

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

August 30, 2023

12:00 p.m.

Councilman Denny Wayne Conference Room (Bush Building, 4<sup>th</sup> floor)

### **MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:** Heather Hardinger, Chair; Craig Hosmer; Derek Lee; and Callie Carroll.

### **MEMBERS**

**ABSENT:** None.

### **COUNCIL**

**PRESENT:** None.

### **STAFF**

**PRESENT:** Jason Gage, City Manager; Collin Quigley, Deputy City Manager; Maurice S. Jones, Deputy City Manager; Paul F. Williams, Chief of Police; Jenny Deppe, Probation Officer; Wendy Garrison, Chief Judge of Municipal Court; Amanda Ohlensehlen, Director of Economic Vitality; David Holtmann, Director of Finance; Rhonda Lewsader, City Attorney; Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Melissa Haase, Assistant Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Anita Cotter, City Clerk; and Lauren Fischer, City Clerk Administrative Specialist.

**GUESTS:** None.

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Councilwoman Heather Hardinger, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 12:02 p.m., and roll call was conducted. Present: Craig Hosmer, Callie Carroll, Derek Lee, and Heather Hardinger. Absent: None.

Councilman Hosmer moved to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2023, meeting as presented. Councilwoman Carroll seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Carroll, Lee, Hosmer, and Hardinger. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Jason Gage, City Manager, noted the Committee members received a notebook containing requested information regarding topics pending before the Community Involvement Committee (Exhibit A).

Mr. Gage discussed the recent resolution approved by City Council regarding nuisance properties. He explained the resolution would require certain tasks to be completed by the Community Involvement Committee, the Finance and Administration Committee, and the City Manager's Office. He noted the Community Involvement Committee is being instructed to submit a report with recommendations based on the information submitted to the Committee by the City Manager's Office. He further noted the Committee's recommendation report must be

submitted to City Council within the next six months. He explained the time needed for the City Manager's Office and staff to gather the requested information will be less than the allotted six months because the Community Involvement Committee will need time to review and discuss the information prior to submitting its report to City Council.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted the purpose of the meeting was for the Committee members to receive an update on the previously-discussed topics (Exhibit A). She further noted the goal was to walk through each topic and discuss which subjects required further action or if a topic's objectives have been met and the item can be removed from the Committee's pending topic list.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted the first topic of discussion was clean air and environmental protection. Mr. Gage noted the tasks assigned to the staff for this topic were presented to the previous Committee members. He further noted this information was provided to the current Committee members for review (Exhibit A).

Councilman Hosmer noted this topic was referred to the Committee at the request of former Councilman Schilling. Councilman Hosmer noted his reason for continuing the discussion on this topic was to request further information regarding policies from other jurisdictions in order to create a policy or a plan for the City to transition City vehicles to electric to help reduce fuel cost and reduce the negative impact traditional vehicles have on the environment.

Councilwoman Carroll asked if other jurisdictions are currently using electric vehicles. Paul F. Williams, Chief of Police, explained the Springfield Police Department requests bids for new police vehicles. He noted he is unaware of a specific electric vehicle model used by other jurisdictions. He noted there are some communities that use hybrid vehicles for their police departments. Chief Williams explained the Springfield Police Department currently uses Ford as a vendor for its police cars, but there is a year delay to produce any new police vehicles. He noted the Police Department is looking for other options and can research the cost of police hybrid vehicles.

Councilwoman Hardinger commented the sustainable energy concept would be a subject to work towards as a long-term plan for the City. She asked if an ordinance would be required to accomplish the goal of creating a plan for sustainable energy. Councilman Hosmer expressed his opinion an ordinance should be required to help create a plan and hold the City accountable for the future.

Mr. Gage discussed the objectives the Committee members want to be included in a comprehensive energy plan. He suggested the Committee members request staff draft a comprehensive energy plan to present to City Council as a resolution. He noted the Committee members can make a recommendation to add this topic to the upcoming discussion on City Council Legislative Priorities.

Councilwoman Hardinger asked staff to research clean air and environmental sustainability to see if it aligns with the City Council Priorities. Mr. Gage replied staff would review the City Council Priorities and provide the information to the Committee members.

