

## OFFICIAL PUBLIC STATEMENT, FINDINGS, AND FORMAL APOLOGY

City of Burlington Junction, Missouri

Upon formal request, we, the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor for the City of Burlington Junction, Missouri, issue the following statement regarding allegations asserting that Jo Anna Marriott, City Clerk/Administrator, engaged in the mishandling or misappropriation of City funds.

The Board has conducted a review of the allegations presented, including examination of all relevant financial records, previously approved Board actions, and independent audit findings for multiple fiscal years. The financial reports in question were presented to and formally approved by the Board of Aldermen in the ordinary course of City governance. Independent auditors have reported no findings of fraud, misappropriation, or financial misconduct.

Based upon this review, the Board finds no factual or evidentiary basis to support the allegations. We therefore formally and unequivocally state that Jo Anna Marriott is not guilty of any wrongdoing, misconduct, mishandling, or misappropriation of City funds.

We acknowledge that allegations of financial misconduct are serious in nature and have the capacity to cause significant professional, reputational, and personal harm. Under Missouri law, the publication or repetition of false statements presented as fact that harm a person's reputation may constitute defamation. Allegations involving claims of criminal or financial misconduct are generally considered defamatory *per se* when false, meaning damages may be presumed.

The Board regrets that unsubstantiated allegations were circulated prior to the completion of a proper review. The City of Burlington Junction assumes fault for permitting the circulation and consideration of unsupported allegations before the conclusion of a formal review process.

This statement serves as the official and final conclusion of this matter. The Board will not give further consideration to unsupported allegations concerning this issue. Any

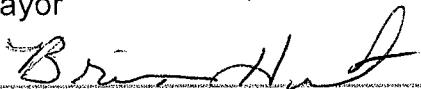
continued publication or repetition of demonstrably false claims will result in appropriate legal action being taken by the accused.

Adopted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2026.

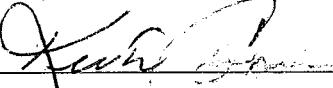
Respectfully,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Johnson

Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Hart

President, Board of Aldermen

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen Johnson

Board of Aldermen

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe McBride

Board of Aldermen

  
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Meagan McElroy

Board of Aldermen