City Seeks Volunteers for Wastewater Improvements Task Force

The City of Springfield is seeking volunteers to serve on a Wastewater Improvements Task Force that will help guide potentially significant improvements to Springfield’s wastewater services and treatment system.

The City and its Public Works Department are undertaking this process because state and federal regulations regarding the Clean Water Act are becoming more extensive and more expensive to meet. The City is facing some significant challenges related to high flow rates in its sanitary sewer system during wet weather periods that sometimes result in overflows from the system. System improvements are required to comply with state and federal regulations, and protect public health and the environment.

In order to make the process of determining a fair and equitable plan for paying for the cost of these improvements as transparent as possible, the City plans to create a 20-member stakeholder task force. The Wastewater Improvements Task Force will include eight citizen representatives, two from each Council zone. It will also include stakeholders from the commercial and industrial sectors, as well as the development community, environmental organizations, and engineering or technical experts.

The group will receive input related to affordability, cost distribution and decision-making criteria; help develop programs to reduce basement backups and extra water that enters the system from private property connections to the sewer system; and address issues regarding satellite communities (Willard, Strafford, Battlefield and Republic) which discharge wastewater to the City’s system for treatment.

The task force will follow a structured schedule, and will be assisted by a facilitator. It will hold approximately eight meetings in nine months, and will take public comment throughout the process. The group will make its final recommendations to City Council by the middle of 2011.

All of the task force members will be approved by City Council. Citizens interested in serving on the task force are only required to be ratepayers of the City’s wastewater utility. Those interested in serving should contact the City Clerk’s Office at (417) 864-1654 or fill out an application online at http://mo-springfield.civicplus.com/723/Boards-Commissions. Click on ‘Apply To Serve’ and choose Wastewater Improvements Task Force when asked which group you are interested in joining. The deadline to apply for the Wastewater Improvements Task Force is Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2010.

For more information, contact: Steve Meyer, Co-Interim Director of Public Works, (417) 864-2047; or Brenda Cirtin, City Clerk, (417) 864-1650.