

# MISSOURIAN

## Missouri loses out on sought-after nuclear project

By ALAN SCHER ZAGIER

COLUMBIA — A highly touted plan by Ameren Missouri and Westinghouse to design and build a series of next-generation nuclear reactors at the utility's Callaway County plant lost out Tuesday to a similar plan in Tennessee, dashing the hopes of state political leaders who envisioned an atomic energy revival in Missouri.

The U.S. Department of Energy announced that Babcock and Wilcox of Charlotte, N.C., will receive the federal government's five-year grant to develop small modular reactors with the Tennessee Valley Authority as part of what the Obama administration calls its "all-of-the-above strategy" for energy production.

The Energy Department did not provide a specific dollar amount, but the 50-50 cost-sharing award has been estimated to exceed \$450 million. The agency's goal is to have commercial operations in place by 2022.

**Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill and other heavyweights in the political, civic and business realms had eagerly anticipated the federal investment, rallying support for the plan in July at a University of Missouri conference. Nixon, a Democrat, had said the grant could turn Missouri's nuclear industry into the equivalent of the auto industry's Detroit.**

Both McCaskill and U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt quickly issued statements Tuesday.

McCaskill said she was "deeply disappointed." Blunt was dissatisfied with the Obama administration for "not heed(ing) my calls to strongly consider this application."

"Missouri's central location, key infrastructure and universities with nationally recognized nuclear engineering programs make it the best location for this project," the Republican lawmaker added.

Babcock and Wilcox will work with Bechtel, a San Francisco-based engineering and construction corporation, and the TVA on a project that seeks to build and license smaller nuclear reactors which can be built off-site and then –not unlike prefabricated homes – shipped to their eventual locations. The modular reactors are expected to appeal to smaller utilities that don't have the space or power grid capacity for traditional reactors.

The TVA released a statement, saying it was “pleased” to be selected for the grant.

“It supports TVA’s mission of being a national leader in technological innovation and may provide a new source of clean base-load generation capacity in the future,” said TVA senior vice president of policy and oversight Joe Hoagland.

The winning project also beat out NuScale Power of Corvallis, Ore., which wanted to build the reactors at the Savannah River nuclear site in South Carolina.

The runners-up could still get a hefty consolation prize. The Energy Department said it will also issue a “follow-on solicitation” seeking further modular reactor projects.

Officials with Pittsburgh-based Westinghouse Electric Co. and Ameren said they plan to pursue federal support in the project’s second phase.

“Our alliance and the entire state of Missouri stand ready to capitalize on this important project that will also help create a cleaner energy portfolio for our state and our country,” said Warner Baxter, president and chief executive officer of Ameren Missouri.

Just three weeks ago, Westinghouse and Ameren hosted a small modular reactor “supplier summit” at the Callaway nuclear plant near Fulton for 300 industry representatives, from heavy equipment operators to trade unions and design engineers.



## Energy department picks Tennessee for reactor project

By Janese Silvey

Published November 20, 2012 at 3:26 p.m. Updated November 20, 2012 at 4:55 p.m.

State and local leaders were disappointed but still hanging on to a little hope Tuesday after the U.S. Department of Energy announced it had awarded funding to a Tennessee partnership to design, construct and manufacture small modular nuclear reactors.

The news means that the Westinghouse Electric and Ameren Missouri proposal for the project won't be funded, at least this go-round. The energy department had offered up to \$452 million for plans to get SMRs online. In a news release, though, the department said the exact amount it will award Babcock & Wilcox and Tennessee Valley Authority has not been determined. Some industry insiders have speculated that the grant funding has been a tough sell as lawmakers face massive budget cuts.

SMRs are roughly a third of the size of current nuclear power plants and are expected to be more cost-effective.

In a statement, Ameren Missouri President and CEO Warner Baxter said the team would continue to discuss with the energy department the importance of the Missouri project as new funding opportunities arise. He said both companies and the state "stand ready to capitalize on this important project that will help create a cleaner energy portfolio for our state and our country, and therefore help meet our future energy needs and strengthen our nation's energy security."

Columbia's Regional Economic Development Inc. also is expected to keep its SMR task force to continue to follow funding opportunities.

