

September 10, 2012

News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **City Council Meeting Summary: Sept. 10, 2012**

Springfield City Council held public hearings on a couple of hot topics, including four proposed amendments that would repeal part or all of a petition-based ordinance approved Aug. 27 reducing penalties for people possessing limited amounts of marijuana and a reallocation of hotel/motel tax monies given up by Wonders of Wildlife museum.

Eighteen people spoke in favor of leaving ordinance 2012-6011 as adopted and one spoke in favor of repeal. Council is expected to vote in two weeks.

Here's how the proposed amendments stack up:

1. Four Council members - Jerry Compton, Jan Fisk, Jeff Seifried and John Rush —sponsored a [total repeal](#).
2. Mayor Bob Stephens sponsored an [amendment that removes two provisions City Attorney Dan Wichmer has determined are clearly illegal](#): a requirement that City Council appoint a citizen oversight committee and expungement. This amendment also suggests increasing the fine for such possession from \$150 to \$450.
3. Mayor Stephens also sponsored an [amendment that eliminates the two clearly illegal provisions, but leaves the fine at \\$150](#).
4. Councilman Doug Burlison, who has supported the initiative since its inception, offered an [amendment that eliminates the oversight committee requirement](#). He resists removing an expungement provision until an opinion from the attorney general's office is available.

#### Hotel/Motel Tax Reallocation

Three speakers addressed a pair of bills reallocating a portion of the city's hotel-motel tax reallocated by the Wonders of Wildlife museum in 2011.

One option would reallocate 100 percent - an estimated \$330,000 a year - to help pay the debt on Jordan Valley Park and Mediacom Ice Park.

The second option would reallocate 40 percent to reduce debt, with the other 60 percent would be available for new tourism projects.

Both plans would allocate about \$328,000 — accrued since WOW gave up the tax funding — toward improvements at the Springfield Expo Center.

## Voting Action

City Council voted unanimously to approve City Utilities' proposed 2013 budget, and to approve proposed water rate increases. The water rate increases will recover costs of operating the system and to fund replacement and repair of aging water mains.

Council also voted unanimously to adopt a resolution permitting Missouri State University to perform certain activities or events within the City during the university's first home football game Sept. 15, 2012, which would otherwise violate the provisions of City noise ordinance (City Code Sections 78-112 and 78-113.)

For more information, contact: Cora Scott, Director of Public Information & Civic Engagement, 417-864-1009 (office) | 417-380-3352 (cell), [cscott@springfieldmo.gov](mailto:cscott@springfieldmo.gov)