



WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

AG SUES JACKSON COUNTY ON ASSESSMENT

Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey sued Jackson County on Dec. 18, claiming county officials failed to follow state law during the most recent property tax reassessment cycle, resulting in unjustified higher taxes on county property owners.

As of Dec. 21, the county hadn't yet filed a response to the lawsuit.

Bailey's lawsuit, which is joined by the State Tax Commission, alleges county officials failed to give timely and proper notice of assessments, didn't perform mandatory physical inspections of certain properties and improperly handled the process for appealing assessments. The lawsuit says that led to

property countywide being overvalued by at least 30% on average, with some property being assessed at more than double its actual value.

The alleged overassessment resulted in an increased tax burden on affected property owners, the lawsuit claims. Bailey is asking the court to invalidate all assessment increases that exceed 15%.

In a news release announcing the case, Bailey advised Jackson County property owners who feel their assessments are inflated to pay their 2023 property taxes by the Dec. 31 deadline but do so under protest in order to pursue legal remedies that may become available later as the case unfolds.

The case is State ex rel. Attorney General Andrew Bailey and State Tax Commission v. Jackson County, et al.

BAN ON HOMELESS CAMPING STRUCK DOWN

A unanimous Missouri Supreme Court on Dec. 18 struck down a 2022 state law criminalizing camping or sleeping on state property and imposing other regulations on the homeless, ruling the wide-ranging omnibus bill it was a part of violated a state constitutional requirement limiting bills to a single subject.

As originally filed during the 2022 legislative session, House Bill 1606 was limited to tweaking laws on county government financial statements. By the time it passed, lawmakers had expanded it to about 20 different provisions loosely relating to "political subdivisions".

Advocates for the homeless filed a lawsuit challenging HB 1606, arguing the homeless restrictions had nothing to do with the bill's original purpose of county financial statements or its other provisions, including adjusting county coroners' salaries, prohibiting mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for public workers and exempting the upcoming World Cup soccer games in Kansas City from sales taxes.

Although Cole County Judge Cotton Walker in March ruled HB 1606 was constitutionally valid, the Supreme Court reversed his decision in an opinion written by Judge Paul Wilson.

"(T)his Court holds the connection between the various provisions (relating to homelessness) and the subject 'political subdivisions' is remote at best and, in some instances, completely missing," Wilson wrote. "Those provisions do not fairly relate to or have a natural connection with that subject and, instead, fairly relate to and have a natural connection with the wholly different subject of homelessness."

Rather than severing the unconstitutional portions of the bill and preserving the rest, the court struck down HB 1606 in its entirety. Wilson wrote that under the court's precedent it can only sever provisions invalidated due to violations of constitutional procedure if the court is convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the underlying bill would have passed without the unconstitutional provisions.

"It takes an extraordinary showing to convince this Court to engage in judicial surgery to save a bill infected with the otherwise fatal constitutional disease of multiple subjects, and no effort was made by any party to make such a showing here," Wilson wrote.

Because the court struck down the provisions targeting the homeless on procedural, rather than substantive grounds, the General Assembly could attempt to re-enact them as stand-alone legislation during the 2024 legislative session, which begins Jan. 3.

The case is Jonathan Byrd, et al., v. State of Missouri.

BETTY COOPER HEARNES DIES AT 96

Betty Cooper Hearnese, the first woman nominated for Missouri governor by a

major political party, died Dec. 14 in her hometown of Charleston, Mo., in the state's Bootheel. She was 96 years old.

A fixture in Democratic Party politics for several decades, Hearnnes was married to former Gov. Warren Hearnnes and served as Missouri's first lady from 1965 to 1973 during his two terms in office. Their 62-year marriage began in 1947, ending with Warren Hearnnes' 2009 death at the age of 86.

Betty Hearnnes began a political career in her own right after her husband's ended. She won a special election to fill a vacant seat in the Missouri House of Representatives in 1979 before going on to win four full terms.

She gave up her House seat in 1988 to run for governor. After winning the Democratic nomination, however, she lost to incumbent Gov. John Ashcroft, a Republican, in the general election.