Others seemed dismayed by the news that Missouri wasn't awarded funding.

**"I am very surprised by the decision in that I had always thought Westinghouse/Ameren will be the winner," said Sudarshan Loyalka, a curators' professor of nuclear engineering at the University of Missouri who is doing contracted work for Westinghouse. "I still think they are an extremely strong team and hope they will stay with it."**

In separate statements, Sens. Claire McCaskill and Roy Blunt denounced the decision.

"I'm deeply disappointed in today's announcement," McCaskill, D-Mo., said. "This project would be a tremendous opportunity for Missouri jobs and American energy security. I plan to keep working with the folks at Ameren and Westinghouse to pursue new opportunities, and to continue working across the aisle to expand innovation and strengthen security in American energy."

Blunt, R-Mo., said Missouri's central location and nationally recognized nuclear engineering programs made the local project the best option.

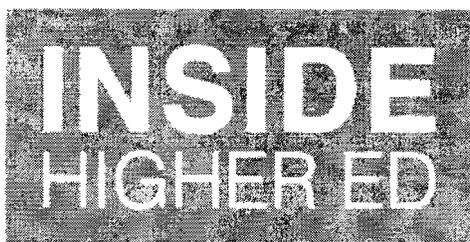
"I'm disappointed the Obama administration did not heed my calls to strongly consider the Ameren/Westinghouse application, despite unprecedented support for this project from Missouri's electric service providers and key stakeholders," he wrote.

Loyalka — recognized as one of the top researchers in nuclear reactor safety in the world — is researching accident scenarios and emergency plans associated with small nuclear reactors as part of a separate agreement with Westinghouse. He hesitated to speculate about Tuesday's decision.

Mark Prelas, his colleague at MU's Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute, said he suspected the competition was simply too steep. "I certainly think that Tennessee plan was outstanding," said Prelas, who noted that NSEI alumnus Preston Swafford is chief nuclear officer at Tennessee Valley Authority.

Prelas wouldn't opine on whether MU's previous attempts to close down NSEI affected the decision.

In May, the Tribune asked Swafford whether he thought MU's decision to shut down its nuclear engineering institute would hurt Missouri's chances for the energy department funding. He replied: "It will obliterate it."



insidehighered.com

## Voting Rights for Adjuncts

November 21, 2012 - 3:00am

By Colleen Flaherty

### Non-tenure track faculty at the University of Missouri at Columbia are one step closer to shared governance.

The university's Faculty Council voted this month to consider redefining "faculty" to include non-tenure-track professors. The move would extend voting rights to the council's four non-voting, non-tenure-track representatives, who are elected by their non-tenure-track peers. The proposal would also enfranchise non-tenure-track faculty with a "professorial" designation in campuswide elections that impact them, such as those pertaining to the academic calendar, the grievance process and some curriculum requirements. They would still be ineligible to vote on tenure process changes.

"There's over 700 of us [non-tenure-track faculty] and we have absolutely no representation anywhere," said Nicole Monnier, an associate teaching professor of Russian who is one of the four non-voting, non-tenure-track faculty members on the council and an advocate of contingent faculty voting rights. "There's been a lot of conversation that giving (non-tenure-track) faculty the vote will dilute faculty authority over the past few weeks, but that's a matter of perception."

The proposal will go to a campus-wide vote among tenured and tenure-track faculty later this year. If it passes, it will appear before the University of Missouri System's Board of Curators for final approval in April.

Instead of diluting the faculty vote, Monnier said, the university's more than 1,200 tenured and tenure-track faculty should view general faculty enfranchisement as a way of "augmenting" their numbers and strengthening their voice.

Harry Tyrer, a tenured electric and computer engineering professor who chairs the council, said the 15-3 vote in favor of the proposal on Nov. 8 followed "spirited debate."

While some council members expressed concern that non-tenure-track faculty's status could

make them more vulnerable to influence in voting, or that extending voting rights to them is an attack on tenure – already a sensitive issue nationwide – Tyrer said he and others viewed the issue as one of fairness.

"I don't see this as being a competition for tenured faculty privileges," he said. "I see this as an inclusiveness requirement. These are individuals who are not tenured but bring an important perspective and point of view."

