

Statement regarding disqualification of Bondi Wood
Wendy S Noren Boone County Clerk
Tuesday May, 4, 2010

On April 29, 2010 I received notification from the Missouri Ethics Commission that Bondi Wood, candidate for nomination for Presiding Commissioner in Boone County had failed to file the required Personal Financial Disclosure statement with the Commission by the 21st day after the last day of filing and was disqualified from running for office. The notification is attached.

Due to the seriousness of this, the matter was referred to my legal counsel who advised me that I had no legal recourse but to remove Ms. Wood from the primary ballot. He notified her in writing of this decision. His notification to Ms. Wood is included in the attached document.

This is an unfortunate situation for both Ms. Wood and the many voters who support her. It is always better for voters to have ample opportunity to choose between candidates, but the law, in this case, appears to be very clear regarding a candidate's responsibility to file.

Each candidate who filed for office in Boone County received several notices of this requirement including:

- a copy of the Personal Financial Disclosure laws
- a copy of the Personal Financial Disclosure form that listed the deadline for Candidates as the 14th day after to close of filing*
- a plain English Summary of Missouri Ethics laws that included a checklist for candidates. This checklist included a reminder to file the Personal Financial Disclosure form*
- a separate notice of required filing dates for Personal Financial Disclosure – this notice included the final April 20th deadline that would result in removal from the ballot*
- a statement signed by the Candidate acknowledging receipt of Summary and notice of obligation to file and the required dates to file.*

*copy enclosed in attached document

This is an increase in notification by our office from prior years but this is also the first time we have had to remove a candidate in Boone County for failure to file the Personal Financial Disclosure Form. We did utilize a Notice to Candidate form provided by the Ethics Commission rather than our own version that we have used in the past. Any time someone makes a mistake it is important to review the usability of all information to try to prevent errors in the future. I hope to work with state officials prior to the next filing period so that we can prevent a situation such as this from occurring to any future candidates.

I realize that this is a huge disappointment to Ms. Wood and her supporters. I also want to express both my personal and professional disappointment that the voters will not get the opportunity to fully express their choice in the primary.

That being said, the legislature, by adopting such strict guidelines, has determined that the Personal Financial Disclosures are an important part of the campaign education process. The most effective enforcement to accomplish this is the removal of candidates for failure to file.

Ms. Wood has been both gracious and accepting of the mistake as we discussed what, if any, options were available to her. I am sure her decision not to pursue further legal remedies was a difficult and disappointing one to make after putting so much energy into a campaign for the past few months. In doing so, she has demonstrated that the adherence to the process is more important than her own personal goals. It is that set of values she possesses that makes me hope that I get the opportunity to work with her in the future in some other position.