



701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: City Manager
To: City Council
From: City Manager & Staff
Council Meeting Date: December 15, 2025
Re: Springfield, MO City Council Meetings
Impacted Ward: Citywide

Executive Summary

The City Management Fellows have prepared a report that outlines the structure and process of Springfield, MO City Council Meetings. This was created in response to a request made at the October 20, 2025 Pre-Council Meeting.

Discussion

The review of Springfield, Missouri's City Council meeting structure offers several observations that may be useful as the City of Columbia's City Council evaluates its own processes. Several of Springfield's practices differ from ours in ways that could inform potential refinements or adjustments to meeting efficiency, transparency, and public accessibility.

One notable difference are Springfield's agendas. They clearly state on the agenda's when citizens may speak, when citizens have already spoken on a topic, and notating when an item is anticipated to be voted on, or not to be voted on. With this approach, it could reduce confusion, streamline meeting flow, and allow community members to better prepare for engagement. Another difference, is the City Manager's Report. This is located at the beginning of the meeting and allows for follow-up from the previous council meeting, creating transparent communication on outstanding issues and providing continuity between meetings.

While looking at the structure of Springfield's public comment procedures, there also was some differences identified. Springfield requires sign-ups for comment and uses tiered speaking times depending on volume. Individuals are given five minutes when there are fewer than 8 individuals speaking on a single topic, and are given three minutes when there are more than 8 individuals signed up to speak on a single topic. This could offer a balance between managing time and preserving space for public comment. Additionally, allowing written public comment ensures participation for individuals unable or uncomfortable attending in person, while still supplying council members with the perspectives of those individuals.

Springfield's virtual participation is reserved for circumstances where quorum is at risk. There were noted challenges with virtual participation, including speaker management, context limitations and technology logistics.

Something unique to Springfield is their "Tuesdays with Council." These are lunch workshops created to foster a space to have ongoing dialogue, deeper exploration of complex topics

and staff presentations outside of official voting meetings. Towards the end of these meetings, the City Manager goes over the proposed agenda for the upcoming meeting. Answering any outstanding questions. They do not spend a lot of time on this item during this meeting. These meetings last anywhere between 20 minutes, to an hour and a half. These meetings are sometimes followed by Special Meetings. These meetings are majority closed sessions.

While not all practices may translate into the City of Columbia's City Council meetings, Springfield's model does provide useful examples that could improve accessibility and efficiency for Columbia.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Enter the cost of proposed legislation to the city for the next **two** years.
Long-Term Impact: Enter the cost of proposed legislation to the city for years **beyond two**.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Primary, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility, Secondary Impact: Inter-Governmental Cooperation, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
N/A	N/A

Suggested Council Action

This is for informational purposes only.