Monnier rejected the idea that non-tenure-track faculty votes could be more subject to influence. Votes can be cast by secret ballot, she said, and not all faculty aspire to the tenure track. Monnier said she's taught at Missouri for 13 years, and was formerly on the tenure track. Her current status is more suited to her lifestyle, she said.

A recent editorial in the university student newspaper, *The Maneater*, endorsed the move, calling non-voting, non-tenure-track faculty representation on the council inadequate.

The council is now capped at 30 members. If the measure passes, Tyrer said it will likely lead to a messy rebalancing of the council to better-reflect the proportion of non-tenure-track to tenured and tenure-track faculty across campus (740 of Missouri's 1,985 full-time, ranked faculty members – some 37 percent – are non-tenure-track, according to information from the university). But gory details are no reason to put off a vote, he said.

During discussions prior to the vote, an associate economics professor and council member, Vitor Trindade, said non-tenure-track faculty work in specialized areas and questioned whether they understood the university's broader mission, according to local media reports. He also questioned whether they should vote on curricular matters.

Trindade was not immediately available for comment last week.

Missouri's university system leaves matters of shared governance up to individual institutions, but the issue is one that goes beyond state lines. Universities across the country have a mix of policies on representation for contingent faculty.

At the University of Texas at Austin, for example, non-tenure-track lecturers and instructors who have served four or more semesters there can vote on the faculty council, but not in campuswide elections of any kind. A movement is under way to change that.

Hillary Hart, president of the UT Faculty Council and a non-tenure-track distinguished senior lecturer of civil, architectural and environmental engineering, said part of the reason the vote hasn't been extended previously is that it's hard to distinguish full- or close to full-time contingent faculty who spend years "investing" in campus life from those who hold other, primary jobs and teach on the side, or come and go for any number of reasons.

But enfranchising non-tenure-track faculty with roots in the campus matters, Hart said. "It's more democratic. And you get better decisions and discussions when you include more of the faculty that contribute and teach there."

In a yet-to-be-released report, "The Inclusion in Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent Appointments," the American Association of University Professors recommends shared governance for all faculty; those institutions concerned with depth of non-tenure-track faculty investment may establish minimum length of university service requirements for participation.

The report also describes the changing demographics of faculty at campuses nationwide. According to 2009 data, the most recent available, 24 percent of instructional staff appointments were on the tenure track, compared to 45 percent in 1975.

Still, Monnier said she's not sure how the campuswide vote will go. Apathy on the part of faculty who would vote in favor of non-tenure-track faculty enfranchisement is a concern, she said, as those strongly opposed could be more likely to vote. Missouri's non-tenure-track faculty haven't started to campaign yet, but Monnier said mobilizing support will be crucial to the measure's success.

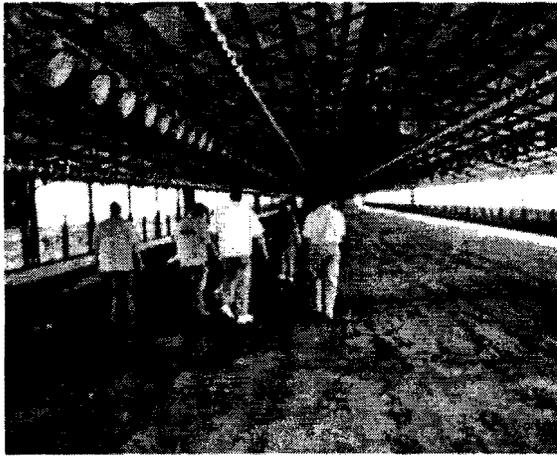
Read more: <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/11/21/u-missouri-moves-toward-giving-adjuncts-voting-rights-faculty-governance#ixzz2Crm3BqXU>

## Excellent Idea of the Day: Earthy Turkey Farmers

A new geothermal energy system would make for a greener and cheaper Thanksgiving turkey.

By [Jennifer Viegas](#)

Wed Nov 21, 2012 07:00 AM ET



Heating and cooling are important in turkey operations and have to be calibrated according to the turkeys' ages. *University of Missouri*

A new geothermal energy system helps to keep turkeys raised for food comfortably warm (not oven hot) on chilly nights.

