

# Jackson County, Missouri

**Commissioners**  
Howard Lotven, Chairman  
Roger Davis  
Mary Shannon  
Keith Curnutt  
Jacquelyn Eidson



Jackson County Courthouse  
415 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106  
(816)881-3670

## **Ethics, Human Relations, and Citizen Complaints Commission**

<p><b>Meeting Minutes</b> <b>Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:15p.m.</b> <b>First Regular Meeting</b></p>
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### **1. Call to Order**

Howard Lotven, Chairman, called the first regular meeting of the Ethics, Human Relations, and Citizen Complaints Commission to order.

### **2. Roll Call**

Present 5 – Howard Lotven, Mary Shannon, Roger Davis, Keith Curnutt, Jacquelyn Eidson

Absent NONE

Excused NONE

### **3. Introduction of OEHRCC Staff and Members of the Public**

Present 3 – Director Chris Crawford, Complaint Officer Anita Mackerel, Administrative Assistant Alexandra Gold-Barnes

### **4. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Roger Davis, seconded by Keith Curnutt, to approve the December 2023 meeting minutes. The motion passed with a voice vote.

### **5. Director's Report**

#### Assessment

There have not been any updates to the pending litigation and investigations discussed

during last month's meeting. The lawsuit filed by the attorney general and the state tax commission is proceeding, as is the lawsuit filed against the county by several of the municipalities within the county. The state auditor's investigation is ongoing as well.

### Truman Courthouse

Complaints regarding the wait times, crowds, and long lines at the Truman Courthouse in Independence have slowed now that the end of the year has passed. We reached out to the county administrator again to follow up on our previous concerns and suggestions for potential solutions, such as offering an additional location for personal property issues to be addressed, devoting some resources to improve the email response time, or allocating more associates to the Truman Courthouse to allow more citizens to be served each day. The county administrator responded that the crowds have dropped dramatically since the first of the year, and that the administration believes most of the crowds were a result of residents who had not updated their personal property tax records before bills were generated and were seeking to make changes before bills were due in December. The administration intends to continue to funnel all personal property business to the Truman Courthouse, stating that the overwhelming majority of personal property requests have taken place at the Truman Courthouse in the past, and they want to allocate as much staff to that location as possible. They believe reopening the assessment office in the downtown courthouse would require them to pull staff from the busiest location (Truman Courthouse) to staff the downtown location. The county administrator also said that they will increase marketing to residents to remind them that filing the personal property declarations now will save them from having to wait in line later when the deadline approaches.

### Board of Equalization (BOE)

There have been several developments with the BOE since last month's meeting. The board has suspended all hearings until January 29th, and the BOE chairman has resigned. It is unclear whether the board will resume appeals with only two members or if they will wait for a third member to be appointed and a new chair to be named. Currently, the BOE plans to hear appeals through March. There are about 16,000 appeals outstanding.

### Budget

The legislature passed the county budget at their final meeting of 2023. The total budget for 2024 is approximately \$646.4 million.

### Training

OEHRCC will be working with the county counselor's office and the human resources department to implement new training programs for county associates. We will advise and recommend topics for training and work with outside vendors in the bidding and procurement process if needed. Some training may be conducted by county staff, and some may be conducted by outside professionals, depending on the subject matter. Currently, the discussion is to include training on subjects such as sexual harassment, workplace harassment and bullying, responding to public records requests, the county personnel rules, and the county ethics code.

### Chair

During last month's meeting, there was a reminder that the chair of the commission is to be appointed each year. Per the code, this is the county executive's responsibility. I've reached out to the county administration to request that they adhere to this provision of the code.

### County Legislature Leadership

The county legislature voted in new leadership at their first meeting of the year. It is typical for the chair and vice-chair of the legislature to turnover yearly as legislators focus on different priorities, roles, and responsibilities each year. For 2024 the chair of the legislature is Jeanie Lauer and the vice chair is Megan Marshall. Megan Marshall was also the 2023 vice-chair.

### Workday

Many or all the commission members have received emails from "Workday." This is the county's new software system, which will replace nearly all the systems and programs the county currently uses, including payroll, timekeeping, and purchasing. The county awarded the contract for this service in 2022 for a duration of 10 years and has dedicated just over \$14 million to the project. We are working with IT to ensure that commission members do not receive notifications regarding timekeeping moving forward.

## **6. Case Summaries**

Anita Mackerel presented case summaries ##182-202 received in December 2023.

All cases were reviewed and there were no questions.

A motion was made by Keith Curnutt, seconded by Roger Davis to approve the director's report with the case summaries. The motion passed by a voice vote.

## **7. New Business**

A few complaints have been In recent months by complainants requesting anonymity. These complaints did not appear on the case summary report but will be included when the investigation into them has concluded. This is done in an effort to maintain the anonymity of the complainant.

Director Crawford is working on a system that allows complainants to remain completely anonymous in the future.

## **8. Unfinished Business**

A performance review for Director Crawford will take place in a closed session during the commission's February's meeting.

Financial disclosure and conflict of interest documents will be distributed to commissioners to be filled out and returned to Director Crawford.

**9. Public Comments**

NONE

**10. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Keith Curnutt, seconded by Mary Shannon. The motion passed by a voice vote.