



## THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH CENTER-KANSAS CITY

K0008

John R. Gibson (1925- ) Papers  
1970-1972  
75 folders

*Correspondence, reports, research materials, drafts, news articles and other data related to the writing, passage by public vote, and planned implementation of the 1970 Jackson County Charter, with particular emphasis upon the involvement of John R. Gibson, a principal contributor.*

### BIOGRAPHY:

In October 1969, 59,900 names on petitions were submitted to the Jackson County Board of Election Commissioners calling for the establishment of a commission to draft a Home Rule document for the government of Jackson County, Missouri. On January 27, 1970, the Jackson County Circuit Court en banc and the Probate Judges named a fourteen-member commission to write a new charter. The members were: Richard H. Brown, Clem W. Fairchild, Harold L. Fridkin, James E. Gardner, John R. Gibson, Jerry Irving, Harry B. Kies, Mrs. Robert Popalisky, Paul R. Shy, Robert Lucien Sweeny, L.M. Thorton Jr., Donald H. Tranin, Thomas A. Webster, and James R. Willard.

The deliberations of the Commission began in late January, 1970. At that time committee assignments were made, and a number of task forces were established to study specific aspects of the county government. John R. Gibson was the chairman of the Drafting Committee charged with providing working drafts of the charter for the Commission to consider. However, it was decided early in the drafting that the time limits under which the work was required to be done determined that the committee could not function effectively and therefore the drafts were "roughed out" by individuals, and the discussions and decisions were made by the Committee as a whole. The principal authors of the drafts were John Gibson, Richard Brown, and James R. Willard, with other members of the Commission contributing their expertise and ideas.

The Commission met at least once weekly, and sometimes two or three times weekly during most stages of the preparation of the charter. Formal working meetings occurred during June, July, and August of 1970, for which there are

written transcripts. All meetings of the Commission were open to the public, and dozens of public hearings were held all over the county. The Commission interviewed more than 35 experts on county and local government, as well as current and former elected officials of Jackson County and many other interested local citizens. Written copies of the comments made during some of these interviews are included. Also included are papers written by University of Missouri-Kansas City Law School students studying metropolitan governments.

The campaign for the passage of the proposed charter extended from the official presentation of the document to the presiding Judge of the Jackson County Circuit Court on September 11, 1970, to the approval of the measure by the public on November 3, 1970. The fourteen members of the Commission actively participated with other supporters of the proposed charter in presenting the issue to the public.

The Charter Transition Commission, a body separate from the Charter Commission, was appointed by the Jackson County Court February 22, 1971, to advise and assist in the transition from the old court form of government to the new charter form of government for the county. The members of the Transition Commission were: Owen W. Anglum III, James G. Baker, Richard H. Brown, Dr. Girard T. Bryant, Carl A. Bua, Mrs. Alberta Caquelard, Mrs. Joanne D. Collins, Phillip B. Curls, Abie Dankins, John A. Egan Jr., C. Adam Fischer, Tom V. Foraer, Charles Franklin, Harry E. Gallagher Jr., Jack E. Gant, John R. Gibson, Mrs. Stanley R. Grant, Raymond W. Hanna, D.O., Mrs. Julia H. Hill, Mrs. Alice E. Homeyer, John K. Keitt, Bruce R. Kent, Mrs. Marilyn H. Kenton, Frank W. Koger, Mrs. Rosemary S. Lowe, Mrs. Wilma Major, Mrs. Ina M. Maness, Robert H. Markey, Cleo Muller, Harlan M. Murry, James B. Nutter, Mrs. Sally Oppenheimer, Tom Patton, William C. Phelps, Mrs. Nina M. Popalisky, Mrs. Gail Raley, Edward L. Scheufler, A.B. Schreier Jr., W. Ferrell Shuck, Paul Smith, Miss Roberta Thompson, Mrs. Robie R. Tyler, Alvin E. Waits, Barry D. Wilkinson, and James F. Wolfe.

The Commission met as a whole on a few occasions, but for the most part activity and decisions of the Commission were accomplished by committees that members formed to consider and advise on specific areas of Jackson County government operations.

The final reports of the Transition Commission were completed and filed prior to the assumption of the Home Rule Charter government for Jackson County, Missouri, on January 1, 1973.

#### PROVENANCE:

The papers were a gift of John R. Gibson and were received as accession KA0002 on April 17, 1980.

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**PREFERRED CITATION:**

Specific item; folder number; *John R. Gibson (1925- ) Papers (K0008)*; The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

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**DESCRIPTION:**

The papers contain correspondence, reports, research materials, drafts, news articles and other data related to the writing, passage by public vote, and planned implementation of the 1970 Jackson County Charter, with particular emphasis upon the involvement of John R. Gibson, a principal contributor to these events.

The papers are divided into three parts: materials relative to the operation and work of researching and drafting the charter by the Charter Commission; campaign for approval of the proposed charter by public vote; and the activities of the Jackson County Charter Transition Commission appointed to advise and assist in the transition to the new charter form of government for Jackson County, Missouri.

The papers came in "working file order" - arranged in the order useful to the performance of the tasks assigned to John Gibson in relation to the above named committees. This order has been maintained wherever possible within the folders, and the original titles for the folders have been maintained. Those without titles have had them assigned according to content, and all the folders have been arranged into chronological or subject series using the best information available to assign dates.

Because of the nature of the files, the researcher should be advised that materials relating to an earlier activity may be filed with a similar, later occurring activity and may not be so identified.

