

**Columbia City Council
Pre-Council Meeting Minutes – March 21, 2011
Conference Rooms 1A and B – City Hall
Columbia, Missouri**

Council members present: Mayor Bob McDavid, Paul Sturtz, Jason Thornhill, Gary Kesphol, Daryl Dudley, Laura Nauser, Barbara Hoppe

Absent: None

Mayor McDavid called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Responsive Government Initiative – Municipal Court

The Hon. Bob Aulgur provided an overview of the Court's functions, challenges and efforts to serve the public more efficiently. Customer service and cost-saving initiatives include: reducing the use of paper forms; scheduling a daily jail docket so that prisoner fees are reduced; and using more pre-trial conferences for settlements and reducing the time Police officers spend in court. When the Court's data system software is updated, it will allow use of electronic signatures. Judge Aulgur suggested outdoor signage for the Howard Building to indicate that Court is located there.

Supporting document: Municipal Court home page <http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Court/>

Building Codes

Interim City Manager Paula Hertwig Hopkins noted that Council would have three options to consider during the Council meeting: a compromise measure; a "housekeeping" proposal; and a proposal to essentially keep the code as is until interested parties reach more agreement, which staff recommends. Environment and Energy Commission member Dan Goldstein said that the compromise version was recommended to Council, addressed some of the concerns of the Building Construction Codes Commission but did not include the more controversial items. Mayor McDavid said that he would introduce and invite debate on the compromise measure at the Council meeting.

Stormwater

The Interim City Manager said that an item in the last Current Events packet outlined the schedule leading up to an August vote to create a stormwater utility. She proposed an April 13 work session on the topic, with an agenda item to be introduced on May 2 and the authorized ballot language submitted by May 24.

Dates to Remember

- April 11 – special meeting at 6 p.m. to swear in new Ward 1 and 5 Council members and express appreciation to retiring members
- April 13 – New Council member orientation; stormwater ballot issue briefing; budget calendar
- May 14 – Potential date for Council's "mini-retreat," starting at 8:30 a.m. – Councilman Thornhill noted his conflict on that day

Responsive Government Initiative – Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS)

ONS Director Leigh Britt described efficiency improvements, including: focus on specific geographic areas rather than many areas, all at once; using duplicate forms so that a copy of findings can be left with property owners; approval of a new, more general position description to cross-train employees in all aspects of their work; a central database to collect and report information; an on-site notary. Future work includes a pilot customer service improvement program; greater use of volunteers; electronic registration for inspections; a proposal for new office space.

Supporting document: "Responsive Government Initiative – Office of Neighborhood Services – March 21, 2011

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Toni Messina, Director, Public Communications

Responsive Governance Initiative

Office of Neighborhood Services

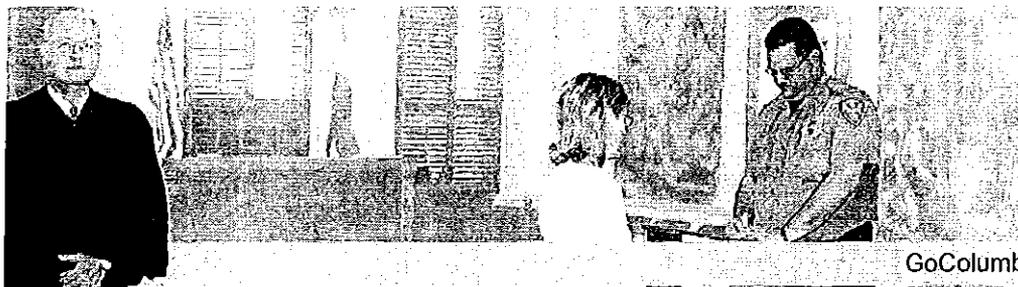
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Activities in place:

- Administrative staff handling setting appointments, preparing invoices, and sending notices in violation instead of by building inspectors.
- Reminder calls for rental inspections to decrease no-shows.
- Geographic assignments of rental inspections to decrease travel time and expense.
- Sharing information to property owners about common code violations to decrease the need for re-inspections.
- Duplicate inspection forms where violations can be hand-written in cases where a small number of violations are identified. One copy is left with the landlord to begin corrections immediately.
- Working to decrease the backlog of rental inspections with a goal of 60 inspections per week for rental inspectors. Backlog had decreased by more than 250 inspections in the last six months.
- Duplicate forms are being used to identify car violations and decrease administrative tasks. The forms allow onsite posting and reduced the number of return trips to a property.
- Job position of Code Enforcement Specialist has been added so that future staff can enforce both property maintenance and health code violations.
- All complaints are logged and maintained in the H.T.E. database. This is a central location to record cases handled by ONS staff.
- Customer service surveys are being started to gain feedback from rental property owners and tenant who file complaints with our office.
- Online volunteer registration for some events is automatically downloaded into a spreadsheet to reduce data entry.
- Volunteers are used to help with a variety of administrative tasks and help with special projects as needed and appropriate. A volunteer has assisted in sorting old rental files for historical reference and also scanning these in for reference in OptiView.

Opportunities for improvement:

- Use of H.T.E. or other software package to improve the efficiency of the rental program.
- Use of a checklist by inspectors to increase efficiency and consistency in rental inspections and simplify the sending of notices of violation.
- Use of e-mail and other electronic communication to set and confirm rental appointments and communicate violations to reduce printing and postage expenses.
- New office location for ONS to improve the working environment for employees and also be more central to our service area and closer to City Hall.
- Purchase of a scanner to access documents via OptiView and also improve the use of our volunteers.



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Municipal Court

600 East Broadway
Columbia, MO 65201
Voice: 573-874-7230
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The Municipal Court for the City of Columbia is a division of the Circuit Court Boone County, 13th Judicial Circuit. Cases in Municipal Court involve alleged violations of City of Columbia laws. If you have received a ticket/summons for a municipal ordinance violation, you have certain rights and responsibilities.

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Municipal Court

for the city of Columbia is a division of
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