In the decades since Hearnnes' trailblazing nomination, only three other women have secured a major-party nomination for Missouri governor - Republican Margaret Kelly in 1996, Democrat Claire McCaskill in 2004 and Democrat Nicole Galloway in 2020. Missouri has yet to elect a woman as governor.

Hearnnes was born July 24, 1927, in

Brinkley, Ark. Survivors include two daughters and four grandchildren.

Happy Holidays

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
DEC 25	DEC 26	DEC 27	DEC 28	DEC 29	DEC 30
NO TRASH COLLECTED TODAY	MONDAY TRASH COLLECTED TODAY + NO TAG	TUESDAY TRASH COLLECTED TODAY + NO TAG	WEDNESDAY TRASH COLLECTED TODAY + NO TAG	THURSDAY TRASH COLLECTED TODAY + NO TAG	FRIDAY TRASH COLLECTED TODAY + NO TAG

HOLIDAY TRASH PICK-UP SCHEDULE

No trash collection on Christmas Day + No Tag Week



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DO YOU QUALIFY?



YOUR ROOF MUST BE LESS THAN
10
YEARS OLD



YOU MUST MAKE LESS THAN
60% AMI*

Household Size	2021 Household Income
1	\$40,680
2	\$46,500
3	\$52,320
4	\$58,080
5	\$62,760
6	\$67,380
7	\$72,060
8	\$76,680

*AREA MEDIAN INCOME



Share the Sun is brought to Kansas City, MO by the following organizations with generous support from the KCMO Government and Metropolitan Energy Center



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SPORTS, COOKING & ARTS

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South KC Food Pantries

South Kansas City is fortunate to have several food pantries to help less-fortunate residents have enough healthy food to eat. These include:

Community Assistance Council, 10901 Blue Ridge Blvd. on the north end of the Ruskin High School campus, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Persons should call 816-763-3277, ext. 100, or email info@cackc.org for appointments or questions.

Red Bridge Area Food Pantry, 100 W. Red Bridge Rd. in the First Baptist Church of Kansas City, from 10 a.m. to noon on the third Saturday each month. Persons must call 816-908-7800 for appointments by the prior Wednesday.

Harvesters (the community food network) brings the semi-truck that serves as its mobile food pantry to seven sites in south Kansas City monthly to distribute fresh produce and other healthy food to families in need. The sites are:

Center School District, 8701 Holmes Rd., from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. as long as food is left on the first Saturday of the month. Persons should drive through the bus parking lot to the district warehouse. The event is sponsored by Three Trails Community church in partnership with the Center School District.

Center District Warehouse, 8701 Holmes Rd., from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. the second Friday of each month. Persons should go to the entrance to the Center Administrative Office and drive through the bus parking lot to the warehouse where volunteers will load the food. Persons should take the Troost Ave exit. The event is sponsored by the Center Education Foundation in partnership with the Center School District.

Evangel Church, 1414 E. 103rd St., from 7 to 8:30 a.m. the second

Saturday of the month. Persons may remain in their vehicles, and food will be brought to them.

United Believers Community Church, 5600 E. 112th Terr., with vehicles lining up at 8:30 a.m. and contactless food distribution running from 9 to 11 a.m. the third Wednesday of the month.

Ruskin High School, 7000 E. 111th St., from 4 to 5:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month. Vehicles should line up on Ruskin Way on the east side of the school, and staff and students will load the food when vehicles reach the school.

Colonial Presbyterian Church, 9500 Wornall Rd., with registration beginning at 8 a.m. and food distribution running from about 8:30 to 10 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month. Families are asked to bring two cardboard boxes for volunteers to put the food in.

Red Bridge United Methodist Church, 636 E. 117th St., from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. on the fourth Friday of the month in the church parking lot.

Serve and Lift Center - South KC, 8001 Longview Rd., from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Walk-in, call for an appointment or order online at <https://catholiccharities-kcsj.org/pantry/>



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Please don't hesitate to contact me with any feedback, questions or ideas!