Citizens' Advisory Board

May 21, 2025
10:00 a.m.
Councilman Denny Whayne Conference Room (Busch Building, 4th Floor)

Members Present: Erin Danastasio, Chair; Rusty Worley, Vice Chair; Andy Peebles; Clifton Smart; Becky Volz; Leslie Forrester; Lauren Shantz; and Christina Angle

Members Absent: None.

Guests: None.

City Staff: Collin Quigley, Interim City Manager; Maurice S. Jones, Deputy City Manager; Jordan Paul, City Attorney; Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Melissa Hart, Assistant Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Kristen Milam, Senior Communications Coordinator; David Holtmann, Director of Finance; Ron Schneider, Director of Parks and Recreation; Errin Kemper, Director of Environmental Services; Amanda Ohlensehlen, Director of Economic Vitality and Workforce Development; Tim Rosenbury, Director of Quality of Place Initiatives; Dan Smith, Director of Public Works; Macaylah Holden, City Clerk Administrative Specialist; and Anita Cotter, City Clerk.

Erin Danastasio, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 10:08 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Roll call was conducted. Present: Erin Danastasio, Rusty Worley, Andy Peebles, Clifton Smart, Becky Volz, Leslie Forrester, Lauren Shantz, and Christina Angle. Absent: None.

Ms. Danastasio indicated the meeting would begin with introductions by the Board members and City staff. She asked everyone to share their name, role, and a positive quality of life experience or opportunity available within Springfield. Each member of the Board and City staff in attendance shared this information.

Ms. Danastasio turned the meeting over to Anita Cotter, City Clerk. Ms. Cotter briefly reviewed the format of binders provided to members. Each binder included a sheet highlighting the Board's role, an Ethics Handbook, a 2025 meeting date calendar, member information, press releases, background information, and a section for each meeting's information. Ms. Cotter explained members were welcome to take their binders with them for reference and indicated a packet of information would be provided at each meeting. The packets would include the agenda and any pertinent information or presentations.

Ms. Danastasio next turned the meeting over to Collin Quigley, Interim City Manager. Mr. Quigley began by expressing his appreciation for the Board's time and their willingness to serve the community.
Mr. Quigley provided an overview of the events leading to the Board's creation. Mr. Quigley briefly discussed the history of the Citizens' Commission on Community Investment. He explained the Police-Fire Pension Sales Tax had ended on March 31, 2025, with the Spring Forward SGF tax beginning April 1, 2025. He noted the 1/4 cent portion of the Spring Forward SGF sales tax had drastically increased the Police and Fire Pension funding balance, with 94 percent of total needs funded. He also explained the 1/4-cent portion of the tax supporting the Police and Fire Pension Fund would not sunset, while the 1/2-cent portion would sunset after March 31, 2035.

Mr. Quigley then reviewed the role of the Citizens' Advisory Board. He noted their role was to provide recommendations to City Council for allocations of the 1/2-cent portion of the Spring Forward SGF sales tax. Projects should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, capital improvements, park projects, or community initiatives. Mr. Quigley explained funds received from the Spring Forward SGF tax were intended for one-time expenses and not ongoing operating expenses. He noted monies would be spent only on projects recommended by the Board.

Christina Angle inquired if grant programs could be funded with collected revenues. Mr. Quigley answered affirmatively but clarified a public purpose or benefit would be required and noted a deference to the Law Department for final review.

He indicated the Completed as Promised model for project completion would be used. This would include communication, project identification, public input, and project prioritization. He noted this model would ensure consistent reporting, feedback, and updates.

Rusty Worley, Vice Chair, inquired if public feedback would be gathered on recommended projects. Mr. Quigley answered affirmatively, noting the Board would be allowed to determine how feedback was gathered and noted the Public Information Office would assist with any needs. Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement, noted the Spring Forward SGF tax was passed with over 80 percent voter support at the polls. She expressed her opinion public input and communication from the Board was optimal to ensure satisfaction and transparency.

Ms. Angle inquired why there was an April 1st deadline associated with projects and if unused funds were gaining interest. Mr. Quigley indicated City Council wanted an annual update on the Board's work, but noted project recommendations and budget adjustments could occur at any time. David Holtmann, Director of Finance, indicated unused funds were gaining interest.

Mr. Quigley turned the meeting over to Jordan Paul, City Attorney, to present on Legal Considerations and Ethics.

Mr. Paul began with a review of Section 19.16 of the City Charter which addressed conflicts of interest. He noted members could not have an indirect or direct financial interest in any City of

Springfield contract. He indicated failure to abide with this provision could result in removal from the Board. Further, he reviewed Section 2-161 of the City Code, which governed the Code of Ethics for Boards and Commissions. He noted this section reiterated the financial interest provision in Section 19.16 and added a provision on personal interests. Mr. Paul explained personal interests were any interest arising from blood relations, marriage, political relationships, or business relationships. He stressed the requirement to disclose conflicts of interests. He also noted an advisory opinion could be obtained from the City Attorney's Office. He expressed his willingness to assist with all legal questions.

