



Office of  
**Mary Jo Spino**  
Clerk of the County Legislature

# Jackson County Missouri

## JOURNAL

### County Legislature

*Jeanie Lauer (5th) Chairman,  
Megan L. Marshall (3rd AL) Vice Chairman,  
Jalen Anderson (1st AL), Donna Peyton (2nd AL), Manuel Abarca IV (1st),  
Venessa Huskey (2nd), Charlie Franklin (3rd), DaRon McGee (4th),  
Sean E. Smith (6th)*

Jackson County Courthouse  
415 E. 12th Street, 2nd floor  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106  
(816)881-3242

**Tuesday, December 31, 2024**

**1:00 PM**

**SPECIAL Meeting**

### **K.C. Legislative Assembly Area, Kansas City, Missouri**

Jeanie Lauer, Chairman, called the meeting of the Jackson County Legislature to order.

**1 ROLL CALL**

Present 9 - Megan L. Marshall, Jalen Anderson, Donna Peyton, Manuel Abarca IV, Venessa Huskey, Charlie Franklin, DaRon McGee, Sean E. Smith and Jeanie Lauer

**2 THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Recited.

**3 APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

A motion was made by Megan L. Marshall, seconded by Donna Peyton to approve the journal of the previous meeting held on December 30, 2024. The motion passed by a voice vote.

**4 HEARINGS**

None.

**5 COMMUNICATIONS WITH AND REPORTS OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

Frank White Jr., County Executive, wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mr. White referred to a letter he sent to legislators earlier today regarding an extension to the application deadline for the Senior Property Tax Credit program. He said they have had an overwhelming response. The Administration believes an extension to June 30, 2025 would benefit seniors. He said they will bring a plan for the County Legislature to review at the next legislative meeting.

Sean E. Smith, County Legislator, said the original legislation for the Senior Property Tax Credit did not have a deadline date. He said the deadline was set by the Administration.

Caleb Clifford, Chief of Staff, said the Administration thinks it needs to be

codified with a deadline date added. He said they are working with the Collections Department and the County Counselor's office to draft the language and bring it back to the County Legislature.

Mr. Smith asked if June 30th will become the new annual deadline. Mr. Clifford responded it could potentially be an annual deadline. The Collections Department may want to provide feedback and make recommendations after the program is in place for awhile. Mr. Smith asked what the benefit is to codify it if it will be changed as it is determined by the Administration. Mr. Clifford said if the County Legislature wants to delegate authority to the Administration or if the County Counselor's office believes it can be done through Executive Order, it would not need to be codified. The Administration wants to make sure they have the support of the County Legislature.

Sean E. Smith asked about the continuance filed by the County Counselor's office on the State Tax Commission (STC) trial. He wanted to say on the record to continue to delay a final outcome as Jackson County enters into a new assessment cycle where assessed values and what is lawful is dependent upon prior assessed values, it seems is creating greater risk as well as problems for taxpayers. He would like to understand the rationale behind filing the continuance and realizes this discussion may necessitate a closed meeting. Bryan Covinsky, County Counselor, said he would rather discuss it in closed session. However, the reason for the continuance is because the Attorney General appealed the court's decision to dismiss the case. Rather than getting inconsistent verdicts/decisions since they appealed this week, it is called judicial economy because they wait until a final decision is reached. Mr. Smith said the explanation given is helpful. He said it is his understanding that one case got dismissed and the other case is scheduled for trial in January 2025, which is the one the County Counselor has asked to be dismissed. Mr. Covinsky replied Jackson County challenged the initial order, then STC challenged Jackson County. The court dismissed STC's challenge which was then appealed which is the reason for judicial economy.

Sean E. Smith asked the Administration about the long lines taxpayers are experiencing now. He knows Chairman Lauer advocated and funded kiosks to minimize these challenges for taxpayers. Grandview is the only municipality that has a location for taxpayers to pay their tax bills. He asked why there has been a hold up on the kiosks for over a year now. Caleb Clifford said the County Administrator is not in attendance and he has been working on this issue. He said they can provide an update at the next legislative meeting or send an email to legislators regarding the current status of kiosks. Mr. Smith observed since three senior members of the Administration are present and cannot speak to this issue, it appears it has not been a high priority. Mr. Clifford said that was not true.

