



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, January 5, 2021

5:30 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

PUBLIC HEARING AT 5:25 P.M.

Michele Allgood with Mitchell & Williams, Bond Counsel for Nice-Pak, said, we are here to present to the city the request for the issuance of up to \$65 million worth of bonds that would permit the city to grant tax abatement to Nice-Pak in connection with the expansion of their facility. This does not create any financial obligation on behalf of the city. It is standard operating procedure and consistent with other incentives that have been offered to other companies. I will be happy to answer any questions and I believe we have representatives from Nice-Pak available if you would like to hear from them. Mayor Harold Copenhaver asked, do we have any questions from council? If no one else wants to speak to this, then we will adjourn and we will move forward to the council meeting in the next few minutes. Councilmember Chris Moore asked, Mr. Mayor, will you give a minute for public comments please? Mayor Copenhaver said, absolutely. City Clerk April Leggett put a minute on the clock and then after the time elapse, notified everyone in the meeting that the time was up. Mayor Copenhaver said, with no further comments, no one else would like to speak to this, we will adjourn the public hearing and we will address city council in the next minute. Thank you.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR HAROLD COPENHAVER AT 5:30 P.M.

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, just a reminder if all councilmembers would mute their mics until you would like to speak, that would be wonderful and I would also like the opportunity to ask you if you would like to speak, if you would raise your hand so one of us can recognize you that way you would have the floor and that way we are not over-speaking with each other. Thank you so much. I would like to call to order now to the full City Council meeting on January 5, 2021. We will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the invocation given by Councilmember Bobby Long.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, well, council and city, I would like to say first of all, thank you for the opportunity to be sitting here. I am truly honored and humbled and we will do the best work we can for this community. I am excited about the opportunity in working with the individuals of this city that have been here for years. Their experience, their knowledge, we will learn from that and then including new individuals from our community to move it forward is very exciting as well. So, I am looking forward to with working with all of the councilmembers. We have a new councilmember joining us this evening and I am excited about that as well, Mr. Emison and congratulations and our City Clerk as well on your new office so I am looking forward to your experience and working with you. I would also like to say thank you to our Council Pro-Temp. He has done an exemplary job, Chris Moore, in leading our city as we went through difficult times and to Councilmember Moore, I thank you very much. It has been an honor to watch you and it is going to be more of an honor working with you. Thank you very much. Councilmember Chris Moore said, thank you Mr. Mayor.

3. ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

Mayor Harold Copenhaver was in attendance.

Present 12 - Ann Williams; Charles Frierson; Chris Moore; John Street; Mitch Johnson; Chris Gibson; Charles Coleman; Bobby Long; Joe Hafner; David McClain; LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, we have no Special Presentations for today.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, several items have been previously removed from that agenda. Does anyone else wish to remove another item? I hear none. Do we have a motion to adopt? Councilmember Chris Moore motioned, seconded by Councilmember Bobby Long to adopt the consent agenda. All voted aye.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Bobby Long, to Approve the Consent Agenda. The motioned PASSED

Aye: 12 - Ann Williams; Charles Frierson; Chris Moore; John Street; Mitch Johnson; Chris Gibson; Charles Coleman; Bobby Long; Joe Hafner; David McClain; LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

[MIN-20:119](#)

MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON DECEMBER 15, 2020

Attachments: [CC Minutes 12152020](#)

This item was passed on the consent agenda.

[RES-20:246](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXTENDING THE AGREEMENT WITH SC REALTY SERVICES, Inc., DBA SG360, FOR THE PURPOSE OF JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Attachments: [Agreement, SC Realty Janitorial Services - Municipal Center 2021](#)

This item was passed on the consent agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-001-2021

[RES-20:247](#)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE 2021 OUTDOOR RECREATION MATCHING GRANT AWARD FROM THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, HERITAGE AND TOURISM

Attachments: [Union St Park Grant Award](#)

This item was passed on the consent agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-002-2021

RESOLUTIONS NOT ON THE CONSENT AGENDA**[RES-20:249](#)**

A RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO AMEND THE APPROVED 2020 CDBG ACTION PLAN.