**It can cool things down during sweltering weather too, since turkeys are raised year-round for sandwiches and other meals. The system, developed by University of Missouri engineer Yun-Sheng Xu and described in the MU Engineering magazine, is expected to help bring down the price of turkey meat, keeping America as the world's top turkey exporter. The environmentally and economically friendly process also improves the bird's air quality.**

"This is the first application of geothermal energy in a commercial livestock operation," Xu was quoted as saying in a press release. "Our first set of performance data suggests that farmers could halve their heating and cooling costs."

## **BLOG: Turkey on Your Table -- Not Like Its Ancestors**

Heating and cooling are important in turkey operations because the temperature in enclosures must be kept at a toasty 90 degrees Fahrenheit while the birds are young, but lowered to 70 degrees Fahrenheit for older birds, Xu explained.

Propane fuel for temperature control units can cost farmers tens of thousands of dollars per year, he added. Propane burners in livestock barns also produce humidity and carbon dioxide, which can smother the birds.

It's also rather stomach churning to contemplate, but humidity in the bird barns moistens the foul waste from the fowl and leads to ammonia contamination of the air the birds breathe.

"Similar systems could be installed in other livestock operations," said Xu. "It may work even better in a chicken coop, since they use solid walls as opposed to the curtains used to enclose turkey barns. Pig- and cattle-rearing facilities could benefit from the inexpensive hot water produced using a geothermal system.

## **NEWS: What Your Turkey Ate**

"The system could even be scaled down to keep a doghouse comfortable in the backyard," he added.

Here's how the system works: It uses the constant 55 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit of the soil a few feet beneath the surface to regulate the temperature of a liquid flowing through buried tubing. In Xu's system, the tubing is buried horizontally, as opposed to other systems that rely on vertically placed tubes, which require expensive deep digging.

An added benefit is that the system uses an artificial wetland above the buried tubes to further insulate them. According to Xu, this "wetland" provides critical habitat to amphibians, migratory birds and other wildlife.

## Popular Missouri Wine Professor Dies in Single-Car Accident

Anthony Peccoux Brought 'Enthusiasm' to Department

By [William Browning](#) | Yahoo! Contributor Network – 19 hrs ago

Anthony Peccoux, 32, brought a new enthusiasm and youthful exuberance to the wine industry in mid-Missouri. His task of revitalizing Missouri's grape industry was cut tragically short by a single-car accident in Boone County, Mo., along U.S. Highway 63. The Frenchman was pronounced dead at University Hospital less than an hour after the Missouri Highway Patrol came upon the crash.

\* The [online crash report](#) states Peccoux's 2013 Volkswagen Jetta was northbound on U.S. Highway 63 when the vehicle went off the right side of the road. The car hit a concrete culvert just south of Turkey Creek.

\* Peccoux was wearing a seatbelt at the time of the accident. Damage to the vehicle was listed as "moderate." The fatality was the fifth for the month of November for Troop F and 56th for the year in the area.

**\* The jovial professor will be missed by his colleagues, even though he was only with the University of Missouri less than a year. Ingolf Gruen, the program chair for Mizzou's food science program, told the Columbia Daily Tribune, "He had a huge enthusiasm. He was very exuberant, outgoing."**

\* Among other grant projects, Peccoux was attempting to secure federal money from Congress to the tune of \$5.5 million to boost Missouri's wine industry. The professor was slated to give a presentation at a grape and wine symposium on the university campus next month.

\* MU Chancellor Brady Deaton told the Tribune he was "saddened to learn of the death ... Dr. Peccoux was an enthusiastic, respected and well-liked member of our university community although he had only been at MU for a short time."

\* The [Columbia Missourian](#) also quotes Gruen, who also serves as the interim director of the Grape and Wine Institute at Mizzou. "He believed Missouri had the genetic material, the native grapes necessary to support and allow the wine industry to survive worldwide despite global warming," Gruen said. Peccoux also presented hundreds of research ideas for his department after just nine months on the job.

