

St. Louis County Council

Ernest G. Trakas

St. Louis County Council, 6th District



314 / 615-5442
314 / 615-7890 Telefax
E-mail: etrakas@stlouisco.com

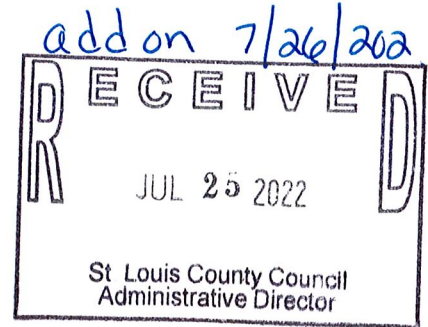
Add on -
7/26

COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
LAWRENCE K. ROOS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
41 S. CENTRAL AVENUE
CLAYTON, MISSOURI 63105

July 25, 2022

(Via electronic mail – rdays@stlouiscountymo.gov)

Hon. Rita Heard Days, Chair
St. Louis County Council
41 S. Central Avenue
Clayton, Missouri 63105



Re: St. Louis County Auditor

Dear Councilwoman Days:

The County Auditor should be above reproach. Last year, Councilman Harder, who chaired the search committee for the position, first brought the current auditor, Toni Jackson, to the Council and advocated for her to be hired. At that time, I raised several questions including if, as auditor, Ms. Jackson would continue doing outside work. I remain concerned about why the auditor refuses to at least provide the Council with a list of her outside clients so that her work can truly be above reproach. But that is not the most concerning thing at this point.

What is most concerning to me now is that County Auditor one morning last week accessed the County's MUNIS database and unilaterally increased her own salary for the proposed budget outside permitted increases in violation of County ordinance. If true, this is problematic in a number of respects.

Since being hired, the County Auditor has not conducted, concluded and/or submitted an audit of any kind to the Council. Given how adamant some councilmembers were about the former auditor's productivity, I would be shocked if the Council is satisfied with the current auditor's similar level of productivity. If nothing else, the auditor's inability to perform any audits in the last year is something for this Council to weigh when determining whether the auditor should receive a raise.

It was less than a year ago that the Council majority approved increasing the auditor's salary by roughly 50%, from about \$85,000 to \$120,000. Thus, even if the raise came to the Council for consideration, would another raise even be appropriate after less than a year since the position's salary was raised by about 50%?

In addition, my understanding is that the auditor's improper action was discovered by staff in the Budget Office in the Department of Administration — but not by the Council's own



budget staff. If this is true, I believe kudos are in order for the Budget Office for finding this. Now, it is incumbent on the Council to ask our own budget staff why they did not find this or, if they were aware of it, why they did not disclose it to the Council.

I hereby request that you convene a Committee-of-the-Whole to investigate the auditor's actions and to determine the answers to these and other questions. An open and thorough investigation is merited, among other reasons, because the County Auditor must be above reproach. That should be our goal as a Council. I'm sad to say that what I have heard about the auditor's apparent behavior falls far short of that standard.

Sincerely,

Ernie Trakas

Ernest G. Trakas

cc: Hon. Kelli Dunaway
Hon. Tim Fitch
Hon. Shalonda Webb
Hon. Lisa Clancy
Hon. Mark Harder
Diann Valenti, County Clerk