

## City Charter Review Task Force Issues Report

**Mary Robertson | Guest Writer**  
CITY OF ST. JOSEPH

In October 2008, the City Council appointed a Charter Review Task Force to address several issues that were raised pertaining to the City Charter. The committee was charged with reviewing these issues and making recommendations regarding which issues were worthy of revising the City Charter by public vote.

The Charter Review Task Force was composed of chairperson Stephen Briggs, vice chairperson Charles Lau, Glenn Boos, Carl Butcher, Edward Catron, Todd Ehler, Virgil Hall, Steve Holdenried, Sharon McKinney, Jerry Mogg, Lisa Robertson, Randy Rowland, Maggie Siegmund, Patrick Squires, Larry Stobbs, and Tom Watkins. Buchanan County Clerk Pat Conway provided expertise to the Task Force on matters related to elections and voting.

The Task Force met seven times over the course of the past year, with work being performed between meetings by many of the Task Force members. The meetings were open to the public, and minutes of the meetings are on file in the City Clerk's office.

Of each of the issues presented for consideration, the only recommendation for action submitted to the City Council pertains to Article X, which addresses the city election process. If voted on and approved, the recommended revisions to Article X would allow the Buchanan County Clerk to comply with state and federal laws. Voter approval of this ballot issue would move the city's primary election one month earlier to February, with the general election remaining in April.

Other issues that were discussed and voted on by the Charter Review Task Force were:

- To leave the current form of government (Council-Manager) unchanged.
- To leave the current budget process unchanged.
- To leave the current council terms unchanged.
- To leave the appointment of the city attorney by the city manager unchanged.
- To not make any changes with

respect to the appointment and removal of board and commission members.

- To not move the Museum Oversight Board to the Administrative Code.
- To not consider a change to the City Council pay and compensation.
- To not consider adding a provision in the Charter for a periodic Charter review.
- To not create a specific Charter provision for an internal auditor who would report directly to the City Council.

The city of St. Joseph extends its sincere appreciation to each of the Task Force members for their time and dedication to this important undertaking on behalf of our community.

For more information on the findings and recommendations of the Charter Review Task Force, contact the City Clerk at 271.4730.

## New State Inspection rules effective Jan. 1

A state law that goes into effect Jan. 1 will exempt some Missourians from having to get safety inspections for newer vehicles.

Beginning Jan. 1, motor vehicles are exempt from the safety inspection requirement for the first five years following the model year of manufacture. For example, a car made in 2006 will be exempt from the safety inspection through 2011.

Currently, the Missouri Department of Revenue requires proof of a safety inspection when vehicle registrations (license plates) are renewed. Citizens presently have the option of renewing their license plates for one-year or two-year periods, so the need to obtain safety inspections for owners of newer vehicles will be minimized. Under current law, brand new vehicles are exempt from the inspection for the model year of the car and the immediate year thereafter. An estimated 650,000 vehicles will be exempt from having to get safety inspections in 2010 because of the enactment of the new law.

"The Department of Revenue

offered to pay,

But I wouldn't hear of it – it gave me a lift to think that just once he was given a gift.

He picked up the reins and got on his way. The reindeer took off with that magical sleigh.

I made my way back to my home and my bed, and laughed to myself at the last words he said

As he steered north by the stars without aid of a map, "Merry Christmas to you – and button your flap."

I know that my story has taken a while, but the time was well spent if it brought you a smile.

Merry Christmas from farmers who plow up the furrow, and Denny Banister reporting for the Missouri Farm Bureau.

(Denny Banister, of Jefferson City, Mo., is the assistant director of information and public relations for the Missouri Farm Bureau)

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Looking behind me expecting a trap, I saw nothing more than my unbuttoned flap.

Ho, ho, ho, he laughed with delight. I guess he was laughing at the ridiculous sight

Of this farmer in long johns with flashlight and rifle, ranting and raving while exposed just a trifle.

Embarrassed and angered, I prepared to do battle – I pushed my way through that big herd of cattle.

His laughter continued as we met eye-to-eye, and I was finding it hard to be mad at the guy.

We ha-ha'd and ho-ho'd for an hour together at my careless exposure, to be sure for the weather.

But even the best of good times must soon halt, so I bade him good-bye and said "Leave without fault."

For the use of my pasture and consumption of hay, he kindly and generously

## Nixon Announces Training Program

Gov. Jay Nixon last week launched Training for Tomorrow, a \$12 million initiative to educate Missourians in high-tech fields and get them working in growing industries. These grants will help Missouri community colleges create or expand training programs to serve additional students.

The Governor announced Training for Tomorrow during visits to Ozarks Technical Community College in Springfield and Moberly Area Community College.

"Earlier this fall, I toured many of Missouri's community colleges to hear directly about the needs of workers and businesses in their areas," Gov. Nixon said. "In those conversations, it became clear that to turn this economy around, more Missourians need access to training programs in high-tech, high-demand fields. Especially in growing industries like health care, technical training beyond high school is absolutely vital, but many of our community colleges simply don't have the equipment, instructors or resources to meet the needs of Missouri's workers. Training for Tomorrow will expand these programs quickly and help get Missourians ready to work as soon as possible."

Under Training for Tomorrow, member institutions of the Missouri Community College Association will partner with the government of the county in which they are located to apply for grant dollars to develop or expand programs to train Missourians in technical fields. Occupations specifically targeted by these funds could include veterinary and pharmacy technicians, nursing aides or skilled craftsmen.

Community colleges applying for competitive grants from Training for Tomorrow will be required to provide a detailed description of the programs they plan to develop or expand.

"This program will provide new opportunities for Missouri workers, meet critical needs for our businesses, and help move our economy forward," said Marcia Pfeiffer, president of St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley and chair of the Presidents and Chancellors Council of the Missouri Community College Association.

wants to make people aware of the new law because fewer citizens will need to get their vehicles inspected," said Alana M. Barragán-Scott, director of the Department. "This will also mean that many customers will need one less document when they renew their license plates. However, the Department urges citizens to monitor the condition of their vehicles and get them repaired if they believe there are mechanical problems with their vehicles."

An inspection must be conducted at an authorized inspection station. The cost of an inspection is up to \$12 for cars and trucks and up to \$10 for motorcycles, but the exact fee is decided by the management at each inspection center. The inspection must be made within 60 days of the application of a title or renewal of license plates.

If a motor vehicle is sold, the new law still applies. For example, if a 2009 car is sold to another person in 2011, a safety inspection will not be required. Safety inspections of school buses and interstate commercial vehicles will not be affected by the new law.

The current vehicle inspection law is in effect until Dec. 31, 2009, so most citizens who need to renew their license plates by the end of December will still need to have proof of a safety inspection whether they go to a local license office or renew online at [www.plates.mo.gov](http://www.plates.mo.gov).

This bill does not affect the required emissions test in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

For more information on safety inspections go to the home page of the Department of Revenue's Web site ([www.dor.mo.gov](http://www.dor.mo.gov)) and find "Do I Need a Vehicle Safety Inspection?" under the Featured Links section, or go directly to <http://dor.mo.gov/mvdl/motorv/help.htm#safety>.



## Ice & Snow On Sidewalks

In winter, we are reminded how important our sidewalks are to school children, senior citizens, people with special needs, mail carriers ... as well as business customers.

City Ordinance (Section 25-78) states, "it is the property owner's responsibility to remove ice and snow from their sidewalks."

Cleared sidewalks are important to the safety and mobility of our entire community. Be a good neighbor and help keep your sidewalks safe. Offer your neighbor a hand if they are unable to shovel their own sidewalks.



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