

Highways Commission Names Chairs

John W. Briscoe, New London, is the new chair of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission (MHTC), and Michael T. Waters, Orrick, is the new vice chair.

The commission elected both men at its monthly meeting this week in Jefferson City. Briscoe and Waters succeed Michael Pace, West Plains, and Gregg Smith, Clinton, who have each served two terms as chair and two terms as vice chair since 2016.

Briscoe, a Democrat, was appointed to the commission in December 2015. Waters, a Republican, was appointed to the commission in March 2015. Both appointments expire March 1, 2021.

"Since I've been on the commission, Mike and Gregg have pro-

vided great leadership for all of us," Briscoe said. "I'd like to thank them for their service to the commission and to the state of Missouri. I have big shoes to fill, but I'll do the very best I can."

Waters echoed those sentiments, saying that Pace and Smith "have truly moved M-DOT forward."

Pace and Smith will remain on the commission along with **Robert G. Brinkmann, St. Albans**, and **Terry L. Ecker, Elmo**.

The six-member bipartisan MHTC governs the Missouri Department of Transportation, the agency responsible for building, operating and maintaining the state highway system and supporting other transportation modes in Missouri.

Top Associate Named For Month of February

Express Employment Professionals in Union/Warrenton recently honored Teresa Frazier as its associate of the month for February.

Frazier was selected from associates working with various companies in the Franklin and Warren County areas.

She is currently working at M & R Plating, where she is assigned through Express.

Frazier was honored with a gift card for her attendance, job performance and work ethic.

RETIRING

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everyone and she has excelled at it."

Part of Unnerstall's exceptionalism has allowed her to be one of two team members who have qualified to be in the Missouri State Farm Agents' Team Member Hall of Fame every year since its inception in 2005. Every year, 120 team members throughout the state are chosen.

Feighery said while he is sad to see Unnerstall go, he is so incredibly happy for her to enjoy her retirement.

"She has spent her life serving others and it's wonderful that she'll be able to do what she wants to now," Feighery said. "I hope she enjoys

retirement and gets to do everything she wants to."

Retirement

Plans and lists of what Unnerstall will do after March 27 have already been made and are growing.

Unnerstall said she has two trips planned for April and May, and is working on another in August. She expressed how excited she is to spend more time with her family and hopes she will be able to spend more time outside swimming and working in her garden.

"After retirement, I am an open book with blank pages, and I will fill them in as I go," Unnerstall said.



Bank of Washington Makes Donation

The Bank of Washington donated \$76,913 to the 2019 Franklin County Area United Way campaign. The donation included nine leadership donors, six community investors, a corporate gift and special events. Front row, from left, are Lynn Voss, Jolene Kahler, Melissa Unnerstall and Susie Eichholz. Back row, from left, are Kim Strubberg, United Way executive director; Kori Kliethermes, Phillip Kleekamp, Kala Inmann, Cathy Weber, Laura Miller, Madeline Slay, Megan Woodcock, L.B. Eckelkamp and Jay Nowak.

Missourian Photo.

Ameren Issues Warning About Utility Scams

Ameren Missouri is warning customers — both business and residential — about scammers, who are using sophisticated tactics to imitate utility companies.

In fact, utility scams are near the top of the list of the Better Business Bureau's Top 10 scams over the last year.

Ameren Missouri has seen an increase in the number of scam attempts by individuals posing as a company representative.

These imposters typically use phone, in-person and online tactics. Posing as electric, water or natural gas company employees, scammers threaten to disconnect or shut off service if customers fail to make an immediate payment — typically using a prepaid card or other nontraceable forms of payment.

They also often mask incoming calls as coming from the utility company on caller identification systems and then give a different phone number to make a payment.

"The best way to combat scams is to know the tactics that scammers use," said Maria Gomez, security supervisor, Ameren. "Never provide or confirm personal or

financial information or make a payment to anyone initiating contact with you — whether by phone, in-person or email — claiming to be a utility company representative.

"If you suspect something isn't right, trust your gut and do not comply. Scammers prey on fear. By educating our residential and business customers about common scams, we can turn the tide on these thieves, prevent monetary losses and strengthen the communities we serve."

As a reminder, Ameren Missouri will never send a notification to a customer within one hour of a service interruption or ask customers to make payments with a prepaid debit card or gift card.