He said if Mr. Smith would like to provide the Administration with advance notice of topics he would like to discuss, the Administration will do their best to have someone at the meeting to discuss it. Mr. Clifford said the Administration will work with the County Administrator, Collector and Assessor to get the information requested by Mr. Smith.

Manuel Abarca IV, County Legislator, asked why the Chief of Staff is responding to questions when it is the responsibility of the County Executive to understand and know all operations of Jackson County. Lack of a simple answer regarding kiosks on the last day of the year when taxpayers are trying to pay their taxes is unacceptable. He said the Chief of Staff is not accountable to the citizens, it is the elected County Executive. The County Legislature should be able to understand why it has taken over a year to solve a problem that was known over two years ago. He believes the Legislature needs to hold the County Executive more accountable. Mr. Abarca asked the County Executive why the City of Lee's Summit does not have the ability to continue a payment program but the City of Grandview has the ability. Frank White Jr. responded the City of Lee's Summit did not work out a plan with the County. He said the City of Grandview worked with the Administration and the Assessment department. He said Lee's Summit was online and he is not sure why they are no longer online. He said the County Administrator with the Assessment Department has been working to get entities online for this process. Mr. White told Mr. Abarca to see him with any issues. Mr. Abarca said the reality is politics in Jackson County continue to disallow constituents to receive the best benefit. The County Legislature owes it to their constituents to hold people accountable for their actions. The Mayor of Lee's Summit sent a letter stating that because they sued about the property taxes, the County Administration is retaliating. He said this is ridiculous and he also thinks it is ridiculous to allow the County Counselor's office to perpetuate these lawsuits when we know we are not conforming with State law with regards to property tax rates. He said the 2025 Assessment Plan has not been accepted by the State of Missouri which has cost Jackson County over \$1 million dollars. He said not challenging the County Executive to do something about all this is detrimental to the County Legislature as well.

Frank White Jr., County Executive, said running the County Administration is a big task and that is why he has staff to delegate tasks. He said he has an issue with challenging someone's effectiveness in open session. He said this is his 10th year in the job and he knows his job. He said they have always done the right thing for the taxpayers. The County Counselor's office has won 10 out of 10 lawsuits, to save taxpayers money. He said his job is to stand between taxpayers and bad law, to protect taxpayers. He thanked Chairman Lauer for giving him time to respond.

DaRon McGee, County Legislator, asked what system the County Executive was referencing when he said Grandview was online but Lee's Summit was offline. Frank White Jr. said he is referencing the Collections department. He said it is Jackson County's software and the County pays taxing entities to collect the funding. The taxing entities must have an agreement with Jackson County's IT department. Mr. McGee asked why the City of Lee's Summit cannot get an agreement with IT to use the software. Mr. White said that is between the municipalities and the Assessment and Collections departments. He said he has not received a letter from the City of Lee's Summit. Mr. McGee said he has not only received complaints about long lines in Independence but also that staff in Independence are rude when they are paying their tax bills. He asked the County Executive what he is doing to mitigate these situations and give taxpayers the best customer service possible. Mr. White said with his Administration, customer service is their number one goal. They try to be available and get them in the proper lines. He said if there is any type of impropriety by his staff he would hear about it or his Collections department would hear about it. He said they do not allow this as Jackson County is in a bill collecting business. Mr. McGee suggested the County Executive look into this issue and perhaps provide additional customer service training for staff.

DaRon McGee asked the Administration's plan to market the deadline extension for the application for the Senior Property Tax Credit program. Frank White Jr. said they will follow the same steps as before, holding community meetings and engaging pastors and churches.

Megan L. Marshall, County Legislator, asked if the ransomware attack had any impact on the municipalities that have property tax collection locations. Frank White Jr. said yes, portals need to be safe before being brought back online, IT wanted to make sure it was secure. Ms. Marshall asked if Jackson County is responsible for staffing the property tax collection locations of municipalities. Mr. White said no, Jackson County does not staff the locations. Ms. Marshall asked if municipalities charge a transaction fee when collecting taxes. Mr. White said no he does not think they can charge. Ms. Marshall asked if there is a list of drop box locations in Jackson County, Missouri. Mr. White responded yes. Ms. Marshall offered her assistance to market the extension of the application deadline for the Senior Property Tax Credit program as she believes it will benefit seniors.

