



The Tesson Times

A Publication of the
Tesson Ferry Township Republican Club
Volume 22 #08 August 2017

August 2017 Meeting

Date: Thursday, August 10th, 2017
Time: 7:00 pm
Place: Abiding Savior Lutheran Church
Speakers: MO State Representatives
Topic: 2016 Missouri Legislative Session



Our regular meeting will be on Thursday, August 10th at 7:00 pm at Abiding Savior Lutheran church, 4355 Butler Hill Road. (North of the Schnucks shopping center at Highway 55 and Butler Hill Road.). Our speakers will be our state representatives from the Tesson Ferry Township and our state senator Andrew Koenig. They will update us on the accomplishments of the 2017 legislative session



July Meeting Highlights

The July TFTRC meeting focused on the possible merger of the City of St. Louis with St. Louis County. Chris Howard, Legislative Assistant to County Councilman Mark Harder was our featured speaker. Chris has studied this topic and offered some insights regarding how this merger might come about. Some possible paths a merger could take are (1) a “unigov” for the St. Louis region; (2) a borough system similar to one proposed by Gene McNary or (3) a re-entry of the city back into St. Louis County. The re-entry seems to be the most likely possibility.

At this point we need to become acquainted with an organization called “Better Together”. As the name implies, this group clearly has an agenda for combining the city with the county. It was started in 2013 led by Mayor Francis Slay and County Executive Charlie Dooley with retired investment guru Rex Sinquefeld funding it. Better Together sponsored six studies over 16 months on public finance, economic development, public health, public safety, parks & recreation and finally infrastructure and administration.

Why does Better Together push for a merger? The stated reason is to address the regional problems of crime, poor economic growth, fragmented government and corruption. Chris says that if these problems are not directly addressed, we will indeed get a merger. Crime is partly tied to poor economic opportunities, but there is a lack of will in getting tough on crime. This is the “Ferguson Effect” which makes police officers think twice about the optics of aggressively dealing with lawbreakers. Meanwhile the St. Louis area continues to lose population to other areas with more economic growth. Better Together says that its proposals will answer these problems.

Since the Missouri Constitution states that there are 114 counties and one independent city, the merger would require a state-wide referendum in order to change the constitution. But there are a number of paths that could be taken to set this up. First of all, supporters and opponents of the merger cross political lines. This is not at all a Democrat vs. Republican issue. The most likely way is through incremental changes such as combining the police force or other governmental entities. Simple re-entry is the straightest path toward the merger goal.

This leads us to the St. Louis County Boundary Commission. First, a map plan is submitted. The commission operates on five-year plans. A municipality or city submits this when it wants to merge with other areas. Next, a plan of intent is submitted. It takes 52 pages to describe the eleven items comprising the plan of intent. Written documents are submitted to the Boundary Commission which then takes nine months to decide on their recommendations. After this, it *could* be submitted to a vote of the people, but there are legislators in Jefferson City who may decide that City and County residents will have no vote. Instead, they may put this in the hands of a freeholder process in which their hand-picked panel decides this issue. If the panel approves the re-entry request by the City, there will be a state-wide referendum to change the constitution. If the referendum passes, the merger will take place within six months.

Chris gave two examples of how this would impact St. Louis County. The county budget is divided into twelve funds with transportation being one of them. The county is responsible for maintaining all arterial roads in its jurisdiction. Butler Hill Road is an example. Now think about all the arterial roads in the city and add that to the mix. It would double or triple the county transportation budget which is currently \$54 million. The county courthouse was recently renovated to the tune of \$114 million. The city courthouse is in even worse condition and would require renovations more in the neighborhood of \$150 million. County taxpayers will be bearing the brunt of this.

Young people would be more supportive of a merger simply to get 5G internet communications. Currently internet providers are reluctant to upgrade their services because the regulations vary across the 93 different municipalities. Merger supporters will use this to appeal to young voters who are not as worried about high taxes.

