



Missouri Ethics Commission

Elizabeth L. Ziegler
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Final Action: MEC No. 21-0030-I, University City, Terry Crow, Steve McMahon, Jeff Hales, Aleta Klein, Tim Cusick, Stacy Clay and Bwayne Smotherson

Date: 8/19/2021

At its August 19, 2021 meeting, the Missouri Ethics Commission took final consideration of the complaint filed against University City and its council members: Terry Crow, Steve McMahon, Jeff Hales, Aleta Klein, Tim Cusick, Stacy Clay, and Bwayne Smotherson.

The complaint filed with the Commission alleged an improper expenditure of City funds to publish and distribute a newsletter that contained a commentary by Aleta Klein discussing a proposed ballot measure.

Pursuant to Section 115.646, RSMo:

No contribution or expenditure of public funds shall be made directly by any officer, employee or agent of any political subdivision to advocate, support, or oppose any ballot measure or candidate for public office. This section shall not be construed to prohibit any public official of a political subdivision from making public appearances or from issuing press releases concerning such ballot measure.

The MEC investigation determined that at the time Klein wrote and submitted the commentary for publication, the council had yet to approve a ballot measure. Though such action was eventually taken by the council, a subsequent vote by the council reversed that decision. Klein's commentary discussed a future bond proposal in general terms but did not advocate, support, or oppose any specific ballot measure.

From the facts presented, the Commission found no reasonable grounds exist to support a violation of Chapter 115, RSMo, and dismissed the complaint.

Elizabeth L. Ziegler
Executive Director