

PLANS AND POLICIES COMMITTEE MEETING

December 10, 2025

2:00 p.m.

Councilman Denny Whayne Conference Room (Busch Building, 4th Floor)
840 Boonville Avenue

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Abe McGull, Chair; Callie Carroll; Craig Hosmer; and Heather Hardinger.

MEMBERS

ABSENT: None.

COUNCIL/ STAFF

PRESENT: Jordan Paul, City Attorney; Maurice S. Jones, Deputy City Manager; Anita Cotter, City Clerk; and Tonia Stopka, City Clerk Administrative Specialist.

GUESTS: Jack McGee, *Springfield Daily Citizen*; Marta Mize, *Springfield News-Leader*; Rex Ybañez, Springfield Tenants Unite; Tom Nowacki, Missouri for Fair Housing; Jeanette Rouse, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Elizabeth VanEvery, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Ben Sonronbus, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Kevin Richardson, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Kai Sutton, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Joe Schlesinger, Missouri Jobs with Justice; and Rachel Jamieson, Missouri Jobs with Justice.

Opening Remarks and Approval of Minutes

Councilmember McGull, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 2:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Roll call was conducted. Present: Callie Carroll, Heather Hardinger, Craig Hosmer, and Abe McGull. Absent: None.

Councilmember Carroll moved to approve the November 12, 2025, meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Hosmer seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Hardinger, Carroll, Hosmer, and McGull. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Review and Discussion: Proposed Ordinance to Limit Campaign Finance Contributions

Councilmember McGull introduced Jordan Paul, City Attorney, to present on the campaign finance contribution limits and ethical oversight of peer cities.

Mr. Paul indicated that many benchmark cities relied on State Law to regulate campaign contribution limits, while others adopted local ordinances to establish contribution limits, report requirements to the City Clerk, and institute enforcement mechanisms through the City Attorney or an ethics body. The local frameworks were described as similar in structure to the ordinance concept previously presented to the Committee.

Mr. Paul reported peer city outreach revealed Kansas City maintained a formal ethics board with defined membership, duties, and public reporting. Contrastingly, Saint Louis did not appear to maintain a clearly identifiable ethics or campaign finance board. Committee members discussed the pros and cons of implementing local contribution limits. They expounded on how it was a nuanced issue but agreed they were in general support of the concept. Committee members also referenced prior public comment cards which conveyed the sentiment local contribution limits would foster transparency and fairness in elections.

Committee members deliberated on specific elements of the potential ordinance. They considered the need to establish administrative structure, reporting requirements, investigative authority, enforcement responsibility, and potential staffing and budget impacts. Members questioned how violations would be addressed, whether existing financial disclosure statements were sufficient or if additional reporting forms should be required, and who would be responsible for enforcement. They discussed how in-kind contributions, gifts, and Political Action Committee (PAC) activity should be addressed.

Committee members agreed that a recommendation to City Council should not be advanced without a clearly defined framework. Several members requested staff review the Kansas City Ethics Commission model in greater detail and prepare options for draft framework language that outlined potential committee structure, operational explanations, filing requirements, enforcement processes, and accountability measures for future Committee consideration. Members noted there should be sufficient time to generate a draft ordinance since there were no upcoming City Council elections.

Councilmember Carroll moved for staff to proceed with draft framework options for review at a future meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Hardinger seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Hardinger, Carroll, Hosmer, and McGull. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Councilmember Carroll moved to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Hardinger seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Hardinger, Carroll, Hosmer, and McGull. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 p.m.
Prepared by Tonia Stopka