

Jackson County, Missouri

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



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

Ethics, Human Relations, and Citizen Complaints Commission

<p>Meeting Minutes Thursday, March 21st, 2024, at 5:15p.m. Third Regular Meeting</p>
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1. Call to Order

Howard Lotven, Chairman, called the third regular meeting of the Ethics, Human Relations, and Citizen Complaints Commission to order at 5:16p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present 3 – Howard Lotven, Mary Shannon, Keith Curnutt

Absent 2 – Roger Davis, Jacquelyn Eidson

Excused 0

With only three members present, a quorum was not established

3. Introduction of OEHRCC Staff and Members of the Public

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

4. Approval of Minutes

A vote was not taken to approve the minutes due to the absence of a quorum. The vote will be taken at the next meeting of the commission.

5. Approval of Director's Report with Case Summaries

County Administration

The administration will be conducting active shooter, severe weather, and emergency response (fire) training over the next year, beginning in the spring of 2024. The emergency response manuals for each department will be updated to reflect current policies. This is being done in an effort to ensure county associates and facilities are as prepared as possible in the event of an emergency. The county also held a career fair on February 24th, and the administration reports that it was successful, resulting in several new associates to fill current needs. An additional career fair will be held on March 23rd from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. The county is still trying to fill positions in corrections, collection, assessment, the counselor's office, and others and hopes that the career fairs will continue to produce quality applicants.

Medical Examiner's Office

The current space used by the medical examiner's office is outdated and undersized for their needs. They have begun the process of identifying possible locations for a new medical examiner building that will better suit their needs. Health Department The health department conducted a community health survey from the end of February through the beginning of March. They used the information collected to develop a community health assessment, which aims to provide a snapshot of the county's health alongside community-driven health priorities. The full report is available to the public and the department will review the report publicly during a webinar to be held March 28th at 10:00 am. Environmental Health The environmental health department will be working with establishments in the county, such as bars and restaurants, to provide free Narcan for the establishments to have on hand in case of emergencies.

County Counselor's

Office The counselor's office currently has three attorneys working on behalf of the county on the state tax commission hearings. They report that they are confident they can defend the county's position on the assessment values in these cases.

Assessment

The assessment department is in the process of adding eight new associates. These associates are desperately needed and can hopefully be used to improve the personal property processes that the department handles. The administration reports that they may be able to reopen the downtown courthouse for personal property business with the help of the new associates. The department also reports that they are receiving property declarations ahead of schedule/expectations. They have been open for partial days on Saturdays at the Truman Courthouse in March and hope to be open for full days on every Saturday in April to help as many taxpayers as possible. The department has also started the reassessment process for 2025 and is working on new construction values for that reassessment period.

Board of Equalization (BOE)

The BOE hearing officers are still working through appeals with assessment staff and taxpayers. There are approximately 12,000 appeals still outstanding, the majority of

which were filed in June/July 2023. It is currently unclear when the appeals will be completed but appeals for the 2024 tax year open on May 1st.

Jackson County Detention Center (JCDC)

The detention center currently has about 800 inmates, approximately 160 more than their operation capacity. They are still dealing with staffing issues but are hopeful that the county’s career fairs will help produce some qualified applicants. They have also implemented raises for staff that have helped with retention.

Sunshine Law Training

OEHRCC has been encouraging the county to conduct associate training on how to respond to records requests. The counselor’s office will conduct this training this month and will cover everything that associates need to know to remain compliant with the state’s Sunshine Law.

Legislature

OEHRCC has been meeting with members of the county legislature over the past several weeks to discuss office needs, complaint trends, and policy recommendations. Among the topics discussed have been the processes at the Truman Courthouse, as well as how OEHRCC can more effectively communicate complaint trends and policy recommendations to the legislature moving forward. We have also discussed two code changes that we feel are important for our office’s continued success. One provision will reinforce associate protections in code to ensure that anyone filing a complaint or cooperating in an investigation cannot be retaliated against. The other provision will allow OEHRCC the discretion to decline a complaint if the complainant behaves in a manner that is abusive, threatening, or discriminatory towards OEHRCC commissioners, staff, or other county employees.

Cases 240018-240044 were reviewed and there were no questions or comments.

A vote was not taken to approve the director’s report and case summaries due to the absence of a quorum. The vote will be taken at the next meeting of the commission.

6. New Business

NONE

7. Unfinished Business

NONE

8. Public Comments

NONE

9. Adjournment

Howard Lotven adjourned the meeting. A vote was not taken due to the absence of a quorum.