

Filed

AUG 04 2026

**Missouri Ethics
Commission**

**BEFORE THE
MISSOURI ETHICS COMMISSION**

MISSOURI ETHICS COMMISSION,

Petitioner,

v.

GWEN SCHWEISS and SCHWEISS FOR
HOSPITAL BOARD,

Respondents.

Case No. 26-0006-I

**JOINT PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT,
CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND CONSENT ORDER**

The Missouri Ethics Commission ("MEC"), together with Gwen Schweiss and her candidate committee, Schweiss for Hospital Board ("Respondents"), collectively the "parties," jointly stipulate and consent to action as set forth here (the "agreement").

Respondents acknowledge their right to have this agreement reviewed by counsel. Respondents further acknowledge they have received actual notice of the legal complaint filed by the MEC in this case, have reviewed the contents of the legal complaint, and submit themselves to the jurisdiction of the Missouri Ethics Commission.

Respondents further acknowledge they are aware of the various rights and privileges afforded by law, including but not limited to: the right to appear and be represented by counsel at a hearing before the MEC; the right to have all allegations against Respondents proven upon the record by competent and substantial evidence; the right to cross-examine any witnesses appearing at the hearing against Respondents; the

right to present evidence on Respondents' behalf at the hearing; and the right to a decision upon the record of the hearing. Being aware of these rights, Respondents knowingly and voluntarily waive each one of these rights and freely enter into this agreement and agree to abide by its terms.

I.

The parties mutually agree and stipulate, subject to adoption by the Missouri Ethics Commission, the following shall constitute the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in this matter:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Missouri Ethics Commission (MEC) is an agency of the State of Missouri established pursuant to § 105.955, RSMo, in part for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of Chapter 130, RSMo.
2. Respondent Gwen S. Schweiss was a successful candidate for Trustee of the Perry County Memorial Hospital in the April 2024 Municipal Election.
3. Respondent Schweiss for Hospital Board was a candidate committee that was established with the MEC on March 17, 2024, and terminated on July 26, 2024.
4. Pursuant to §§ 105.957 and 105.961, RSMo, the Commission's staff investigated a complaint that was filed with the Commission and reported the findings to the Commission.
5. The Commission determined there were reasonable grounds to believe

violations of the law had occurred and authorized a hearing pursuant to § 105.961.3, RSMo.

COUNT I

Failure to Timely File a Statement of Committee Organization

6. Respondents received a single contribution of \$1,148.00 on January 19, 2024.
7. Respondents did not file a Statement of Committee Organization until March 17, 2024.

COUNT II

Failure to File Campaign Finance Disclosure Report

8. Respondent Schweiss was a candidate in the April 2, 2024 election.
9. The January 2024 Quarterly Reports were due on January 15, 2024, which was 77 days prior to the April 2, 2024 election.
10. The reporting period for the 40 Day Before Election Report that was due on February 22, 2024, was: January 1, 2024, through February 17, 2024.
11. Respondents reported the following contributions during the reporting period for the 40 Day Before Election Report:

Date	Amount	Contributor
01/19/2024	\$1,148.00	Gwen Schweiss
02/17/2024	\$166.00	Gwen Schweiss

12. Respondents reported the following expenditures during the reporting period for the 40 Day Before Election Report:

Date	Amount	Recipient
01/19/2024	\$1,148.00	Dirt Cheap Signs
02/17/2024	\$166.00	Dirt Cheap Signs

13. Respondents did not file a 40 Day Before Election Report on or before February 22, 2024.

COUNT III

Failure to include a "Paid for by" Disclosure

14. Respondents purchased yard signs supporting Respondent Schweiss's candidacy.

15. The yard signs did not contain a "Paid for by" disclosure.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

COUNT I

Failure to Timely File a Statement of Committee Organization

16. Candidates are required to file a statement of committee organization within twenty days after becoming a committee. Section 130.021.5, RSMo.

17. A candidate for a county office must form and register a committee when:

[T]he aggregate of contributions received or expenditures made by the candidate and any other person with the candidate's knowledge and consent in support of the person's candidacy. . . exceed[s] one thousand dollars and the aggregate of contributions from any single contributor. . . exceed[s] three hundred twenty-five dollars.

Sections 130.016.6 & .7, RSMo.

18. There is probable cause to believe Respondents violated § 130.021.5, RSMo, by failing to register a candidate committee within 20 days of accepting a contribution greater than \$1,000.

COUNT II

Failure to File Campaign Finance Disclosure Report

19. Committees are required to file campaign finance disclosure reports “[n]ot later than the fifteenth day following the close of each calendar quarter.” Section 130.046.1(3), RSMo.

20. Additionally:

[I]f any committee accepts contributions or makes expenditures in support of or in opposition to. . . a candidate, and the report required. . . for the most recent calendar quarter is filed prior to the fortieth day before the election. . . the committee shall file an additional disclosure report not later than the fortieth day before the election for the period closing on the forty-fifth day before the election.

