-Fifth Division
Judge Earnest E. Brown, Jr., 11th Judicial District West-Sixth Division
Jefferson County Elected Official et al
Arkansas Democrat Gazette
Pine Bluff Commercial
Deltaplex News