## INVENTORY:

**BOX 001***JACKSON COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION*Operations

- Folder 1. News articles, 1967-1970  
Including articles related to the Charter Campaign.
- Folder 2. Drafts of an article by Gibson on the operation and work of the Commission in response to an article published in the UMKC Law Review (vol. 39 #3, p.297ff. See folder 66). The article was not completed or published.
- Folder 3. Correspondence, July 1968-January 1971  
Letters and memos relating to the activities of the Commission including some draft revision notes. Also a four month end report on the actions of the Commission which contains a narrative history and copies of the resolutions of the Commission. This file also contains some agendas and minutes.
- Folder 4. Agendas and resolutions, February-August 1970
- Folder 5. Rules of the Commission, February 1970

Fact Finding

- Folder 6. Notes  
Handwritten, undated notes concerning charter fact finding, drafting, and meetings. When notes have been attached or filed with dated items, they have been left in place. This folder contains items which could not be identified to a degree to be interfiled.
- Folder 7. Statutes and Constitutional Provisions  
Documents and research materials related to the general provisions of the Missouri State Constitution and to Missouri statutes concerning the charter method of governing counties.
- Folder 8. Phelps Legislative file  
Series of Missouri Senate and House bills dealing with proposals to reorganize county government. The title of this folder was assigned by Gibson.
- Folder 9. Lawyers Task Force  
Task force of young lawyers who were given specific legal questions that the Commission needed researched.
- Folder 10. Legal activities  
Materials dealing principally with a lawsuit concerning the legality of a special election being held concurrently with a regular election.

- Folder 11. Comparative language of charters
- Folder 12. Sample charters
- Folder 13. Sample charters–St. Louis, Missouri  
Includes an article, “Evolution of the Government of St. Louis County”. Gibson indicated that much of the early draft material for the Jackson County charter came from the St. Louis County charter.
- Folder 14. Population figures
- Folder 15. Districting figures

#### Task Forces

- Folder 16. Personnel
- Folder 17. One man - one vote
- Folder 18. Ombudsman
- Folder 19. Intergovernmental relations
- Folder 20. Public Administrator
- Folder 21. Medical Examiner
- Folder 22. Juvenile services
- Folder 23. Public Defender
- Folder 24. Health - welfare
- Folder 25. Human relations

#### Reports

- Folder 26. “Proposed provisions for the Jackson County Charter, re: Incorporation and annexation”.
- Folder 27. “Reapportionment and districting under the proposed Jackson County Charter”.
- Folder 28. “Model provisions for initiative, referendum, and recall”.
- Folder 29. “Provision for professional services in the Jackson County Charter: legal, police, and fire”.
- Folder 30. “Jackson County Charter Report: Planning, zoning, and housing”.
- Folder 31. “Charter Government and Home Rule in Missouri: An analysis of Missouri’s constitutional provisions for charters; Missouri’s charter cities: legislative and case analysis; Case law and analysis of the St. Louis County Charter”.
- Folder 32. “Fiscal and budget control”.

- Folder 33. Reports on the powers and functions of the county government under the charter form.
- Folder 34. "Analysis of charter provisions for legislative and executive branches and for departments and elected offices".
- Folder 35. "Survey of county offices".
- Folder 36. "Metropolitan Government: the political science of urban government".
- Folder 37. Reports and comments from various groups

#### Drafts

- Folder 38. Undated draft material
- Folder 39. Original draft (title assigned by Gibson)
- Folder 40. First draft (title assigned by Gibson)
- Folder 41. July 1, 1970 draft
- Folder 42. Second draft, August 7-8, 1970
- Folder 43. Draft, August 10, 1970
- Folder 44. Draft, August 14, 1970
- Folder 45. Draft, August 15, 1970
- Folder 46. Changes, August 19, 1970
- Folder 47. Draft, August 18, 1970
- Folder 48. Changes, August 19, 1970
- Folder 49. Draft, August 20, 1970 (Gibson's title noted "for final submission".)
- Folder 50. Draft, August 25, 1970
- Folder 51. Revision, August 28, 1970
- Folder 52. September work on drafts (title assigned by Gibson)
- Folder 53. Draft, September 1, 1970
- Folder 54. Final draft, September 1, 1970
- Folder 55. Final draft, September 9, 1970
- Folder 56. Final draft
- Folder 57. Official copy

#### Campaign for the approval of the proposed charter

- Folder 58. Campaign correspondence, October 1970
- Folder 59. General arguments for passage.

- Folder 60. General arguments for passage - speeches
- Folder 61. General arguments for passage - speeches by Gibson
- Folder 62. General arguments for passage - notes
- Folder 63. Opponents position
- Folder 64. Charter election results

Jackson County Transition Commission

- Folder 65. Article, "A Page of History"  
Article written by Gibson for a brochure about the Charter.
- Folder 66. Article, "Home Rule for the urban county: Observations on the New Jackson County Constitutional Charter". This article was published in the UMKC Law Review (vol. 39 #3, p. 297ff). The folder contains a rough draft of the article and a photocopy of the published form which was added by the processor. Gibson indicated the dissatisfaction of the lawyer members of the Charter Commission over the contents of the article. The article attempts an analysis of the work of the Charter Commission and the contents of the Charter.
- Folder 67. Correspondence, 1971-1972  
Also included are some agendas, minutes, and reports of the Commission.
- Folder 68. Agendas, minutes, budgets, and membership lists
- Folder 69. Rules and regulations
- Folder 70. Committee memoranda and reports
- Folder 71. Citizen's Association Charter Review Committee
- Folder 72. Drafts of the merit system
- Folder 73. Prosecutor's office - Charter Transition Commission Bill  
Gibson's title for this file. Contains working papers, notes, reports, and research materials of the Law Enforcement Committee dealing with the prosecutor's office. Gibson was a member of the committee.
- Folder 74. Office of the Sheriff  
Working papers, notes, reports, and research materials of the Law Enforcement Committee dealing with the Sheriff's office.
- Folder 75. Research materials, miscellaneous