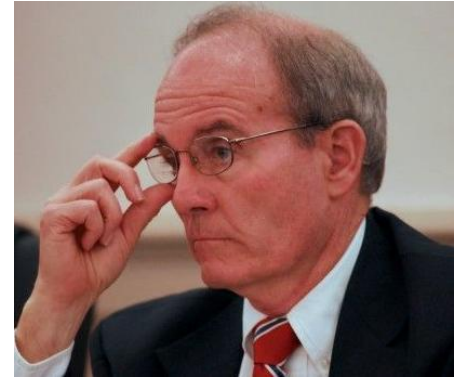


LAW AND ORDER

Florissant mayor won't be punished for using city stationery and email list to endorse candidates



JEFFERSON CITY • The mayor of Florissant apparently won't be punished or fined for violating a law barring the use of city resources for political purposes. Florissant Mayor Thomas Schneider, [who has been in office since 2011](#), used city stationery and the city's email database to endorse candidates for elections in Hazelwood and in the Ferguson-Florissant school district and the Hazelwood school district in the April elections. That, said the Missouri Ethics Commission, is a no-no. But, the commission also decided that Schneider had violated local laws, not state laws, and referred the matter to the city attorney earlier this year. In August, Florissant city attorney John Hessel told the Missouri Ethics Commission that he also agreed that Schneider violated city laws barring the use of city services for any other purpose. But Hessel said Schneider will not face any punishment. "Mayor Schneider has acknowledged the violation and represents that he will not engage in any similar conduct and comply with all relevant sections of the city charter," Hessel wrote. "His justification was that he was acting in the best interests of North County, including Florissant, and was unaware of the prohibition contained in the city charter." Hessel added that Schneider agreed to reimburse the city for any costs associated with the incident, but Hessel said he could not calculate one. Accordingly, no fee is being imposed but Mayor Thomas Schneider has been advised and directed to comply with all relevant sections of the city charter and ordinances of the City of Florissant," Hessel wrote. The mayor, reached at a conference Tuesday, told the Post-Dispatch that he should have used his campaign stationery to make the endorsements, rather than use city property. He also pledged it would not happen again. "It was an inadvertent error. It was just a routine endorsement for the mayor of Hazelwood and a few others I had respect for," Schneider said. "I admitted my mistake." Records show Schneider had \$26,425 in his campaign account on July 1. It is legal to use that money for political purposes. It is not the first time Schneider has courted controversy. Last year, [Post-Dispatch columnist Tony Messenger reported](#) that Schneider had pressured a city prosecutor to help erase the records of a 2009 stealing and marijuana case against his son, Paul. In a letter to the city council, the attorney said Schneider spoke to her several times about his son's case, as well as sent emails related to the situation on a personal account. Schneider has denied the allegations.

Post Dispatch story picked up by: [Perryville News](#), [The Marietta Daily Journal](#), [Newspressnow.com](#)

https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/florissant-mayor-won-t-be-punished-for-using-city-stationery/article_7b8619fa-c204-56d3-a9a0-b4b1732aa9c6.html

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