\* Peccoux learned his viticulture expertise from France and Germany. The professor studied with Dr. Hans Reiner Schulz at the Geisenheim Research Centre in Germany before getting advanced degrees at the University of Bordeaux in France. Peccoux also did work for the French National Institute for Agricultural Research.

\* One recent piece written by Peccoux shows how Missouri's grape and wine industry uses a wide variety of grapes due to Missouri's erratic climate and wild temperature changes between seasons. The paper shows the Norton variety of grape to be most widespread in Missouri at slightly more than 19 percent based upon acreage grown.

\* The accident happened on a straight stretch of road in between Columbia Regional Airport and Columbia, Mo. The driver was headed in the direction of the city. A search of Google Map's street view shows a line of slight hills to the right of the highway. A few small culverts come out from under the highway just south of the creek, which has guardrails ahead of a bridge.

*William Browning, a lifelong Missouri resident, writes about local and state issues for the Yahoo! Contributor Network. Born in St. Louis, Browning earned his bachelor's degree in English from the University of Missouri. He currently resides in Branson.*

## Incidents at MU are tied to stalking case at Stephens College

By Arthur Cook Bremer

November 20, 2012 | 5:50 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — Court documents show that the man who has been charged in what has come to be known as the "bear hug" incident and for accosting another student in a campus parking garage was reportedly stalking a student at Stephens College.

The Stephens College student, referred to in court documents as "C.S.," told investigators she was terrified of the stalker and what he might do to her if he found her. The college provided her with extra security.

**Timothy Anderson was arrested last month in connection with two separate incidents on the MU campus. The first took place Oct. 24 on the sidewalk at Ninth Street west of Ellis Library where a female student reported being grabbed from behind and held in what she described as a "bear hug" by a man who then released her and ran away.**

The second incident took place the next day at the Hitt Street parking garage, where a woman reported being followed and harassed by a man who asked if they knew each other. The woman told the police that the person had a strong resemblance to the man in a composite sketch produced after the first incident, according to the probable cause statement from the MU police.

In addition to the charge of stalking related to Anderson's contact with C.S., he has also been charged with third-degree assault in connection with the incident that occurred near Ellis Library and harassment for the encounter at the Hitt Street garage.

According to probable cause statements filed in the 13th Circuit Court of Boone County, Anderson was approaching female students on both the MU and Stephens College campuses, appearing to mistake them for "C.S."

After police made contact with C.S., they learned that Anderson had been trying to contact her since early October, in some instances using other people's cell phones to send text messages and phone calls to the victim.

Upon reading a release from MU Police about the incident near the library, an MU student contacted campus police to inform them that a person matching the suspect's description had borrowed his phone more than a week earlier to send a text message to C.S. After obtaining the phone number, MU police made contact with the victim who identified the caller as Timothy Anderson, according to court documents.

C.S. told police that she had been acquainted with Anderson two years earlier at her high school but broke off contact with him after he made advances toward her, according to a probable cause statement from Columbia police.

The probable cause statement notes that, following his arrest, Anderson made 15 calls to C.S. from the Boone County Jail, one of which was received while police were interviewing her.

After Anderson's arrest, Tony Coleman, the Director of Campus Security at Stephens College, sent a message to students and staff notifying the campus of the situation.

Coleman said that seven people reported seeing Anderson on the Stephens campus the same week as the incidents at MU. Three female students at Stephens reported being approached by Anderson, who appeared to mistake them for "C.S."

Coleman urged students to report any unusual activity to campus security. "We'd rather go out and check on something that's innocent enough than to have something like this go unreported," said Coleman.

Anderson was scheduled for a bench trial Tuesday morning, but the trial was rescheduled for Dec. 11.

*Supervising editor is Katherine Reed.*

## MU veterinarian seeks dogs for cancer study

By Janese Silvey

Tuesday, November 20, 2012

**A University of Missouri veterinarian is looking for dogs with tumors to participate in a study that uses bacteria to trigger an immune system fight against cancer.**

Jeff Bryan, head of oncology at the MU College of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, said he needs about 30 dogs. They can be any breed, but larger dogs would be easier to test, and the tumors should be external, either on the skin or in the mouth.