Attachments: [Corrected notice for new 2020 allocation](#)
[HUD Approval, CV3 CDBG](#)
[2020 CDBG Action Plan, Revised December 2020](#)

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, the only thing that I wanted to comment on this was when I was reading the letter that was attached before Finance last week, the October 22, 2020 letter, one of the things that I would like more information on and I emailed Ms. Burkett about this, in the letter it says, "based on your jurisdiction, CDBG allocation for this year, you also have \$3,081,285 in available Section 108 borrowing authority. Since Section 108 loans are federally guaranteed, this program can leverage your jurisdiction's existing CDBG funding to access low-interest, long-term financing to invest in Opportunity Zones or other target areas in your jurisdiction." I wasn't aware of that program and I would just simply like more information on what the Section 108 loans entail and what sort of projects can be financed in the opportunity zones or other target areas just for future reference. I think it would be good to know. Mayor Harold Copenhaver asked, is Regina available? Councilmember Hafner said, I don't need to know tonight. Mayor Copenhaver said, okay. Councilmember Hafner said, maybe at a Finance meeting or something. Councilmember Chris Gibson said, I think that would be beneficial for the entire council if we could do some sort of special presentation. Councilmember Hafner said, we can go ahead and vote on it tonight. I am saying at a future council meeting, just maybe have a brief presentation of what the Section 108 loans are. I am not be any means saying that we need to go out and borrow \$3 million, but I would like to just know what sort of projects can be done and what the requirements of the loan and the payback and stuff like that just for future reference as far as education. Community Development Director Regina Burkett said, I am investigating that right now. The only city in the state that I know of that has used this before was the City of Little Rock and it has been about eight or nine years ago. There is a young man there that I have a conference call with later this week to see exactly how they use that funding. They built homes into low and moderate income areas is what they did with it. So, I am investigating that now. I have made several phones calls and I haven't gotten the answers I want, but hopefully, I will receive those next week and I will be able to report something to you all next Tuesday at the Finance meeting. Councilmember Hafner said, or you can wait until the next council meeting and present something then. Ms. Burkett said, okay. I can wait until the next council meeting. We have never used that. I talked to our HUD representative today. I have talked to her twice about it. She said there is not that many people in the state that has used it. I am working, like I said, with someone from Little Rock and also with someone from the Municipal League to see how we can use it because I think there may be a way that maybe it might benefit us so let me check with that and get back with everyone. Councilmember Hafner said, alright. Thank you for checking on that Regina. That is all I had. Mayor Copenhaver said, Councilmember Hafner, thank you for bringing that to our attention. Councilmember Bobby Long said, while we are waiting for that timer to go off, I can't remember Councilmember Hafner, but I was thinking that we had about three Opportunity Zones in Jonesboro. Am I correct on that? Councilmember Hafner said, I am not sure on the exact number right off hand Councilmember Long, but I know between Opportunity Zones and low to moderate income areas, I think we have plenty of space that we could maybe do something if the opportunity presents itself and it's a good program. Councilmember Long said, oh I agree. Councilmember Hafner

said, that is one reason why I wanted to look at it. Ms. Burkett said, we do have three Opportunity Zones in the city, yes. Councilmember Long said, okay. Maybe when we have that presentation, if we could have a map showing where those are located. Ms. Burkett said, oh, yes, I think we already have one. I'll just find out. Councilmember Long said, okay.

A motion was made by Councilperson John Street, seconded by Councilperson Charles Frierson, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Ann Williams; Charles Frierson; Chris Moore; John Street; Mitch Johnson; Chris Gibson; Charles Coleman; Bobby Long; Joe Hafner; David McClain; LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Enactment No: R-EN-003-2021

[RES-20:250](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO AMEND THE CITY SALARY AND ADMINISTRATION POLICY BY INCLUDING UPDATED JOB TITLES AND GRADES

Attachments: [2019 Pay Grades and Titles by Grade](#)
 [Proposed 2021 Pay Grades and Titles by Grade](#)