**6 PERFECTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES AND REPORTS OF COMMITTEE**

[5904](#) AN ORDINANCE repealing Section 5577., Jackson County Code, 1984, relating to possession of firearms and age restriction, and to enact in lieu thereof two new sections, Sections 5577. and 5578., relating to the same subject, with a severability clause and a penalty provision.  
*(Legislature As A Whole - 8th. Perfection)*

[5906](#) AN ORDINANCE awarding a contract for construction services for the Stoenner Road Bridge Replacement County Project No. 3247, Federal Project No. BRO-B048 to Dondlinger & Sons Construction Company, Inc., of Wichita, KS, under the terms and conditions of Invitation to Bid No. 24-068 at a cost to the County not to exceed \$877,022.00.  
*(Public Works Committee - 7th. Perfection)*

[5909](#) AN ORDINANCE submitting to the qualified voters of Jackson County, Missouri, at the primary election to be held on August 5, 2025, a question to amend the Jackson County Charter, with an effective date.  
*(Rules Committee - 7th. Perfection)*

**7 FINAL PASSAGE OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES**

[5902](#) A motion was made by Sean E. Smith, seconded by Manuel Abarca IV, to adopt the Floor Amendment dated December 30, 2024 for Ordinance #5902, to adopt the annual budget and set forth appropriations for the various spending agencies and the principal subdivisions thereof, for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025. The motion passed by a roll call vote:

Yes: 5 - Donna Peyton, Manuel Abarca IV, Venessa Huskey, DaRon McGee and Sean E. Smith

No: 4 - Megan L. Marshall, Jalen Anderson, Charlie Franklin and Jeanie Lauer

(APPROVED)

**8 RESOLUTIONS IN COMMITTEE**

[21641](#) A RESOLUTION authorizing the County Executive or the Chairman of the Legislature to sell the County-owned property located at 1300 Washington Street, Kansas City, MO 64105 via the competitive bidding process.

*(Legislature As A Whole - 27th Meeting)*

[21766](#) A RESOLUTION transferring \$49,500.00 within the 2024 General Fund and authorizing a contract to cover the cost of consultation and proposal services to Colette Holt & Associates Law Firm of San Antonio, TX, at a cost to the County not to exceed \$49,500.00.

*(Legislature As A Whole - 14th Meeting)*

[21821](#) A RESOLUTION awarding a twelve-month term and supply contract, with one twelve-month option to extend, for the furnishing of on-call construction management at risk services for use by various County departments to McCown Gordon, of Kansas City, MO, under the terms and conditions of Request for Qualifications No. 24-051.

*(Public Works Committee - 8th. Meeting)*

**9 CONSENT AGENDA**

None.

**10 INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES AND ASSIGNMENT TO COMMITTEE**

None.

**11 INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS AND ASSIGNMENT TO COMMITTEE**

None.

**12 COUNTY EXECUTIVE ORDERS**

None.

**13 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**14 NEW BUSINESS**

Jalen Anderson, County Legislator, apologized for not being in person at the meeting as he has had some health challenges and he appreciates those who have reached out. He thanked Chairman Lauer for her service as Chairman of the County Legislature this year and her dedication to the constituents of Jackson County. He said he is proud to serve with his colleagues and thanked them as well. Chairman Lauer thanked Mr. Anderson for his work.

Manuel Abarca said he just received communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives who said he has been trying to pay his taxes using the online portal since this morning and he would like the Administration to look into this issue. Mr. White said they will look into it.

**15     ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Megan L. Marshall, seconded by Sean E. Smith, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by a voice vote.

Meeting adjourned until Monday, January 6, 2025 at 3:00 P.M. at the Jackson County Courthouse, 415 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri, 2nd Floor, Legislative Assembly Area.