

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

Meeting Minutes Thursday, November 16th, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. Eleventh Regular Meeting

1. Call to Order

Howard Lotven, Chairman, called the eleventh regular meeting of the Ethics, Human Relations, and Citizen Complaints Commission to order at 5:15 pm.

2. Roll Call

Present 4 - Howard Lotven, Jacquelyn Eidson, Roger Davis, Keith Curnutt

Absent 1 - Mary Shannon

A motion was made by Roger Davis, seconded by Jacquelyn Eidson to excuse Keith Curnutt from the October 2023 monthly meeting. The motion passed with a voice vote.

3. Introduction of OEHRCC Staff and Guests

Present – 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 Jacquelyn Eidson to approve the October 2023 meeting minutes. The motion passed with a voice vote.

5. Director's Report

Tax levy rates have been set for the current tax year by all jurisdictions in the county. Kansas City Public Schools, Raytown School District, and the City of Oak Grove are the only jurisdictions that did not reduce their rates to comply with Missouri's constitutional revenue limitations, and they each maintained their levies at their previous level. Kansas City Public Schools are exempt from the state's revenue limits, so they did not have to reduce their rate. Voters in the Raytown School District

approved multiple ballot initiatives in April 2023 that allow them to increase revenue. The city of Oak Grove restructured how the tax dollars will be used to increase the amount dedicated to debt service and decrease the amount used as general revenue; revenue dedicated to debt service is exempt from the state's revenue restrictions.

The assessment department has started moving its entire department and their operations to the new county building at 1300 Washington Street. The assessment department will work in the building as renovations take place. Work has begun on the 2025 reassessment process and the property declaration process for 2024 will soon begin.

The board of equalization currently has 17,300 appeals remaining. Hearing officers were terminated due to funding restrictions, slowing down the progress of working through the appeals. Appeals may be heard through February of next year. Roger Davis asked about whether the board of equalizations keeps minutes and is open to the public. The board keeps publicly available minutes of their procedural meetings, but citizens have reported more difficulty getting minutes from hearings on individual properties. Citizens have also reported having difficulty attending board meetings in person.

Citizens are required to pay their property taxes by the December 31st, 2023 deadline regardless of their appeal status. Citizens who still have an outstanding appeal at the time of payment will be refunded the appropriate amount at the conclusion of their appeal, if necessary. Citizens may also pay under protest. If someone chooses to pay under protest, their refund (if necessary) will be issued quarterly rather than immediately; the county holds payments under protest in a separate account, and the funds are only released quarterly.

The collections department is implementing a new pay-by-phone system. The department is encouraging taxpayers who can pay online or over the phone to do so to avoid in-person congestion. The new pay-by-phone system has a Spanish speaking option that is not typically available in person.

Case Summaries

Anita Mackerel presented case summaries #152-164 received in October 2023. Regarding case #158 involving the detention center, Howard Lotven clarified that the detention center clearly posts the rules and timelines for phone access and visitation, and confirmed that attorneys have 24/7 access to their clients. Roger Davis asked about the progress of the new detention center. The new detention center's timeline has been pushed back due to construction issues but is currently on schedule and planning and site preparation continue.

A motion was made by Keith Curnutt, seconded by Jacquelyn Eidson to approve the Director's Report with the case summaries. The motion passed by a voice vote.

6. New Business

Regarding meeting in person for a future meeting, it is agreed that an in-person meeting will be scheduled for spring or summer of 2024. To aid citizens who do not have equal access to technology, Director Crawford offers to obtain a conference room in the

downtown courthouse in which people could attend in person but still watch the online meeting.

7. Unfinished Business

Roger Davis inquired about the progress of Director Crawford's employee classification/grade change. The process is still ongoing, and Director Crawford will provide an update in the new year.

Director Crawford also brought up a previous complaint that the commission voted against categorizing as an ethics complaint. The complaint is being treated as a citizen complaint and the investigation process is ongoing. It is recommended to keep this case open for the time being.

8. Public Comments

NONE

9. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Roger Davis, seconded by Keith Curnutt to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by a voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 6:06 pm.