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, before we go into further conversation, I would like to make a little short statement here and bear with me. I am excited about this opportunity and moving forward with the city and discussing our budget this evening as has been discussed in previous meetings with the Finance Committee. I am excited about this opportunity. I believe that if we work together and focus on progress as a team, we are going to accomplish some great things. I thank Mayor Harold Perrin and his entire staff and the department directors for working diligently for months on this budget. I am also thankful for Harold, Steve Purtee, and Councilmember Hafner and multiple members of the staff for backgrounds of some of these line items and their importance and for allowing input in a few areas. I am excited that it is a balanced operations budget and we feel that there are some very beneficial capital improvement projects in the work. I have been discussing in the previous budget workshop meetings the last several weeks with Finance Committee Meetings, there are a couple of adjustments that we feel would greatly improve our ability to serve the citizens of Jonesboro. Throughout my campaign and during the transition meetings, I and I suspect several of you have heard that we need to adjust with the times and the growing needs of our city of almost 80,000 people. That we as a city need to be more proactive, increase transparency, and work on bringing this community obviously together. What we propose with this 2021 budget is to bring back some of the role of Chief Operations Officer and redefine the current position of Chief of Staff as the Chief Administrative Officer. Part of this redefining will be the salary reduction to help offset the Chief Operations Officer salary. Over the next couple of months, the exact division of duties between these two positions are open to be adjusted to make sure that we are getting the most productivity possible. In addition to working with multiple city departments, the CAO position will be tasked with representing the city at various non-profit meetings, helping police and fire with needed and projects to increase the public/private partnership projects. Focusing on projects to increase community involvement and being designated contact citizen groups looking to do their part to improve Jonesboro. As I said earlier, it is vital to the future of our city that we have a proactive, transparent, and accessible administration. We need to follow up on projects. We need to make sure that we finish things we start and we need to make sure we do everything in our power to bring this community together. And, that is what I am asking to prioritize starting with the approval of this administration realignment.

And, before anyone else would like to make an address here, I would like Communications Director Bill Campbell who would like to make a few comments on this subject and I would like to invite Bill to speak.

Communications Director Bill Campbell said, hi everyone. It is nice to see you on zoom. It is kind of funny up there. It's cool and Brian thank you for joining us. I appreciate the oversight. I am just saying that you guys have done a great job of overseeing the administration the five years that I have been here. I have grown to admire you and your concern for the city and the way that you support and enhance, I guess, the administration as you do it. I do want to speak on this subject because we talk about so many departments and Mayor Perrin was so good at managing a budget. He didn't always tell you some of the things that he felt and some of the things that we saw from the 4th floor. One of those is that we talked about staffing in some departments, but most of the city as it has grown has left departments a little bit understaffed. I am not here to complain about that. We don't mind doing the work. You have got great departmental leaders and it has been fun for me to watch and just to an aside, I want to mention the six months where Mayor Perrin has kind of been in and out and more in than out, but not always here. The team has still worked as a team and it has been impressive for me to watch these directors and department heads work as they have. But, he would discuss sometimes the lack of people that we have to address various issues and sometimes that started at the 4th floor. The Chief of Staff position was created, in fact, with the idea of trying to, as we used to say, do more with less. And, until somebody said, what a minute, you can't do more with less and everybody said oh, no. That position was created to attempt to diminish the bottleneck of people with their needs. You couldn't do a better job than Mike Downing has done with it, but no single person could do everything that is needed. Some of you may have noticed that sometimes my role goes beyond a traditional communications director. I don't mind that. I love to help people. My idea of helping is helping the little old lady who doesn't have heat when it is 12 degrees outside and trying to find her landlord and trying to get somebody. Those little things like that. When I arrived in Jonesboro five years ago, one of the first things I heard was that we desperately need a homeless shelter. We do. We still desperately need a homeless shelter and one thing that I have learned is that it is not because nobody wants one. We have got people. It is not because we do not have resources. We have got different people with different resources. We have had opportunities to have a homeless shelter, but we didn't have anybody in place to own a project that big and to organize all of the people and the moving parts of it. We didn't do everything in the right order. There are many ways to fail to get a homeless shelter, but there are precious few ways to do it and get it right and get it done and get it approved. We have to have someone who can handle major projects and not be caught up in the daily grind and it is a daily grind. I love it, because if you go home feeling that you did something good for somebody, it is a worthwhile grind and you guys know that. The Veteran's Village that was completed is a success. It is a big success because it is beautiful and because of the dedication the people put into it. But, I want you to know that it took two mayors, two grants directors, two ADEC directors, and a lot of people who were stuck in an elevator for two hours with me in Kansas City who helped get this thing rolling, figuring out what we needed and finding the resources to get it done. The grants directors worked overtime to make this happen. You don't do this in a regular day. We have a sports shooting range on tap. And, sometimes, the lead is taken up by the Police Chief. He is not working on that while he is running the Police Department. He is doing that in his free time. That is well and good and it is appreciated, because these are people, like I say, who love the city. But, imagine what we could do if we could have somebody to help make sure that we have every duck lined up. Ducks don't like to line up by themselves. We can get that done whether it is this, whether it is the downtown to ASU connector. So many