Signs of Scams

Threat to disconnect: Scammers may aggressively tell you that your utility bill is past due and service will be disconnected if a payment isn't made. Typically, the scammer will tell you that a disconnection will come within an hour.

Request for immediate payment: Scammers may instruct you to purchase a prepaid card. The scammer will ask you to return a call for immediate bill payment. When

you return the scammer's call, the scammer asks you for the number on the prepaid card. This allows the scammer to gain instant access to the card's funds.

Fake case number and/or fake truck identification number: Scammers are known to record a voice message and use it to trick customers into thinking they've called the utility company.

The scammer gives a fake case number and/or fake identification number of a company truck that is in the vicinity of the customer's home.

Equipment or repair bogus fee: Scammers may call demanding a separate payment to replace or install a utility-related device or meter.

Overpayment trick: When scammers call claiming that you've overpaid your utility bill and need to provide personal bank account information or a credit card number to facilitate a refund.

Power restoration ripoff: Scammers may call offering to restore power quickly or in a preferential order for immediate payment typically in the aftermath of a severe storm causing widespread power outages.

Protect Yourself

Never give your credit card, debit card, Social Security, ATM, checking or savings account numbers to anyone who calls, sends an email or comes to your home requesting this information.

Don't trust anyone asking for immediate payment. If you suspect that someone is impersonating an Ameren employee, end the conversation and immediately call Ameren Missouri at 1-800-552-7583.

Sign up to manage your account online at Ameren.com where you can immediately check the status of your account.

Never purchase a prepaid card to avoid service disconnection or shutoff. Legitimate utility companies don't specify how customers should make a bill payment and always offer a variety of ways to pay a bill. Ameren customers can make payments online by phone, electronic check, mail or at pay in person locations.

For more information, visit Ameren.com/stop-scams. Customers should also follow Ameren on social media to receive the latest updates on scams.

Plan Board Backs Lot Sale

By Joe Barker
Assistant Managing Editor

The Washington Planning and Zoning Commission supported a lot sale to the Noah's Arc Foundation — again.

Just like the board did last month, it recommended approval of a lot sale in the Heidmann Industrial Park. This time, it's for a different lot.

The Noah's Arc Foundation applied for state licenses to cultivate medical marijuana and operate a medical marijuana-infusion facility. On both applications, Noah's Arc listed its business address as Lot 12 in the industrial park.

On Monday night, the plan board reviewed a plan to sell Lot 18 to the foundation instead. Lot 18 is located off Vossbrink and Michels drives in the industrial park and near Riechers' Truck Body & Equipment Co.

The Washington 353 Redevelopment Corporation backed selling Lot 18 in the park to Noah's Arc Foundation last week. The deal would void the prior transaction involving Lot 12.

Sal Maniaci, community and economic development director, said the deal keeps Lot 12 in the city's inventory for use by another investor.

Every time a lot is up for sale, the planning and zoning commission has to

review the change in the plans. The city council is expected to vote on the sale at its March 16 meeting.

Medical Marijuana

Earlier this year, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) issued a license to the Noah's Arc Foundation for medical marijuana-infused products manufacturing.

Marijuana-infused products are products infused with marijuana or an extract thereof and are intended for use or consumption by a means other than smoking, according to DHSS. Among possible products are edibles, ointments and concentrates.

While it got the infusion permit, Noah's Arc was denied a license to cultivate

medical marijuana. That denial prompted Noah's Arc to reopen discussions with the city about industrial park lots.

Maniaci told the plan board at Monday's meeting that Noah's Arc representatives said they are confident they needed a smaller facility without the cultivation component. If at some point the company received a cultivation license, Noah's Arc told the city it could build its facility up instead of out.

The infusion permit was listed with the Lot 12 address. Maniaci told *The Missourian* the city asked

if the permit transferred with a new address. He said the response from Noah's Arc was as long as it's the same industrial park, and in the same general area, the permit from the state should still be valid.

Maniaci said the city is letting Noah's Arc handle the permit.

Based on city zoning, the Noah's Arc Foundation doesn't require any additional permits in order to operate. When the city approved its medical marijuana zoning, it decided to treat the businesses like any other manufacturing company.



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