

# Jackson County, Missouri

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



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

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

### **Meeting Minutes Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. Tenth Regular Meeting**

#### **1. Call to Order**

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

#### **2. Roll Call**

Present 4 – Howard Lotven, Mary Shannon, Jacquelyn Eidson, Roger Davis

Absent 1 – Keith Curnutt

Excused NONE

#### **3. Introduction of OEHRCC Staff and Guests**

Present – Director Chris Crawford, Administrative Assistant Alexandria Gold-Barnes

Members of the Public – John De Luca

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

A motion was made by Roger Davis, seconded by Jacquelyn Eidson to approve the September 2023 meeting minutes. The motion passed with a voice vote.

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

The new administrative building at 1300 Washington Street is yet to undergo renovations, as the legislature has yet to approve renovation funding. Upon approval, renovations will take eight to ten months before completion. The building is currently occupied by the assessment department and the BOE. OEHRCC has received

complaints regarding congested traffic and a limited number of ADA accessible parking spaces.

The BOE exhausted funding for hearing officers aiding in the appeals process. The legislature denied extending additional funding for hearing officers and officers were let go. The appeals process is estimated to take an extended amount of time due to their absence. The funding of hearing officers is still on the legislature's agenda for September 2023.

Some taxpayers will have a pending appeal at the time tax bills are received. Taxpayers are required to pay the amount listed on their tax bill. For those that successfully appeal their property value after tax bills are paid, a refund of the difference will be issued.

The state auditor's investigation is underway into the 2023 assessment process. Complaints regarding the assessment department have been forwarded to the auditor's office as the auditor has requested citizen feedback.

Meeting minutes are being posted to the commission's website. Minutes will be posted as far as three months prior, and any minutes wanted after that timeframe must be requested.

Open enrollment for health benefits will open October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and is expected to last ten to fourteen days. The legislature has yet to approve health insurance plans and payments and could delay the process. Human resources' health benefits specialist will no longer be working with the county by the end of the month leading to potential issues and complaints.

The county counselor is working to implement anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training for all county employees. The training will be contracted by a third-party vendor. The contract and funding have been proposed to the legislature but have yet to be approved. The last training took place approximately five years ago. The OEHRCC will provide ethics training in conjunction with the counselor's office in 2024. Sunshine Law request response training will also be recommended.

County associates have voiced concerns about complaining as they do not believe the protection language in the county code is strong enough. Director Crawford edited the protection language, and it is in the review process. Moving forward, the language will be proposed to the legislature for approval. Protection will be awarded to those associates who file complaints as well as those who participate in a complaint investigation. Complainants will have the opportunity to remain anonymous.

## **6. Approval of Case Summaries**

Director Crawford presented case summaries #142-151 received in September 2023. There were no questions.

A motion was made by Roger Davis, seconded by Mary Shannon, to approve the Director's Report with the case summaries. The motion passed by a voice vote.

## **7. New Business**

NONE

**8. Unfinished Business**

NONE

**9. Public Comments**

Mr. De Luca states that he attended his assessment appeal process in person, and he wanted to sit in on the BOE hearing. He states that he met with the BOE manager to discuss entering the hearing and was asked multiple times who he was and who he was attending with. He was told he could not attend the public meeting. Mr. De Luca feels that meeting minutes are not being made and there are no recordings taking place.

**10. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Roger Davis, seconded by Jacquelin Eidson. The motion passed by a voice vote and the commission adjourned at 6:21 pm.