Mr. Gage asked the Committee members if an inventory of the existing policies or programs relating to energy efficiency would be beneficial. Councilwoman Hardinger replied it would be beneficial to have an inventory of the City's existing policies and helpful to have examples from other municipalities which have sustainable energy ordinances.

Councilman Lee asked if the sustainable energy topic was part of the most-recent community survey. Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement, replied sustainable energy was not listed as a specific topic on the community survey. She noted staff could review questions posed by the community about the Forward SGF plan to see if there were any comments regarding clean air or sustainable energy. Mr. Gage added staff could also research previous survey results while compiling the list of existing policies.

Councilman Lee spoke about constituents who have shown concern for other City Council Priorities which do not include sustainable energy. He expressed his opinion a comprehensive energy plan would be good for the City, but noted he would rather focus on the City Council Priorities expressed by the community. Councilwoman Carroll agreed with Councilman Lee. She noted after speaking with neighborhood groups, citizens voiced more concern for City Council Priorities such as public safety. Councilwoman Hardinger suggested reviewing the data submitted by the community to see if energy sustainability is a topic for the Committee members to prioritize.

The Committee members discussed the importance of creating an energy sustainability plan for the future of the City. Councilwoman Hardinger suggested the Committee explore the current process the City is following to meet the objective of sustainability. Mr. Gage noted, on the recommendation of the Committee, the staff would compile an inventory of processes and procedures for the Committee to discuss during the next Community Involvement Committee meeting.

Councilwoman Hardinger moved for staff to compile a list of sustainability programs the City has and include any survey data. Councilman Hosmer seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Lee, Hosmer, Carroll, and Hardinger. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Councilwoman Hardinger reviewed the Committee topic regarding local business preference. She noted the previous Committee members discussed whether there was an urgent need to change the current local preference ordinance. She noted based on the information and past presentations of this topic (Exhibit A), the City does meet the Federal and State guidelines for local preference. She asked the Committee members if they would like to keep this topic on the pending topic list for further discussion.

Councilman Hosmer asked for clarification about the current local preference ordinance. David Holtmann, Director of Finance, replied the current ordinance refers to non-commodities. Councilman Hosmer expressed his opinion it would be in the City's best interest to encourage contracts with local contractors rather than out-of-state contractors.

Councilman Lee expressed his opinion, as a contractor, the current local preference policy is being used by the City. He asked if the City had received complaints from local vendors regarding the bidding process. Councilman Hosmer replied, to his recollection, there were vendors who were upset regarding the process.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted from the information received from staff, the City is giving local preference. She asked how often this topic is evaluated to ensure the City is meeting the objective of local preference. Mr. Gage explained part of the purchasing officer's job responsibility includes reviewing the policies and ordinances to ensure the City complies.

Councilman Lee moved to recommend to City Council that the Committee has considered the existing policy and does not recommend any changes at this time. Councilman Hosmer seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Hosmer, Carroll, Lee, and Hardinger. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted the next topic was prevailing wage. Councilman Lee asked for clarification on how the prevailing wage topic affects tax increment financing (TIF). Mr. Gage explained the TIF in the prevailing wage requirement would be included for projects regarding public infrastructure. He noted the City's Workable Program for the prevailing wage requirement refers to a private developer.

Amanda Ohlensehlen, Director of Economic Vitality, discussed the City's Workable Program, which applied to land clearance for redevelopment; it was used for recipients of real property tax abatement based on a score card. She noted the program's score card also added requirements for single project redevelopment. She further noted this program ended a few years ago; as a result, prevailing wages were not addressed on the score card or in the City's Workable Program. She noted the Missouri statute requires public projects to pay a prevailing wage.

Councilman Lee moved to recommend to City Council that the Committee has considered the existing prevailing wage program and does not recommend any changes at this time. Councilman Hosmer seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Hosmer, Carroll, Lee, and Hardinger. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted the next topic was the Sexual Assault Task Force update. Mr. Gage discussed the Springfield Sexual Assault Task Force Recommendation Checklist (Exhibit A). He noted this checklist outlines everything the staff has completed for this topic.

Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement, noted the staff created a public education component and a public survey to send out into the community. She noted the Task Force faced issues meeting, including a change in the committee chair. She noted there were three to four additional Sexual Assault Task Force Committee meetings to review the survey results before the Sexual Assault Task Force decided to disband.

Chief Williams noted the Police Department has accomplished the assigned tasks. He noted the Springfield Police Department has tested all backlogged sexual assault kits. He acknowledged sexual assault will continue to be an ongoing topic of discussion. He noted the Springfield

Police Department received a grant which Harmony House has agreed to continue to fund for the Police Department to retain the two in-house sexual assault advocates on staff. He noted the department funding allowed for Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview (FETI) training for all Special Victims Unit Investigators, Domestic Violence Investigators, and Municipal Court Judges. Chief Williams explained the Task Force request to establish a Springfield and Greene County integrated sexual violence court is not in the realm of the Police Department's capabilities.

Councilwoman Hardinger asked about the likelihood of establishing a sexual violence court. Chief Williams explained this topic was discussed during the Task Force meetings as a standalone topic, but the idea failed to move forward due to the workload of the court system. He suggested adding this as a discussion topic at the next Greene County Criminal Justice Roundtable meeting.

Mr. Gage clarified these recommendations came from the Task Force and were adopted through a resolution by City Council. Rhonda Lewsader, City Attorney, noted the tasks listed in the resolution are on-going responsibilities assigned to the Community Involvement Committee. She discussed the actions the Committee members could take to remove this topic from their agenda if there was a consensus from the Committee that all tasks are complete.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted there was still one pending task listed about the sexual violence court. She asked staff for additional information regarding the feasibility of establishing a sexual violence court to ensure the Committee has fully discussed each task before submitting a motion to City Council. Mr. Gage replied staff would provide an answer to the Committee during the next scheduled meeting.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted the next topic for discussion was alternatives to incarceration. Mr. Gage noted Springfield Municipal Court is one of the few that utilize a probation officer to oversee the community service assignments. He further noted the current requirements for community service allow the individual to choose where they serve their time. He explained this topic refers to whether the Municipal Court can create a program that allows an offender to do certain City-related community service such as neighborhood clean ups. He noted concerns related to the liability and cost of using a municipally-run community service program. He further noted Municipal Court does have a system in place for community service for offenders.

Wendy Garrison, Chief Judge of Municipal Court, discussed the advantages of having a probation officer working for Municipal Court. She noted the probation office can order the offender to attend classes and complete community service with not-for-profit organizations.

Jenny Deppe, Probation Officer, discussed the number of individuals currently on supervised and unsupervised probation working to complete their community service hours. She explained some individuals are required to take courses, such as Stealing Charges and Victim Impact, in addition to their community service, depending on their charges. Judge Garrison added she is looking into adding different programs that will help the defendant understand the effect their crime has on their victim.

Ms. Lewsader spoke about the statute she forwarded to the Committee members regarding liability issues this program could have for the City (Exhibit A). She noted further investigation can be conducted with Risk Management to assess other types of liability this program could have for the City.

Councilwoman Hardinger discussed the feasibility of adding programs the City sponsors, such as Clean Green, as a community service option for offenders. Mr. Gage noted the City's main concern with this type of program is the liability the City could face by providing direct supervision over the program. He discussed the possibility of working with a third party, such as Greene County, for the supervisory aspect of the program.

Councilman Hosmer expressed his concern the defendants are not learning from their crimes. He expressed his opinion the City should apply restorative justice methods to help rehabilitate an individual before they become a repeat offender.

Councilwoman Hardinger asked if the offender can choose where they can complete their community service. Judge Garrison replied they can choose, but it must be for a not-for-profit organization. She noted individuals are more successful when they can choose their own community service projects.

Mr. Gage asked if workman's compensation would be required for those individuals completing community service. Ms. Lewsader clarified the statute presented to the Committee (Exhibit A) includes certain types of liability. She noted the Law Department and Risk Management Department are investigating whether the City would need workman's compensation for a volunteer in case of an injury on City property.

