

## PLANS AND POLICIES COMMITTEE MEETING

January 13, 2026

1:00 p.m.

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

### MEMBERS

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

### MEMBERS

**ABSENT:** None.

### COUNCIL/ STAFF

**PRESENT:** Maurice S. Jones, Deputy City Manager; Collin Quigley, Deputy City Manager; Jordan Paul, City Attorney; Amanda Ohlenselen, Director of Economic Vitality and Workforce Development; Matt Schaefer, Assistant Director of Economic Vitality and Workforce Development; Steve Childers, Director of Planning and Development; Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Anita Cotter, City Clerk and Tonia Stopka, Administrative Specialist.

**GUESTS:** Marta Mieze, *Springfield News-Leader*; Jack McGee, *Springfield Daily Citizen*; Isabelle Walker, Nuisance Property Work Group; Kevin Richardson, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Jeanette Rouse, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Nathan Hall, Missouri Jobs with Justice; Sara Barnts, Springfield Tenants Unite; and Rex Ybañez, Springfield Tenants Unite.

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Councilmember McGull, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:02 p.m. He welcomed everyone and roll call was conducted. Present: Derek Lee, Callie Carroll, Craig Hosmer, and Abe McGull. Absent: None.

Councilmember McGull shared consideration of the December 10, 2025, meeting minutes would occur at a future meeting. He introduced the meeting topics which were the continued discussion of a proposed ordinance to amend the City Code by enacting a new Section 46-6 “Campaign Finance,” and discussion of the fiscal impact of development projects.

### **Presentation and Discussion: Proposed Campaign Finance Ordinance**

Councilmember McGull introduced Maurice S. Jones, Deputy City Manager, who invited Jordan Paul, City Attorney, to present an overview of the draft framework for a proposed campaign finance ordinance. Mr. Paul indicated Committee members had requested staff review the Kansas City Ethics Commission model and return with a targeted approach for implementation, enforcement, and administration of a proposed campaign finance ordinance for Springfield.

Mr. Paul explained the proposed campaign finance ordinance would establish an Ethics Compliance Officer and a City Ethics Commission. The officer would field complaints, responses, and evidence to the commission. The commission would review campaign disclosure reports and have jurisdiction to address alleged violations of Section 46-6 of the City Code by City Council members, up to two years prior to the date of complaint. The two-year window would align with existing two-year election cycles. Mr. Paul noted the City Attorney or an Assistant City Attorney would serve as legal counsel to the commission and the City Clerk's Office could potentially provide further administrative support.

Mr. Paul indicated the commission would consist of nine members appointed by City Council for three-year terms, which would be consistent with Charter requirements for advisory boards. Membership would prohibit commissioners from advocating for City Council candidates during their term of service and for one year thereafter; but would allow for participation in non-City Council political activities.

Mr. Paul outlined the proposed powers and duties of the commission, including the ability to adopt and amend its own procedural rules, request administrative support from staff, receive and evaluate complaints, conduct investigations, require the production of documents and witnesses, and prepare findings and recommendations, including an annual report to City Council. He emphasized the commission would make referrals for violation of city code and would not have authority to initiate prosecution.

Mr. Paul explained the three ways to prompt an investigation, two of which would require an affirmative vote from five of the nine City Ethics Commission members. A majority vote would be needed if the commission were to initiate their own investigation or if a person were to produce a sworn complaint. A vote would not occur if the commission were to receive an ordinance directive from City Council as the investigation would be mandatory.

Mr. Paul specified investigations were subject to defined timelines, which would include procedural milestones and generally require a resolution within 90 days. He indicated if a violation were found, the Commission would issue written findings of fact and conclusions of law. If no violation were found, they would formally dismiss the complaint. Mr. Paul noted termination or resignation from City Council would not impede commission jurisdiction to investigate alleged violations.

Committee members discussed confidentiality concerns during the investigative phase, including the applicability of the Missouri Sunshine Law provisions and the potential for misuse of the complaint process for political purposes. Mr. Paul explained investigative matters involving potential violations could, in certain circumstances, remain closed to protect the integrity of the investigation, but records would ultimately become public upon conclusion.

The committee discussed in-kind contributions from individuals versus Political Action Committees, independent expenditures, and reporting requirements. Members expressed concern that candidates unfamiliar with campaign finance regulations could inadvertently violate contribution limits, particularly with non-monetary contributions such as advertising, printing, or

volunteer services. Members emphasized the need for clarity to ensure the ordinance would not discourage individuals from seeking public office.

Consensus emerged that supplemental plain language guidance should accompany the ordinance. Members recommended the development of educational materials to be included in candidate filing packets, with coordination between the City Attorney's Office and the City Clerk's Office. The Committee indicated the ordinance was nearing completion, pending the addition of candidate guidance materials and further clarification of in-kind contribution scenarios. Staff agreed to return to a future meeting to present the requested updates to the draft framework.

**Discussion: Fiscal Impact Evaluation for Development Projects**

Mr. Jones introduced Amanda Ohlenselen, Director of Economic Vitality and Workforce Development, to highlight the necessity of a comprehensive fiscal analysis of potential development projects. Ms. Ohlenselen emphasized development project evaluations should consider direct fiscal impacts, long-term community benefits, infrastructure capacity, redevelopment potential, and align with adopted City plans and City Council objectives. Ms. Ohlenselen proposed the City engage an external consultant to design a citywide economic development strategy and standardized evaluation framework. The framework would support proactive economic development efforts, target redevelopment opportunities, coordinate efforts with partner agencies, identify appropriate incentives, and provide consistent tools for the analyzation of development proposals including qualitative and quantitative impacts.

Committee members discussed potential infrastructure limitations and redevelopment challenges in underutilized and constrained areas. They emphasized market-driven proposals should be in step with the initiatives of the City's Comprehensive Plan and the priorities of City Council, such as the development of key city corridors. Staff noted feedback from Committee members and agreed to return to a future meeting with consultant options, a defined scope of services, anticipated costs, and implementation timelines for further consideration.

**Adjournment**

Councilmember McGull moved to adjourn. Councilmember Carroll seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Carroll, Hosmer, Lee, and McGull. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:51 p.m.  
Prepared by Tonia Stopka