We have to band together to actively do what is needed to stop this. The people pushing this merger have been working towards this goal for years and they have the

money on their side. The first thing we need to insist upon is that no merger takes place without a vote from only the residents of St. Louis City and County. More information will be forthcoming regarding organized efforts to block the merger.

St. Louis businessman Fred Sauer spoke to our group briefly. He brought a supply of his booklet *Wake Up St. Louis County! Rex Sinquefeld Wants You to Pay for His Empire*. Mr. Sauer has done comprehensive research into the financial affairs of both the city and county governments. His findings reveal the city's gross mismanagement of taxpayer dollars by having too many government workers on the payroll. These workers are paid inflated salaries and benefits as shown below.

	City	County
Average salary & fringe benefits	\$103,122	\$59,813
Citizens per public employee	48	248
Number of public employees	6,703	4,031

Ed Ryan, Director and Secretary of Mehlville Fire Protection District spoke briefly about the plans that Better Together has for the consolidation of fire districts into an area-wide district. The plans call for a laundry list of improvements. Mehlville Fire District residents would see their real estate taxes increase by 10 to 15 cents just to fund the manpower increases alone. Then there's the increased number of firehouses, fire trucks and other equipment that will be paid for by you.

David Gregory Trivia Night – August 19th



I invite you to attend Rep. David Gregory's Annual Trivia Night! It will be Saturday August 19th at the Sunset Hills Community Center at 3915 S. Lindbergh Blvd, 63127. The price is \$25 per person or \$200 for a table of 8. There's a prize for the best-decorated table as well as the opportunity to bid on auction items. Doors open at 6:30 pm and trivia starts at 7:00 pm. A check can be made to *Gregory for Missouri*. We'll have a number of Tesson tables and we would appreciate you and your knowledge at them! You can mail the check to me: *John Judd, 4769 Cactus Wren Ct., St. Louis MO 63128*. Please call me and let me know that you'll be sitting at one of our tables. My home phone is 416-4605 and my cell phone is 852-1700.

Dave's done a great job and we want him to be re-elected. Thank you.

John Judd-Committeeman

Visit us at the following sites:

tessonferrygop on Twitter

<http://www.tfrepublicanclub.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/tessonferrygop>



Rep. Gregory Town Hall Meeting – August 3rd

Rep. David Gregory (R-96) will host a town hall meeting on August 3, 2017 at 6:30 pm. It will be at the Grant's View Library at 9700 Musick Road, St. Louis, MO 63123. He will speak on the accomplishments of the legislative session that concluded in May and his goals for the upcoming session. He will be available to answer questions and is looking forward to input and feedback from his constituents. The public is invited. Rep. Gregory is pleased to provide a free box lunch for this event. In order to insure that we have enough food for the town hall meeting please RSVP to District Director John Judd at 314-852-1700.

TFTRC Picnic – Sunday August 27th



Picnic

Join us on Sunday, August 27th at the Suson Park Lakeside Shelter for the TFTRC picnic starting at 3:00 pm. The club will provide hot dogs, hamburgers and beverages. We ask that you help by bringing in something to share as well. If your last name begins with the letters "A through H", please supply a side dish or salad. If your last name begins with the letters "I through Z" please bring an appetizer or dessert. The cost is FREE if you make reservations by August 18th. RSVP Christy Hessel at 314-845-6879 or email her at christy_hessel@att.net. The flyer for this picnic is attached.



Coming Events

- **Thursday, August 3rd**, David Gregory Town Hall meeting, Grant's View Library.
- **Thursday, August 10th**, 7:00 pm, TFTRC meeting.
- **Saturday, August 19th**, David Gregory Trivia night, Sunset Hills Community Center.
- **Sunday, August 20th**, Central Committee picnic, Creve Couer Park, \$10/person.
- **Sunday, August 27th**, TFTRC picnic, Suson Park, Lakeside Shelter.
- **Monday, August 28th**, 7:00 pm, TFTRC Board meeting.
- **Wednesday, September 13th**, Veto Session of Missouri Legislature..