things that I have seen through the years, there is no good feeling when you have to let something go, a phone call that you don't return or you put it off a day or you put it off another day or you put it off another day and you will find yourself prioritizing not issues, but people. We manage. We have 22 directors and I know the Business 101 model of always have a certain number of people that somebody manages, but we are not just a business. We are an institution. And, institutions have to have needs that businesses do not. They have to have people who make connections, who put things together, who organize, who hand off to non-profits and put all of the pieces together. I have seen our grants department throttled this year. It is unbelievable what they have done. And, when I bring up the grants department that is not to omit the IT department. It is not to omit the police and the fire and E911 and Finance. It is remarkable. As a guy who came to city government as an outsider, I have high praise for these people. It is throughout through the 3rd floor, through the departments that are outside of the municipal center. And, so, what I am saying is we need somebody that we can get more than we pay for when we get this person, when we get a position, when we get a CAO. And, I don't want to be talking about how bad we need a homeless shelter five years from now and that is just an example. So, I will leave it at that. Thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Mr. Campbell.

Councilmember Dr. Charles Coleman said, I am always going to speak to address issues on the north side and I really hate to use the term the north side, but it is just to the point that most of the people I talk with even today feel that even with the hard work that Harold Perrin put into it, but they still feel they are left out on things, needing somebody. As a matter of fact, it has been almost driving me up the wall. I am going out personally on my time to talk to banks, to talk to food services, trying to do something on the north side of Highway 141, anywhere on the north side of town. And, it is really aggravating that I have to spend that time maybe doing some other things and I know I think about our city, but I live on this side of town. I see it daily. A lot of people who don't live on this side don't understand some of the things that we need, just small things. And you have heard me say this once before, like going to the lumber company, picking up plumbing supplies and these type of things. It is really tedious, but when you have it in your backdoor, you don't have a problem with it. You can go around the corner or at least a mile from where you stay. Well, when we try to find things over here, we need somebody who is going to be able to, maybe I shouldn't try to address every issue. But, somebody can do that legwork and I am being very personal that I have done since I have talked with these people, a lot of them have given me great consideration. Some of the bank people have given me great consideration for talking with them. Some of the other industry people have given me great consideration. You can talk all you want to, but if you don't have somebody behind you, somebody there pushing you, and so, I have no problem, you know, promoting this particular resolution for what we are trying to do. And, I am sure that people are kind of tired of hearing me talk about it, but as long as I am on this council and even if I am not on this council, I am going to be talking until they do something more convenient. Back to something that Bill said, you know, we do need a homeless shelter. We need a whole lot of things and we need somebody that is going to be able to put it to a test. How many times as a city council as a whole tried to find out information of jobs that have been completed or have not been completed? You know, with long conversations and it is not done so. Basically speaking, you know, I guess my statement would be that I would like to promote this issue of RES-20:250 and move on. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember Coleman.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, Mr. Mayor, just as a point of order, we are currently having discussion on an item that has not had a motion and a second and so we kind of got the cart a little bit before so we need a motion and a second to adopt and then

we will have discussion on the item. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember.

Councilmember Coleman said, I am going to make a motion for this to be. (The sound cut off during his motion.) Councilmember Mitch Johnson said, I will second that. (You could barely hear part of Councilmember Johnson's motion.) Councilmember Moore said, I will second that. I will second Dr. Coleman's motion. City Clerk April Leggett said, Dr. Coleman cut out and I didn't hear that motion. Dr. Coleman said, yeah, I made a motion that this resolution be adopted. Ms. Leggett said, okay, thank you. Councilmember Moore said, and I will second Mr. Mayor.