Here's how it works: A body's immune system does not recognize or fight cancerous tumors because they grow from the body's own cells. But the immune system does recognize bacteria, so giving a tumor an infection makes the immune system attack. The key is keeping the bacteria away from other cells, where it would make a patient sick.

Previous studies, including research out of the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University, have shown clostridium is the most successful bacteria because it only survives in oxygen-deficient environments — meaning it thrives in tumors and stays out of the oxygen-rich bloodstream.

MU is tackling the research because the veterinary college is one of only four in the country that has a positron emission tomography, or PET, scanner that will allow Bryan to calculate oxygen levels. That will show him how much oxygen, or lack thereof, the bacteria needs to have the best chance to thrive and prompt an immune system response without bothering healthy cells.

Although there are slight risks, the dose of bacteria that will be delivered to the study participants will be low and tolerable, Bryan said.

The study will pay for canine participants' treatment and any follow-up medical care at the teaching hospital, said Tracey Berry, a spokeswoman for the college. The study will not cover travel costs.

Ideally, the tests will work and send participants home cancer-free and with an immune system that would fight future cancer cells, meaning the animal would not have that particular type of cancer again. Bryan said.

And participants would be making an impact on future four- and two-legged cancer patients.

If the team can develop the treatment successfully in dogs, "we can learn important information that would help us treat people," he said. "They'll be contributing to cancer research in other dogs and also people."

For information, call (573) 882-7821.

# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

## Bill McClellan: Many have reason to be thankful

7 hours ago • [By Bill McClellan bmcclellan@post-dispatch.com](mailto:bmcclellan@post-dispatch.com) 314-340-8143

### MU MENTION P. 2

Everybody has reason to be thankful at Thanksgiving, even, or sometimes especially, people who seem to be having a bad year. Let's look at a few of these people.

Roger Wilson pleaded guilty in April to misappropriation of funds from an insurer. The case had to do with illegal campaign contributions from the Missouri Employers Mutual Insurance Co.

Even though he received probation, the conviction might seem like terrible luck. Now that the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that buying elections is a form of free speech, it's nearly impossible to get in trouble for campaign contributions.

But don't feel sorry for Wilson. He has much to be thankful for. Especially his state pension.

Wilson was twice elected lieutenant governor. When Gov. Mel Carnahan died in a plane crash in October 2000, Wilson became governor — albeit a lame duck, ceremonial governor — for three months.

But for purposes of his pension, how long was he governor?

Twelve years.

That's because there is a separate pension plan for holders of statewide offices, and the pension is calculated from the retiree's highest-paid position. In Wilson's case, that's governor. So all that time as lieutenant governor counts as governor.

Plus, there is a dandy little rule that, under some circumstances, allows a state office holder to "buy" time for up to a total of 12 years. The cool thing is you can buy pension time at the rate of your lowest state service and apply it to your highest service. So Wilson was able to "buy" four years at the price he would have been charged when he was a new legislator and apply that four years to his time as governor.

As a 12-year state office holder, he gets half of his top salary. His monthly pension is \$5,185. That is in addition to his legislative pension of \$1,885.

Wilson can be thankful that his guilty plea did not impact his pension.

**Gary Pinkel is the coach of the Missouri football team. This has been a rough season for the Tigers. Their first year in the Southeastern Conference has not gone well. Missouri needs a win on the road Saturday to finish at .500.**

On a personal note, Pinkel started the year under fire for a DWI he received late last year. Then he caught heat for declaring that former Penn State coach Joe Paterno was a great man. Then came a divorce from his wife of 39 years. Earlier this month, a judge awarded Pinkel's ex-wife maintenance of \$23,000 a month, or \$276,000 a year.

But even in the midst of all this trouble, Pinkel can be thankful that his contract runs through 2017 — five more years — and guarantees him \$2.35 million a year.

Robert Archibald is president of the Missouri History Museum. He has been under fire since September, when Post-Dispatch reporters David Hunn and Stephen Deere detailed a land deal in which the museum spent about \$1 million for a piece of property on Delmar Boulevard. The purchase was made without an appraisal and despite the fact that the museum knew the property was contaminated.

The city estimates the land is now worth \$232,300.

Questions have also been raised about Archibald's compensation package, which totals more than \$500,000 a year and includes six weeks off for "historical researching and writing" in addition to four weeks' vacation.

