

Springfield Illinois City Council & Committee of the Whole

Basic Facts

- The Springfield, IL City Council meets twice a month at 5:30pm on Tuesdays. Meeting dates at <http://www.springfield.il.us/Calendar.aspx>
- Meetings are held on the third floor Council Chambers at Municipal Center West 300 S. Seventh Street Springfield, IL 62701.
- At the second City Council meeting of the month, the Zoning Agenda is considered and voted on.
- The Committee of the Whole (COW) meets twice a month at 5:30pm on Tuesdays.
- The Committee of the Whole consists of all members on the Council except the Mayor. The Committee of the Whole debate issues in detail and refines ordinances before they are sent to the Council for final passage. The Mayor usually attends to listen and to answer any questions but does not vote.
- On months when there is a fifth Tuesday, the council does not meet on that day.

Citizen Rights

- Except for zoning matters and emergency ordinances, all requests by members of the public to address the Council during the Council's consideration of "Ordinances and resolutions - final action," shall be made to the Clerk in writing with the subject matter stated, not less than one (1) working day before the next scheduled Council meeting.
- Any other comments by the public pertaining to City business shall be made during the Council's Order of Business under "Public forum addressing City business."
- Persons addressing the Council shall limit their statements to five minutes unless further time is granted by the presiding officer.
- Each person addressing the Council is called to step up to the microphone, gives his or her name and address for the record, and, unless further time is granted by the presiding officer, limits his or her address to five minutes. Remarks are addressed to the Council as a whole. No questions may be asked the Council members, except through the presiding officer.
- Any person making personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous while addressing the Council may be requested to leave. A person who does not obey the request of the presiding officer to cease may be expelled.
- Interested persons, or their authorized representatives, may address the Council under the Order of Business entitled "Public forum addressing City business," for the reading of protests, petitions, or communications relating to any matter over which the Council has control if a majority of the Council members present agrees.
- Interested parties, or their authorized representatives, may address the Council by written communication with regard to any matter concerning City business or over which the Council has control, or by addressing the Clerk, who shall distribute the written communication to Council members.

City Council - Order of Business

1. Pledge to the flag
2. Call to order - roll call
3. Approval of financial report (once a month)
4. Approval of the minutes
5. Incorporation of first reading of ordinances and resolutions and reading of consent agenda into the record
6. Removal of ordinances and resolutions from consent agenda
7. Consent agenda - final action
8. Debate agenda - final action
9. Ordinances and resolutions - emergency passage
10. Other business
11. Public forum addressing City business
12. Adjournment

Springfield City Ordinances

Except for emergency passage, passage of an ordinance or amendment to an existing ordinance requires at least three weeks.

1st week: City Council - First Reading for ordinance

- All new ordinances are read into public record by the City Clerk before the meeting, starting at 5pm.
- The ordinance number designates the year the ordinance was first read and then the sequential number as ordinances are introduced during that year. 2016-001 is the first ordinance introduced in 2016.
- The printed agenda for the City Council meeting, with a summary of all ordinances, is available inside the west door on the pillar. Get there early to get a copy - or download from <http://www.springfieldcityclerk.com/Government/HowTheyVoted.aspx>
If the agenda changes at the last minute, the online version may not match the actual agenda.
- The ordinance sponsor, which could be the Mayor or one or more Aldermen, is noted on the agenda.
- No action is taken at this point.
- If you are interested in an ordinance, plan to attend the Committee of the Whole the following Tuesday for the discussion and the following Council meeting where it will be on the agenda for final passage.
- You may watch the Council on Channel 18 live at:
<http://www.springfieldcityclerk.com/Government/OnlineCouncilMeeting.aspx>

2nd week: Committee of the Whole – Debate and Final Action / Committee

- Aldermen rotate the duties of presiding officer.
- During the Committee meeting, each new ordinance listed within the section titled **Ordinances for Committee Consideration**.
- Aldermen use Roberts Rules to move and second assignment of each ordinance to either the Consent or Debate agenda for next week.
- Between second and voting, Aldermen have the opportunity to gather additional information from a variety of sources: city officials, Corporation Counsel (the City's chief attorney), experts, interested parties or their attorneys or representatives, or citizens.
- A successful voice vote moves a new ordinance to the consent or debate agenda for final action at the next Council meeting.

