

MISSOURI

PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU

Warren County
Record
Warrenton, MO
Circ. 2856
From Page:
5A
4/14/2011
19843



Director, and Police Chief Greg Houdayshell.

Sign to Be Posted Stating if Meetings Are Open or Closed

By Tim Schmidt
Record Editor

The city of Warrenton has implemented a new procedure in helping visitors determine whether a meeting is open or closed to the public.

A sign will be posted in the city hall lobby stating whether the board of aldermen is in an open or closed session beginning with the next meeting on April 19.

This comes after confusion from the previous meeting on April 5 led to a brief exchange between two citizens who said they weren't allowed into the earlier work session that was held prior to the regular board of aldermen meeting.

"That way there is no guesswork," said Terri Thorn, director of operations/finance officer.

The earlier meeting was, in fact, a Ways and Means committee meeting to begin the process in preparing the 2011-2012 budget. Along with board members and city employees, the meeting also was attended

by a newspaper reporter.

Thorn said the men were mistakenly told they could not enter the meeting chambers. She noted that the police officer on duty was working security in the lobby for the first time. He had just been hired last month.

The city, Thorn said, hadn't done a good job of training employees related to the meeting procedures.

Under the Missouri Sunshine Law — the state's open records and meeting law — a board can only close a meeting to the public to discuss items related to real estate, personnel or litigation.

Meeting agendas must be posted at least 24 hours in advance, unless an emergency situation arises.

The city posts its various meeting agendas in the city hall lobby. An agenda for a board of aldermen meeting is normally posted the Friday before a Tuesday meeting and can be viewed online at the city's Web site (www.warrenton-mo.org).