Merger Questions

- How many seats on the County Council will the City have? Two? Three?
- Why isn't the city required to address its financial mismanagement before pushing for a merger? Is this a bail out?
- What will stop the City of St. Louis from annexing unincorporated parts of St. Louis County after a merger takes place?



St. Louis County Needs Your Help

The merger of St. Louis County with the City of St. Louis is very real possibility. Missouri Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard has publicly stated that the City-County merger and the privatization of St. Louis Lambert Airport would be two priorities in the 2018 legislative session. Both city and county residents could be cut out of the process altogether if this is put to a state-wide vote instead of a strictly local one. Here is your opportunity to make your voices heard by meeting with key state legislators when they convene for the Veto Session on September 13th, 2017.

The Tesson Ferry Township Republican Club and the Faith-Based Voters Club are teaming up to charter a bus for that day. We will meet at the South County Costco, 4200 Rusty Road, St. Louis, MO 63128. The bus will depart at 7:30 am and will leave Jefferson City at 3:30 pm. The cost will be \$20 per person. Each person will be responsible for their own lunch while at the capitol. **Reservations are on a first-come basis.**

Our goal is to enlist the support of key senators and ask them to do everything in their power to prevent this merger from taking place. You will receive the names and room numbers of the Republicans we would like to visit. You will also receive background information and talking points to present to them. Come join us for a fun day that will make an impression on our state legislators.

Date: Wednesday, September 13th

Place: South County Costco Parking Lot

Time: Bus leaves St. Louis at 7:30 am.
Bus leaves Jefferson City at 3:30 pm.

Cost: \$20 per person

Contact: Earlene Judd
416-4605

Checks Payable: TFTRC (Tesson Ferry Township Republican Club)

Send Check to: Earlene Judd
4769 Cactus Wren Court
St. Louis, MO 63128

Board Position Open



TFTRC owes a debt of appreciation to Jim Murphy for his work as Social Media Director as well as all the volunteer efforts he has undertaken over the years. We are sorry to see Jim leave his position on the board. As a result, TFTRC is looking for another person to serve as Social Media Director. If you are interested in this position, please contact John Judd at 314-416-4605.



Good Book to Read

Sharyl Attkisson's first best-selling book *Stonewalled* detailed the ways in which the media and the news narrative are controlled and manipulated by corporations and special interests. Her most recent book is *The Smear: How Shady Political Operatives and Fake News Control What You See, What You Think and How You Vote*. The title really says it all. Attkisson goes into how political and corporate operatives have colluded with a compliant mainstream media in order to influence public opinion and take out enemies. She outlines the various techniques used in order to smear opponents and names the big players in the smear industry. The biggest one is David Brock who heads Media Matters for America and an entire conglomerate of political action committees focused on advancing liberal policies and candidates. Attkisson describes transactional journalism: the practice of government operatives writing "news" stories and then delivering those stories to compliant reporters in order to get their spin on the news cycle. The 2016 election capped thirty years of smear tactics and resulted in Donald Trump's election in spite of all the smears targeting him from both the political right and left. If you weren't cynical before reading this book, you certainly will be afterwards. Well-informed citizens need to read this book just to develop a critical attitude towards the news they are taking in everyday. Find this best-seller at the St. Louis County Library.

Christy Hessel, Newsletter Editor

Quote of the Month

For now, one thing you can count on is that most every image that crosses your path has been put there for a reason. Nothing happens by accident. What you need to ask yourself isn't so much Is it true, but who wants me to believe it – and why?