- If not moved, seconded and voted on successfully, an ordinance is tabled and left in Committee. Ordinances in Committee can be called for a vote in the future to be put on the City Council Agenda. There is a 180 day limit for such an ordinance to remain in committee, unless the Committee votes to retain the ordinance in committee.
- Citizens wanting to speak to the Committee can sign up with the City Clerk one hour before, although the Committee may hear from citizens who are not signed up. Find more information under **Citizen's Rights** on page 1.

3rd week: City Council - Final Passage

- Ordinances on the Consent Agenda are voted on as one item without discussion.
- Aldermen may pull an item from the Consent Agenda to the Debate Agenda with a move, second and majority vote.
- Each ordinance on the Debate Agenda is read. With a move and second, there can be discussion and Aldermen may question city officials or other experts or interested parties or their attorneys or representatives and hear from the public.
- A simple majority vote passes the ordinance. If there is a tie, the Mayor may vote to break it. The mayor votes for ties, but doesn't always vote otherwise. The Mayor can vote to be on record; if so, the vote can be 11-0.
- Ordinances passed by City Council are then sent to be signed by the Mayor. The Mayor may sign all or part of an ordinance, or he or she may veto the ordinance.
- If the Mayor vetoes an ordinance, it takes a supermajority to override the veto.
- People wanting to speak to the Council must sign up with the City Clerk 24 hours in advance of the Council meeting. Find more information under **Citizen's Rights** on page 1.

Council Rules and Procedures

City Council rules are based on three documents:

1. The organization of City administration is set forth in the ordinance establishing the Mayor/Aldermanic form of government for the City of Springfield based on the 1987 Consent Decree:
https://www2.municode.com/library/il/springfield/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TITIIIAD_CH30GEPR
2. That ordinance provides that the Council determines its own rules of procedure for meetings. These rules are published at
<http://www.springfieldcityclerk.com/Government/RulesAndProcedures.aspx>
3. On all points of order not herein specifically provided for by these Rules, Robert's Rules of Order is used.

We encourage you to look up the latest version of all three sets of rules. However, we excerpt several here (current as of May 10, 2016) that you may find helpful.

- **Emergency Passage** allows an ordinance to be voted immediately for final passage during a City Council meeting. Aldermen vote *to consider whether to take a vote* for Emergency Passage by a simple majority. If they vote to consider emergency passage, then an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) majority (8 votes) of the members of the Council is required for the final passage of an emergency ordinance. The Mayor votes in instances where an extraordinary majority is required to adopt the ordinance, resolution, or motion. If an ordinance on Emergency Passage doesn't receive the

required super majority, which is 8 votes out of 10, then it is assigned to consent or debate agenda for next City Council meeting.

- **4.4 Points of Order.**

The presiding officer shall determine all points of order, subject to the right of any member to appeal to the Council. If any appeal is taken, the question shall be, "Shall the decision of the Presiding Officer be sustained?" If at least two-thirds (2/3) majority (8 votes) of the council members then holding office vote in favor of the appeal, then the decision of the presiding officer is overridden.

- **6.14 Requirement for Removing Ordinance from Table.**

In the event a proposed ordinance or resolution is tabled by the Committee of the Whole, a two-thirds vote of the Council shall be necessary to remove it from the table for consideration.

- **Suspension of Rules.**

Any provision of these Rules not governed by City ordinance may be temporarily suspended by a two-third (2/3) majority vote (8 votes) of the members of the Council then holding office.

Pursuant to Section 4-6 of the Ordinance providing for the Mayor/Aldermanic Form of Government for the City of Springfield (Section 31.11 of the City Code of Ordinances - http://library.municode.com/HTML/12414/level3/TITIIIAD_CH31LECODIEL_ARTILE.html#TITIIIAD_CH31LECODIEL_ARTILE_S31.11VOORREBEREWR) the Mayor shall vote in those instances where an extraordinary majority is required to adopt an ordinance, resolution, or motion.

The vote on any such suspension shall be taken by ayes and nays and entered upon the record.

The Rules and Order of Business shall not be suspended unless for a stated and specific purpose, and no other business shall be in order except the business for which the Rules were suspended.

After disposing of the business for which the Rules were suspended, the Rules and regular Order of Business of the Council shall then be in force.

- **(9.2) Amendment of the Rules**

These Rules may be amended, or new Rules adopted, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority votes (8 votes) of the members of the Council then holding office, provided that the proposed amendments or new Rules have been introduced into the record at a prior Council meeting.