



Missouri Ethics Commission

Stacey Heislen
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Final Action: MEC No. 26-0065-I: City of Bunceton Alderman Wendell Cunningham and Mayor Pro tem Jon Goldsmith

Date: September 17, 2026

The Missouri Ethics Commission (MEC) took final consideration of the complaint filed against former City of Bunceton Alderman Wendell Cunningham and Mayor Pro tem Jon Goldsmith.

The complaint alleged that Wendell Cunningham failed to disclose his ownership interest in Leslie's Service Center on his personal financial disclosure statement and acted unlawfully by approving payments from the City of Bunceton to the business. The allegations involving Jon Goldsmith were not investigated, as they did not fall within the jurisdiction of the MEC.

The investigation found that Mr. Cunningham's votes to approve payments to Leslie's Service Center did not constitute favorable action resulting in a prohibited special monetary benefit to himself, his spouse, or his dependent children. Under the plain language of § 105.452(4), RSMo, the prohibited beneficiaries are limited to the public official, the official's spouse, and dependent children. Unlike other subsections within the statute, § 105.452(4) does not include "any business with which the official is associated." While § 105.452 addresses associated businesses elsewhere, the omission of such language in subsection (4) is clear.

The investigation also confirmed that the City of Bunceton's annual operating budget for 2026 is one million dollars or less and that the City does not have an ordinance or policy requiring the filing of a personal financial disclosure statement with the MEC.

Finally, pursuant to § 105.458.2(1), RSMo, transactions between the City and a business associated with an official must exceed five hundred dollars per transaction or five thousand dollars annually before public notice and competitive bidding requirements apply. The investigation did not find that the transactions in question met the statutory monetary thresholds.

Based on these facts, the Commission finds no reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of the Chapter 105, RSMo, occurred and has dismissed the complaint.

Stacey Heislen
Executive Director