Sharyl Attkisson – *The Smear*



Missouri Initiative Petition Process

You feel strongly about trashing or keeping our new right-to-work law. You are passionate about whether or not we should legalize medical marijuana. Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft has approved 133 initiative petitions for circulation. Petitions proposing statutory changes must be signed by 5% of the legal voters in any 6 of the 8 Congressional Districts. Petitions proposing constitutional changes must be signed by 8% of the legal voters in any 6 of the 8 Congressional Districts. The key deadline is May 6, 2018. The petition gatherers must deliver the valid signatures to the Secretary of State by that day to have a chance to be on the November 2018 ballot. For more information see www.sos.mo.gov. Give it some thought before you rush to sign! Thanks.

John Judd, Committeeman

What Would a Regional St. Louis Fire District Cost?



In our July meeting Mehlville Fire Director Ed Ryan touched upon some of the increased costs that would be incurred if the Better Together plans were implemented for a regional St. Louis fire district. Here's some of the numbers taken from their study. Watch out for the word "investment"; it means taxes.

Type of Equipment	Current County #	Proposed County#	Current City #	Proposed City #	Total Increase
Engine	86	110	32	32	24
Ladder	29	31	5	7	4
Ambulance	58	90	12	30	50

Estimated New Hires for New Department		Salaries & Benefits
Firefighters/EMTs	1130	\$143,349,338
Clerical for firehouses	48	\$2,454,678
Mechanics	5	\$359,145
Specialized Units	72	\$10,727,730
Total	1255	\$156,890,891

Total Projected Capital Projects & Equipment Investment			
Cap. Project/ Equipment.	#	Investment Cost	Total Investment
Additional Firehouses	24	\$5,500,000	\$132,000,000
Engines	24	750,000	18,000,000
Ambulances	32	300,000	9,600,000
Fire & Ladder Trucks	2	1,000,000	2,000,000
Specialized Units	8	750,000	6,000,000
Total			\$167,600,000

In addition, current firefighters across the metropolitan region would be converted to the new pay structure. No firefighters would see a reduction in their pay or benefits. The estimated cost of pay parity for current employees is \$23 Million for the first year of integration. This assumes pay would be frozen for firefighters making more than the estimated new salary structure.

While all these improvements made to a regional fire district would be spread over several years, the costs would still be staggering when you consider that this would only be one part of the regional budget. This doesn't touch roads, courts or police. There is also an assumption that there will be cost savings due to economy of scale, but we've seen how that works for the federal government. Throw in some more city mismanagement and corruption and the cost savings disappear as well. No doubt, fire protection across the area would improve if all these things were implemented, but this doesn't address how it will be paid for or who governs this. Residents in the Mehlville Fire Protection District would be paying a lot more with marginal improvements at best.

Christy Hessel, Committeewoman



Paul Curtman Launches US Senate Exploratory Committee

Paul Curtman, Missouri Rep. Dist. 109 held a US Senate exploratory kickoff rally at Orlando's on Dorsett Road on Saturday, July 29th. It was a standing-room-only crowd that was totally energized by this charismatic leader. Curtman served in the Marines and was deployed to the Middle East in Operation Enduring Freedom. He went on to earn a degree in political science from UMSL and became a licensed investment representative. In 2010 he was elected to the Missouri state legislature at the age of 29. He is the author of two books and has a solid background in both economics and history. He is a strong defender of the US Constitution and in keeping our elected officials accountable to the people they represent. Curtman would be challenging incumbent Senator Claire McCaskill in the November 2018 election. To support his campaign go to www.curtmanformissouri.com. Keep a close watch on this impressive young leader. He is smart, focused, dynamic and has what it takes to capture this important senate seat.

2017 TFTRC Board Members			
Pres. Zina Hackworth	882-5373	Sgt-at-Arms Lou Holtmann	487-2820
VP Matt Chellis	845-5806	Membership Earlene Judd	416-4605
Secy Larry Eaves	200-6402	Newsletter Christy Hessel	845-6879
Treas Joe Garavaglia	416-4720	Social Media	
Committeeman John Judd	416-4605	earlenejudd2@sbcglobal.net	
Committeewoman Christy Hessel	845-6879	christy_hessel@att.net	