Despite the unwelcome publicity, he has much to be thankful for. He should be especially thankful for his board of trustees. They have not only stuck by him in these troubled times, they have agreed to loot the museum's reserves or endowment to give him a \$580,000 payout for 410 "unused vacation days." That's over \$1,400 a day.

Tony West had a tough year, too. The former St. Louis jail guard was convicted earlier this month of sexual contact with a prisoner. The state had charged him with using his authority as a guard to pressure a female inmate into having sex in a second-floor janitor's closet.

Perhaps surprisingly, his wife, a former guard herself, has remained on his side. During the sentencing phase of his trial, she described her husband as a good father and provider for the family. She also testified that she and West used to have sex in the same closet.

Afterwards, she told reporter Joel Currier that she believes her husband is innocent.

West will be sentenced next month. The jury recommended a 3½-year prison sentence.

Still, West should be thankful for being married to such a steadfast woman.



## Providence Road project moves ahead

By [Andrew Denney](#) Published [November 20, 2012](#) at 5:58 a.m. Updated [November 20, 2012](#) at 2 p.m.

### MU MENTION P. 2

With the intention of relieving traffic congestion on Providence Road near Stadium Boulevard, the Columbia City Council approved a motion last night to move forward with a plan to build a new street between Bingham and Burnam roads and to build other improvements along Providence.

The city has a two-part plan to alleviate traffic congestion along Providence, which has caused headaches for motorists during peak travel times and for residents of the Grasslands neighborhood. "We have a lot of stacking on Providence during peak times," Public Works Director John Glascock said in a presentation to the council.

The council last night gave the go-ahead for the first phase, which in addition to the new road includes the removal of a traffic signal at Providence and Rollins Street and the installation of traffic lights on Providence at Burnam and Turner Avenue. The plan also calls for eliminating access to Providence from Bingham Road and creating a right-turn lane at Brandon Road.

The council voted to place the second phase of the plan, which includes the extension of a proposed new residential street between Bingham and Burnam farther south to Brandon Road, on the city's capital improvement project list. Columbia voters will be asked to renew the city's quarter-cent capital improvement sales tax in 2015.

Residents who live or own property in the area had mixed reactions to the plans.

In a letter to the council, Bruce Beckett, who formerly lived in the Grasslands and sold his son a house on Bingham, wrote that he opposes the construction of a new residential street in the area because it would result in the demolition of houses and the elimination of access to Providence from Bingham, which he said would divert traffic to Burnam. Beckett wrote that the council should amend its motion to remove those two items.

"To do otherwise would be a premature and regrettable waste of public money that could be put to better use elsewhere," Beckett wrote.

After he testified in support of the proposed project, Robbie Price, president of the Grasslands Neighborhood Association, asked Grasslands residents in attendance to stand to show the council the neighborhood's interest in the project. About 40 attendees stood.

**The city has been looking for ways to smooth traffic congestion in the area since 2005 and has worked with the Missouri Department of Transportation, which maintains Providence and has an interest in improving safety along the roadway, and the University of Missouri in developing plans for the project.**

Scott Bitterman, engineering supervisor for the city's Public Works Department, said when initial plans to alleviate traffic congestion in the area were first proposed, the expected cost of the project was less than \$1 million. That project called for extending Burnam through property owned by the Pi Kappa Psi fraternity to link up to the intersection of Providence and Rollins, but it was rejected because of its effect on the fraternity. As the project has grown more complex, Bitterman said, its expected cost has ballooned.

Now, according to city documents, the total cost of the two-phase project is expected to be more than \$6 million. The first phase is expected to cost about \$3.2 million, and the second phase would cost about \$3.3 million. Those figures include cost estimates for design, construction, relocating utility infrastructure and acquiring easements.

The report says the city could use capital improvement plan funds, federal transportation funds and a city reserve fund for capital projects to pay for the improvements. The motion to move forward with plans for the first phase was approved unanimously.

"I know that this is a very expensive project, but this isn't just a neighborhood issue, this is truly a citywide issue," said Fifth Ward Councilwoman Helen Anthony, who represents the ward that encompasses the project area.