

**BEFORE THE
MISSOURI ETHICS COMMISSION**

Filed

OCT 16 2024

Missouri Ethics
Commission

MISSOURI ETHICS)	
COMMISSION,)	
)	
Petitioner,)	
)	Case No. 22-0013-A
v.)	
)	
JOSH DENNIS 2020 CORONER)	
CAMPAIGN, Candidate)	
Committee,)	
)	
and)	
)	
JOSHUA DENNIS, Candidate,)	
)	
Respondents.)	

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

This is the decision and Order of the Missouri Ethics Commission following a hearing on a Complaint filed by Petitioner, by and through counsel, pursuant to Section 105.961, RSMo, and Chapter 536, RSMo. The hearing was conducted before the following members of the Missouri Ethics Commission: Robin Wheeler Sanders, Whitney Smith, Jeremy Schneider, and Jim W. Martin.

The Commission held the closed hearing on October 16, 2024, at the offices of the Missouri Ethics Commission at 3411A Knipp Drive, Jefferson City, Missouri 65109. The Commission was represented by Brian Hamilton. Respondents Joshua Dennis and Josh Dennis 2020 Coroner Campaign did not appear after due notice.

Having considered all the competent and substantial evidence upon the whole record, the Commission finds by a unanimous vote as follows:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Josh Dennis 2020 Coroner Campaign registered as a candidate committee on June 2, 2020.

2. Joshua Dennis was an unsuccessful candidate for Livingston County in the November 3, 2020, general election.

3. Pursuant to §§ 105.959 and 105.961, RSMo, the Commission's staff audited the reports and statements filed with the Commission and reported the findings to the Commission.

4. Based on the audit report, the Commission determined that there were reasonable grounds to believe that violations of the law had occurred, and it therefore authorized a hearing in this matter pursuant to § 105.961.3, RSMo.

COUNT I

Failure to terminate a committee.

5. Josh Dennis 2020 Coroner Campaign did not have any debts at the time of the termination requirement.

COUNT II

Failure to accurately report beginning money on hand.

6. Respondents inaccurately reported the beginning money on hand on four reports in 2020.

COUNT III

Failure to timely and accurately file campaign finance disclosure reports.

7. Between 2021 and 2023, Respondents failed to file ten quarterly reports and/or limited activity statements.

Report Name	Report Year
April Quarterly Report	2021
July Quarterly Report	2021
October Quarterly Report	2021
January Quarterly Report	2022
April Quarterly Report	2022
July Quarterly Report	2022
October Quarterly Report	2022
April Quarterly Report	2023
July Quarterly Report	2023
October Quarterly Report	2023

COUNT IV

Failure to timely and accurately report contributions received.

8. Respondents failed to timely and accurately report two monetary contributions, totaling \$450.

Contributor Name	Amount	Date	Report Not Showing Contribution
Dean Brookshier.	\$250	10/19/20	30 Day After General-11/3/20
Bachmans Farm Store, LLC Scott Bachman	\$200	10/27/20	30 Day After General-11/3/20
Total	\$450		

COUNT V

Failure to accurately report expenditures.

9. Respondents reported an expenditure of \$525.00 to MAST Productions on the amended October 2020 Quarterly Report. However, the same expenditure was reported on the 30 Day After 8/3/20 Primary Report.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

COUNT I

Failure to terminate a committee.

10. Pursuant to § 130.011(9) a candidate committee is “a committee which shall be formed by a candidate to receive contributions or make expenditures in behalf of the person's candidacy and which shall continue in existence for use by an elected candidate or which shall terminate the later of either thirty days after the general election for a candidate who was not elected or upon the satisfaction of all committee debt after the election, except that no committee retiring debt shall engage in any other activities in support of the candidate for which the committee was formed.”

11. There is probable cause to believe that Respondents violated § 130.011(9), RSMo, by failing to terminate the committee within thirty days of the general election.

COUNT II

Failure to accurately report beginning money on hand.

12. Reports shall state “[t]he amount of money, including cash on hand at the beginning of the reporting period [.]” § 130.041.1(2), RSMo.