Mr. Paul turned the meeting to Anita Cotter, City Clerk, to discuss Sunshine Law requirements. Ms. Cotter stressed the Sunshine Law was Missouri law set forth in the Revised Statutes of Missouri (RSMo), Chapter 610. She explained any public governmental body would be subject to the Sunshine Law and noted the law was meant to ensure transparency and openness in government. Clifton Smart inquired if the Board was considered a public governmental body. Ms. Cotter answered affirmatively.

All meetings, electronic or otherwise, were subject to the Sunshine Law. Ms. Cotter noted intent was considered under the law, and it was best to give the benefit of the doubt that items would fall under Sunshine Law. She also explained all records, such as physical correspondence, email, text messages, and meeting minutes were open records.

Ms. Cotter reviewed requirements to comply with Sunshine Law, which included notice of all meetings, an agenda listing matters to be discussed, physical agenda postings, and meeting minutes. She indicated a member of the City Clerk's staff would assist to ensure compliance in all areas.

Andy Peebles inquired what was considered an illegal public meeting. Ms. Cotter explained an illegal meeting occurred when a quorum of any public body was present and discussed official business outside of a posted meeting. She indicated all discussions related to Board business must occur during the formal meeting setting.

Ms. Cotter provided each member with instructions to access their City of Springfield email address. She requested each member complete a form indicating their password and seal it in the provided envelope. This would be provided to the Information Systems Department to complete activation of each email. In addition to their individual City of Springfield email, members would have access to a centralized email address for Board use.

Ms. Cotter recommended all correspondence from citizens be directed to the centralized email to ensure all Board members received the information. She indicated any correspondence received at a private email address regarding Board business should be forwarded to the member's City provided email and deleted from personal inboxes. Ms. Cotter explained this would assist with keeping correspondence centralized.

Mr. Peebles inquired how public input would be regulated. Ms. Cotter explained the Board would determine how the public could submit input and noted comment cards were made available at each meeting. Ms. Scott indicated the public appreciated the ability to attend meetings and frequently utilized available comment cards. Ms. Cotter passed the meeting to Ms. Scott to further discuss public communications.

Ms. Scott began by noting the microphones and cameras throughout the room and explained each meeting was recorded and livestreamed on Facebook and the CityView webpage to provide access and transparency. She provided a brief overview of her department's role. The department responsibilities included communications, outreach services, media relations, websites, special events, photography, and more for the entire City. Ms. Scott explained the department can assist with news releases for significant milestones achieved by the Board and expressed the department's willingness to help as needed.

Ms. Scott indicated the Board would need to consider how to handle media relations and media requests. She noted most departments requested her office serve as the first point of contact for media. Ms. Danastasio and other members were not opposed to this. Ms. Danastasio requested Ms. Scott and her team remain first point of contact for media relations. It was the consensus of the Board to have all media requests be forwarded to Ms. Danastasio when received.

Ms. Scott provided a handout to all attendees outlining a project request submission form proposal. The handout included twelve questions. She requested consideration and feedback from the Board. Mr. Quigley noted the proposed submission form would serve as a repository for ideas to ensure citizens had the ability to submit ideas. Ms. Scott also noted other public input options were available such as: social media engagement, focus groups, online surveys, statistically-valid polls, or public town halls.

Mr. Worley inquired how the Board could expand on information already available from the City's Forward SGF planning. He expressed a desire to avoid duplicate work. Ms. Scott explained a wide range of information had been gathered during the planning of Forward SGF, long-term planning, and citizen satisfaction surveys. She indicated a synthesized report could be provided, if desired. Ms. Danastasio requested the information be provided in a digestible format for the Board to review.

Mr. Worley recommended a survey be conducted to determine citizen priorities for project funding. Lauren Shantz inquired if the Forward SGF planning included information on citizen priorities. Ms. Scott responded affirmatively and noted greater detail would be provided at the next meeting.

Becky Volz inquired if the Board would solely rely on citizen suggestions for projects. Mr. Quigley indicated the proposed submission form would allow for ideas to be submitted, but noted City Council and City staff would also provide suggestions.

Ms. Scott turned the meeting over to Mr. Quigley to conclude the presentation.

Mr. Quigley reviewed upcoming topics for future meetings. These would include discussion of Forward SGF values and priorities, community snapshot information, and creating a vision for the future of the Board. He reminded attendees the Board meeting calendar was available in their binder.

Ms. Danastasio inquired if Board members would be allowed to attend meetings virtually. Ms. Cotter indicated the decision would be at the Board's discretion.

Ms. Danastasio reminded everyone of the next meeting on June 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., in the Councilman Denny Whayne Conference Room.

Ms. Angle moved to adjourn. Mr. Worley seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Danastasio, Worley, Peebles, Smart, Volz, Forrester, Shantz, and Angle. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:47 a.m.

Prepared by Macaylah Holden

Approved by the Citizens' Advisory Board
on May 21, 2025