



Jackson County Fact Sheet

Proposed Charter Revisions

ETHICS REFORM

Limit Executive Power – The proposed Charter would limit the County Executive’s power to award professional service contracts by requiring a competitive bid process for any contract over \$5000. This ensures the best service provider is selected. Currently there are no limits for the Executive in awarding professional service contracts.

Increased Accessibility and More Transparent Government – The proposed Charter will create a single place for citizens to submit complaints regarding the conduct of County officers, employees, volunteers and elected officials by consolidating the Ethics Commission and the Human Relations and Citizen Complaints Commission. This office will be fully staffed and it will be required that their work is done in public.

Increased Checks and Balances – Any ethics complaint filed against the Executive or a member of the Legislature will automatically be forwarded to the State Ethics Commission for review and additional oversight.

EFFICIENCY

Eliminate Obsolete County Offices – The proposed Charter will eliminate the requirement of offices that no longer exist, thus saving taxpayer money.

ONGOING CHARTER REVIEW PROCESS

Ongoing Charter Review Process – The proposed Charter provides for an automatic review every 10 years through a Citizen Charter Review Commission. This periodic review protects Jackson County citizens in the governance of their County. Currently there is no automatic process for review.

PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION

Broader Definition – The proposed Charter would broaden what constitutes “discrimination” to protect groups not protected by the current Charter, thus exceeding state and federal requirements.

In 2009, Jackson County Executive Mike Sanders called for a complete review of the County’s home rule Charter in an effort to promote a more transparent and efficient government. The Charter is the “constitution” for Jackson County and outlines the responsibilities of the executive, legislature, law enforcement and the courts.

Sanders appointed seven citizens to the 2010 Charter Task Force, headed by former Kansas City Mayor Kay Barnes on March 15, 2010. They completed their work by mid-May after seeking citizen input through public forums and comments submitted through the County’s website. They identified a number of important changes and made recommendations to the Jackson County Legislature on May 10. The Legislators voted to place the proposed Charter revisions before the voters **August 3, 2010.**

“I’d like to thank the members of the Charter Task Force and the County Legislature for their hard work on the most comprehensive review of the Charter since its original passage in 1970.”

- Mike Sanders

“We believe the final product strengthens ethical standards, streamlines the government to improve efficiencies, and provides safeguards against discrimination in all its forms.”

- Kay Barnes

For more information or to download a copy of the proposed Charter, go to the County website:

www.jacksongov.org