13. There is probable cause to believe that Respondents violated § 130.041.1(2), RSMo, by failing to accurately report the beginning money on hand on four reports in 2020.

COUNT III

Failure to timely and accurately file campaign finance disclosure reports.

14. Pursuant to § 130.046.1(3), RSMo, all committees must file regular campaign finance disclosure reports at the following times and for the following periods: “(3) Not later than the fifteenth day following the close of each calendar quarter.”

15. Pursuant to § 130.046.5(2), RSMo:

No disclosure report needs to be filed for any reporting period if during that reporting period the committee has neither received contributions aggregating more than five hundred dollars nor made expenditure aggregating more than five hundred dollars and has not received contributions aggregating more than three hundred dollars from any single contributor and if the committee's treasurer files a statement with the appropriate officer that the committee has not exceeded the identified thresholds in the reporting period.

16. There is probable cause to believe Respondents violated §§ 130.046.1(3) and 130.046.5(2), RSMo, by failing to file ten quarterly reports and/or limited activity statements.

COUNT IV

Failure to timely and accurately report contributions received.

17. All committees are required to report receipts for each reporting period, including:

(a) Total amount of all monetary contributions received which can be identified in the committee's records by name and address of each contributor. In addition, the candidate committee shall make a reasonable effort to obtain and report the employer, or occupation if self-employed or notation of retirement, of each person from whom the committee received one or more contributions which in the aggregate total in excess of one hundred dollars and shall make a reasonable effort to obtain and report a description of any contractual relationship over five hundred dollars between the contributor and the state if the

candidate is seeking election to a state office or between the contributor and any political subdivision of the state if the candidate is seeking election to another political subdivision of the state;

...

(e) A separate listing by name and address and employer, or occupation if self-employed or notation of retirement, of each person from whom the committee received contributions, in money or any other thing of value, aggregating more than one hundred dollars, together with the date and amount of each such contribution[.]

§ 130.041.1(3), RSMo.

18. There is probable cause to believe that Respondents violated § 130.041.1(3), RSMo, by failing to report two contributions.

COUNT V

Failure to accurately report expenditures.

19. All committees are required to report expenditures for each reporting period, including:

(a) The total dollar amount of expenditures made by check drawn on the committee's depository;

...

(d) The full name and mailing address of each person to whom an expenditure of money or any other thing of value in the amount of more than one hundred dollars has been made, contracted for or incurred, together with the date, amount and purpose of each expenditure. Expenditures of one hundred dollars or less may be grouped and listed by categories of expenditure showing the total dollar amount of expenditures in each category, except that the report shall contain an itemized listing of each payment made to campaign workers by name, address, date, amount and purpose of each payment and the aggregate amount paid to each such worker[.]

§ 130.041.1(4), RSMo.

20. There is probable cause to believe that Respondents violated § 130.041.1(4), RSMo, by failing to accurately report an expenditure.

ORDER

The Missouri Ethics Commission finds probable cause to believe Respondents violated §§ 130.011(9), 130.041.1, 130.046.1 and 130.046.5, RSMo and pursuant to § 105.961.4, hereby **ORDERS**:

1. Respondents shall comply with all relevant sections of Chapter 130.
2. It is the order of the Missouri Ethics Commission that a fee is imposed against Respondents in the amount of **\$2,975**, pursuant to § 105.961.4(6), RSMo. However, if Respondents pay **\$297** within forty-five days after the date of the Consent Order, the remainder of the fee will be stayed. The fee will be paid by check or money order made payable to the Missouri Ethics Commission.
3. Regardless of the stay in paragraph 2 above, if there is probable cause to believe that any Respondent commits any further violation of the campaign finance laws under Chapter 130, RSMo, within the two-year period from the date of this order, then the Respondent who committed the violation will be required to pay the remainder of the fees. The fee will be due immediately upon final adjudication finding that there was probable cause to believe that such Respondent has committed such a violation.
4. Respondents shall be jointly and severally liable for all fees imposed under this order.

SO ORDERED, this 16th day of October, 2024.

Robin Wheeler Sanders

Robin Wheeler Sanders, Chair
Missouri Ethics Commission