

CITY OF GARFIELD VIOLATES KOMA

PATRICK HENRY ONCE SAID THAT LIBERTY IS NEVER SECURE AS LONG AS GOVERNMENT DOES BUSINESS IN SECRET.

The Liberty Sentinel, Jan. 3, 2008

(Larned-Tiller & Toiler) The Kansas Attorney General has determined the five Garfield City Council members and city mayor violated the Kansas Open Meetings Act (KOMA) on July 2, 2007.

An investigation by the Attorney General's Office found the Garfield City Council improperly closed a discussion involving a majority of a quorum of the city council members. The private discussion involved the matter of a broken window at the city fire station.

According to the findings, there was no motion made to go into executive session, nor was there a motion recorded in the minutes of the Garfield City Council. According to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, all executive session motions must be recorded in the minutes.

The five council members and the mayor of Garfield have entered into an agreement with the Attorney General's Office to obtain at least one and 1/2 hours of training on the provisions of the KOMA, to be presented by an attorney of their choosing on or before January 30, 2008. The council will provide the Attorney General with a written statement confirming they have in fact obtained the training and all costs or fees of the training will be paid by individual council members and mayor.

"We made an honest mistake," said Mayor Meckfessel in a telephone interview. "We have all new council members, and we should be able to make a mistake. This is old news and we have taken care of it."

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