

https://www.timesnewspapers.com/southcountytimes/features/st-george-residents-to-vote-nov-8-on-dissolving-city/article_df3ffbb4-48d0-5cab-94d5-bfa170daccfe.html

St. George Residents To Vote Nov. 8 On Dissolving City

County Council sets Nov. 8 election date for St. George vote

Steve Birmingham

Aug 26, 2011

Petitions calling for a St. George disincorporation vote were certified recently by the St. Louis County Board of Election Commissioners. The St. Louis County Council on Aug. 23 approved a bill setting the Nov. 8 election.

St. Louis County Counselor Patricia Redington said the county took up the matter as required by state statute, and that St. George did not need to approve legislation to place the disincorporation measure on the ballot.

"There are two ways for a city to disincorporate," Redington said. "In this case the county got a petition from at least half the voters in the city, upon which the county governing body is to order an election. That's pursuant to section 79.490 of the Missouri Revised statutes."

Redington said the other method for disincorporation is if 100 percent of the residents signed the petition; in that case no vote would be required and the city would be disincorporated.

The certified petitions contained more than half of the approximately 800 registered voters in the city. At least 60 percent approval is needed on Nov. 8 for the city to be dissolved.

Rumors Fly

The matter of the city's possible disincorporation arose during the public comment portion of the Aug. 22 St. George Board of Aldermen meeting when several residents mentioned rumors that a job with St. Louis County government awaited Mayor Carmen Wilkerson if the disincorporation was successful.

Sally Keene, a resident of the city for 57 years, rose to ask Wilkerson what she "would get out of this."

"As Carmen knows, I wouldn't want to live anywhere else," she said. "But Carmen, what are you going to get out of this if we disincorporate?"

Wilkerson responded "not a thing."

"Then why are you ruining our lives," Keene asked. "You don't need to tell me that you're not getting something out of it."

Wilkerson reiterated her position on the rumor.

"I'm not getting anything," she said. "There's no lucrative job waiting for me in St. Louis County."

"We heard that," Keene answered.

"I know you did," Wilkerson responded. "I heard it too. It's probably been repeated 15 or 20 times, but it's not true just like a lot of things that are repeated 15 or 20 times."

Keene reminded Wilkerson that at "one time you and I really liked each other, didn't we? " Wilkerson acknowledged they did. Keene then reminded Wilkerson that she was the one who had convinced Wilkerson to run for the board of aldermen years ago. Wilkerson again acknowledged her point.

"And I know you probably regretted it," Wilkerson said.

"Yes I do," Keene answered.

Wilkerson said the reason she led the disincorporation effort was because "things were not right here, and I am willing to give my time and my personal funds to make it right if I can, and that's why I'm doing what I'm doing.

"There's no personal gain for me, no monetary gain for me, there's no job waiting for me at the end of this," Wilkerson continued. "I'm just doing this because I have very strong feelings about the inefficient use of tax dollars that goes on here."

"You are so mistaken," Keene responded. "You're so mistaken and I'm sorry for you. I really am. I pray for you all the time."

Wilkerson responded, "Thank you."