

Jasper County MRA Meeting  
Pizza Ranch, Joplin, MO  
08/22/2023

Last evening, I attended the JCMRA Meeting in Joplin for the purpose of visiting with a newly chartered assembly and listening to a presentation on “Vetting Republican Candidates at the County and Possibly the State Level.” The presentation was given by Mrs. Cyndia Haggard, Chair Vernon County Republican Central Committee.

Many Central Committee Members have probably heard this presentation, that being Mrs., Haggard’s goal, “to get central committees on board with the process.” As stated last night, her goal is to establish a Missouri Republican Association (yes, I noticed the Initial’s MRA) that includes as many Conservative Republican groups and organizations as possible to push “vetting of Republican Candidates” at the County level first and then the State Level. Currently the State Republican Committee is not entirely on board with the process.

The apparatus for conducting the vetting process was discussed which consists of a 25-question test covering Republican Party Platform issues and the Missouri Constitution. The questions have been developed by an educator who specializes in writing objective-based questions. The intent of the test is to determine if the candidate is truly a Republican. Not necessarily a conservative, but one that understands the party platform and the state constitution well enough to sign a pledge to uphold both. Both the test and the pledge are mandatory. Remember this is vetting candidates not endorsing candidates.

Once a candidate has passed the test, agreed to the pledge, blessed by the approving vetting committee, and paid their registration fee to the central committee treasurer they are given a receipt to present to the county clerk so they can be accepted as a republican candidate. This is the driving issue, currently the county clerks take registration fees from candidates stating they are republican without any verification of that being true. The intent then is to have central committees to develop vetting committees that approve candidates as republicans, the central committee treasurer receives their registration fees and issues a receipt that advises the county clerk that the candidate has been accepted as a republican candidate and can have their name placed on the ballot.

Mrs. Haggard has a complete standardized vetting package for distribution once it has been cleared by her lawyer. She is still waiting for the lawyer’s go ahead. The key is that all central committees must use the same process and not develop their own vetting system to ensure all candidates are treated the same.

What she needs from all republican/conservative organizations and individuals is pressure on the State Committee to step-up and do their jobs. If you support the vetting of republican candidates at all levels, then contact the State Chair Nick Myers [nmyers@mogop.org](mailto:nmyers@mogop.org) and tell him so!

## References

<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=115.357&bid=48337&hl=>

**115.357. Filing fees** — declaration of inability to pay, form of. — 1. Except as provided in subsections 3 and 4 of this section, each candidate for federal, state or county office shall, before filing his or her declaration of candidacy, pay to the treasurer of the state or county committee of the political party upon whose ticket he or she seeks nomination a certain sum of money as follows:

(1) To the treasurer of the state central committee, five hundred dollars if he or she is a candidate for statewide office or for United States senator, three hundred dollars if he or she is a candidate for representative in Congress, circuit judge or state senator, and one hundred fifty dollars if he or she is a candidate for state representative.

(2) To the treasurer of the county central committee, one hundred dollars if he or she is a candidate for county office.

2. The required sum may be submitted by the candidate to the official accepting his or her declaration of candidacy, except that a candidate required to file his or her declaration of candidacy with the secretary of state shall pay the required sum directly to the treasurer of the appropriate party committee. All sums submitted to the official accepting the candidate's declaration of candidacy shall be forwarded promptly by the official to the treasurer of the appropriate party committee.

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=cyndia%20haggard>

Vernon County Missouri Republicans

Cyndia Haggard ·

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You may have heard a rumor that our county will be vetting candidates who want to file for office as Republicans. The rumor is correct. State statute 115.357 indicates no candidate can file for office under a political party's name unless and until that party accepts the filing fee. In fact, the law clearly states the fee is to be paid to the treasurer of the party committee. The election authority may accept the fee as a convenience, but it must be forwarded to the party. We have discussed this with our county clerk, we have asked her to direct candidates to us if they have not yet been vetted, and she has assured us she is fully onboard with the process.

Members of the Missouri GOP are strongly encouraging county committees to vet candidates before accepting filing fees, and we couldn't agree more. Information about the process will be published well in advance of filing. Republicans who wish to legitimately complete the process will likely have nothing to worry about. Candidates who intend to run or have run as a Republican because it enhanced their election prospects probably should be concerned. We have included previous court rulings in support of this process. As a reminder, efforts to pressure, intimidate, or influence any member of the committee will not be successful.

Officers of Vernon County Republican Central Committee

Cyndia Haggard, Chair

Jerry Wadel, Vice Chair

Dennis Turner, Secretary

April Mosher, Treasurer

Once I receive confirmation of previous court ruling links, I will let you know.