The Committee members discussed allowing individuals who are required to complete community service to do City-sponsored neighborhood clean-up projects. It was discussed how these individuals would verify the completion of their community service hours and whether the City volunteer programs would have the same verification requirements as a not-for-profit community service option.

Councilwoman Hardinger suggested neighborhoods which are interested in allowing community service as part of the neighborhood clean-up efforts could submit a request to Municipal Court, which could designate a person to verify the work was completed. She asked if it would be feasible to integrate the City clean-up programs with the court-ordered community service requirements.

Mr. Gage replied integrating these programs would require additional research. He explained projects such as Clean Green do not have a specific person to monitor the volunteers, so a verification process would need to be put into place.

Councilwoman Hardinger asked if staff could provide information regarding the feasibility of implementing City clean-up programs as an option for community service.

Councilwoman Carroll expressed her concerns some neighborhoods would have issues allowing offenders working near their homes. Councilwoman Hardinger clarified it would be services the community members could request as an option before it could be implemented.

Mr. Gage explained using a third party to monitor and verify the community service could be investigated. He asked Ms. Lewsader to draft information regarding workman's compensation and research to determine if a legislative change would be necessary. Ms. Lewsader replied she would work to gather the requested information.

Councilman Lee asked Judge Garrison if there was anything the Committee could do to help with implementing the training from her Restorative Justice classes. Judge Garrison responded it depends on how the City would like this program to be implemented. She noted the overall process would need to begin with an agreement between Municipal Court, the Prosecutor's Office, and all other entities involved before certain aspects of the program could be implemented.

Mr. Gage summarized the requested information the Committee members wanted staff to research included implementation of restorative justice programs, the application of workman's compensation as it applies to community service, and using a third-party group to verify City-sponsored community service work completion. The Committee members discussed adding a way for the public to identify an offender. Mr. Gage noted staff would investigate the legality of public identification for an offender sentenced to community service.

Councilman Lee asked if the Prosecutor's Office would help implement a restorative justice program. Judge Garrison explained the Prosecutor's Office and the Municipal Court are two separate entities, and it would depend on the Prosecutor's Office's willingness to participate in the program.

Councilwoman Hardinger noted the last topic for discussion was the resolution regarding nuisance properties. Mr. Gage explained it would take a few months for him to gather the needed information to present to the Committee members. He emphasized the six-month time frame and noted his presentation will need to occur in 90 days or less to allow the Committee members time to create their recommendation report for City Council.

Councilwoman Hardinger asked if it would be beneficial for the Committee to meet to discuss the resolution to ensure each aspect is met in a timely manner. Mr. Gage replied it would be helpful as this topic will require more Committee meetings to make sure each component can be met.

The Committee members discussed breaking down the resolution into smaller tasks to help with time management. Mr. Gage emphasized some tasks the Committee must complete will rely on the information he will supply to the members.

Councilman Lee asked if more time would be needed to compile the requested information based on the requirements listed in the resolution. Mr. Gage explained this project will be a challenge to complete within the six-month time frame. He noted staff would make every effort to meet

any request of the City Council members, such as ordinances and staff research projects, but emphasized some requests may take more time than others to complete.

Councilwoman Hardinger suggested meeting with staff to discuss the Committee's responsibility regarding the resolution. She noted once they begin discussing the logistics of the resolution, they may deem more time would be needed to complete all tasks.

Mr. Gage discussed the Committee's requirement to submit a comprehensive report regarding the feasibility of all recommendations within the Nuisance Property Work Group Final Report including estimated staffing impacts within six months.

Councilman Lee and Councilwoman Hardinger suggested inviting Councilman Jensen to the next Community Involvement Committee meeting to discuss any questions the Committee members may have about the resolution. Ms. Lewsader noted Councilman Jensen is welcome to attend the meeting and answer questions for the Committee members because it is a public meeting.

Councilwoman Hardinger thanked the staff and the Committee members for their attendance.

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

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:08 p.m.

Prepared by Lauren Fischer