Section 130.046.1(3), RSMo.

21. There is probable cause to believe Respondents violated § 130.046.1, RSMo, by failing to file a 40 Day Before Election Report.

COUNT III

Failure to include a "Paid for by" Disclosure

22. Pursuant to § 130.031.8, RSMo, printed matter relative to a candidate for public office "shall on the face of the printed matter identify in a clear and conspicuous manner the person who paid for the printed matter with the words 'Paid for by' followed by the proper identification of the sponsor pursuant to this section."

23. The specifics regarding "proper identification of the sponsor" are laid out in the subsections of the statute as follows:

In regard to any printed matter paid for by a committee, it shall be sufficient identification to print the name of the committee as required to be registered by subsection 5 of section 130.021 and the name and title of the committee treasurer who was serving when the printed matter was paid for.

Section 130.031.8(2), RSMo.

24. There is probable cause to believe that Respondents violated the provisions of § 130.031.8, RSMo, by printing, publishing, circulating, and/or distributing yard signs without properly identifying who paid for them.

II.

Based on the foregoing, the parties mutually agree and stipulate, subject to adoption by the Missouri Ethics Commission, the following shall constitute the Order issued by the Missouri Ethics Commission in this matter:

CONSENT ORDER

The Missouri Ethics Commission finds probable cause to believe Respondents violated §§ 130.021.5, 130.046.1, and 130.031.8, RSMo, and pursuant to § 105.961.4, RSMo, hereby **ORDERS**:

1. Respondents shall comply with all relevant sections of Chapter 130, RSMo.
2. A fee is imposed against Respondents in the amount of \$2,100; however, if Respondents pay \$300 within 45 days of the date of the consent order, the remainder of the fee will be stayed.
3. Respondents are jointly and severally liable for the payment of this fee.
4. Regardless of the stay in paragraph 2, if there is probable cause to believe that any Respondent has committed any further violation of the campaign finance laws in Chapter 130, RSMo, within the two-year period from the date of this order, then the Respondent who committed the new violation will be required to pay the remainder of the fee. That remainder will be due immediately upon final adjudication of finding probable cause.
5. Fees will be paid by check or money order made payable to the Missouri Ethics Commission.

III.

The parties understand that the MEC will maintain this agreement as an open

record of the Commission. This agreement does not bind the MEC or restrict the remedies available concerning any violations not expressly detailed here, including any future violations. Each party agrees to pay all their own fees and expenses incurred as a result of this case, its litigation, and/or its disposition.

Respondents, together with their heirs, assigns, agents, representatives and attorneys, do hereby waive, release, acquit and forever discharge the MEC, the Commission's respective members, employees, agents and attorneys including former members, employees, agents and attorneys, of, or from any liability, claim, actions, causes of action, fees, costs, expenses and compensation, including, but not limited to, any claim for attorney's fees and expenses, whether or not now known or contemplated, including, but not limited to, any claims pursuant to § 536.087, RSMo, as amended, or any claim arising under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, which now or in the future may be based upon, arise out of, or relate to any of the matters raised in this case or its litigation or from the negotiation or execution of this Joint Stipulation. The parties acknowledge that this paragraph is severable from the remaining portions of this agreement in that it survives in perpetuity even in the event that any court or administrative tribunal deems this agreement or any portion thereof void or unenforceable.

This agreement shall become effective immediately upon (1) the signature of all parties; (2) the adoption of the Joint Proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law by the Missouri Ethics Commission; and (3) the issuance of a Final Order by the Commission,

without any further action of the parties.

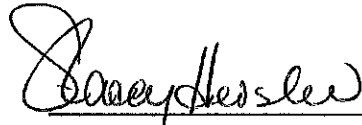
SO AGREED:

RESPONDENTS

GWEN SCHWEISS

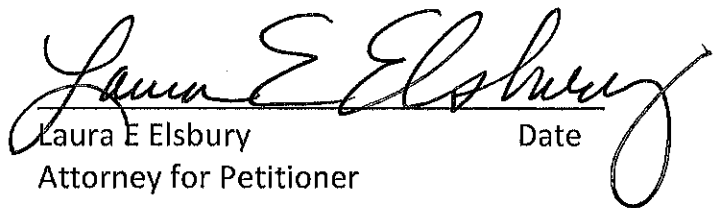
 7-20-26
Gwen Schweiss Date

PETITIONER

 8/4/2020
Stacey Heislen Date
Executive Director

SCHWEISS FOR HCSPITAL BOARD

 7-20-26
By Gwen Schweiss Date

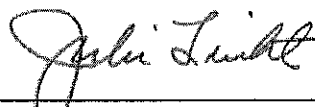

Laura E Elsbury Date
Attorney for Petitioner

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5. Fees will be paid by check or money order made payable to the Missouri Ethics Commission.

SO ORDERED, this 4th day of August 2026.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Julie Leicht", positioned above a horizontal line.

Julie Leicht, Chair
Missouri Ethics Commission