Councilmember LJ Bryant said, thank you Mayor. I will just make a couple of points. I will save the motion for my points for the budget. I will try to be germane to what we are discussing here as it relates to positions. So, just a few points as it relates to positions. I know, I think at an earlier meeting, we discussed we were going to leave a grants position open. To me, that doesn't make sense. It seems like it would be more important to fill that position than to create an additional positions and just as it relates to positions, I mean I am a bit of a broken record, but I will make a point to full council that with an increase in positions by 66% and so I have got major concerns that relates to positions and specifically in our budget supplement we had, there is really a good summary. We had a nice summary on, I guess, it was page 24 of the supplement of positions that were asked for by other departments. So, whether it was police or fire or IT or 911 or parks or sanitation, there were a lot of other requests by other departments. And, kind of a final point or two that I would make and I think I said this last week. Reed Hasting, the CEO of Netflix, often said something along the lines of a programmer that costs a little bit more can be 100 times more valuable so I think the role of Chief of Staff at the higher salary sometimes, you know, can be tremendous and I think we can create too much bureaucracy at the top because it seems to me from a position standpoint, that we want as many people in the field producing work as possible. But, I will conclude my comments for now. Thank you Mr. Mayor. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember Bryant, I appreciate your comments.

Councilmember Bobby Long said, thank you Mayor. I appreciate the comments that everybody had and I also appreciate LJ's views on those. You know, when I started looking through the budget and looked at them harder, I noticed that when I started counting all of these up, the majority of our departments, when you start looking at director roles, manager, and supervisor roles, there is a total of 34 that oversee 153 unsupervisory roles. And, as you know from being in the banking industry and also just in private industry, many of these departments, if you have got a good director over them, take little to no oversight. For instances, Communications, Bill Campbell has got two people he is a director of. Finance has a 3 to 5 ratio, three managers, supervisors, or those in director roles or managerial roles over five people. Some of them are one to one. So, I think when you start looking at an institution versus the difference between a private business or even a home and an institution, everything that you mentioned, private industry has to do on a day-to-day basis. They also have to live within their means. They have to work a lot of times on very shoestring types of staffing. So, these are not just issues that are specific to institutions. So, I would have to agree with Councilmember Bryant on these. You know, a lot of the things that even Mr. Campbell mentioned about taking the phone calls from the lady, those are not roles that the CAO, I think, would undertake. It seems to me though that the Chiefs and the Mayor should have supervision. The directors then should make it happen and then the chiefs to supply the needs and should supply the tools and equipment and resources needed to do the job. And, then let the directors that we hire go out and do

those with the people that we give them to do it with. And, you know, when we start talking about people on the ground, I mean, right now, we need firefighters. We need police officers. We need IT. We need people in grants. So, it seems to me that would be a better use of the money and hire good people to do those work instead of hiring another level of high dollar administration. Instead, I think it would be better use and utilized to hire good people that do those jobs that way. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember Long, I appreciate your comments very much.

Councilmember Charles Frierson said, the organization and operation of the city is not something for the council to be involved in and that is exactly what is being talked about right now. That organization is led by state law up to the administration and the Mayor. The council only does two things. One is budget, financial, but not organization and the other is to maintain city properties. We are trying to get far beyond that when we talk about we will take it from this and that and the other in the organization. That is the Mayor's job. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember, I appreciate your comments as well.

Mr. Campbell read an email received from Iris Stevens, 2714 Turtle Creek. "I am very concerned about this particular Jonesboro city budget. Mayor Copenhaver is apparently asking for \$100,000 to fund a new position which he admits he might not need (reported in the Sun) but wants the money for. Secondly, I see no provision for a new fire station in one of the underserved areas that we really need. I've been told that in two years we have an ISO audit and if we are lacking in at least one fire station we could face the consequences of having our rating go down which would impact our insurance rates. I am very concerned when this audit happens and we are in a serious situation, the city would declare an emergency and ask for a tax increase. This should not happen. We have adequate time now to plan for any additional fire station without it becoming an emergency. We have had very little time to be able to study this budget and it would be best if passing it were delayed so that everyone's questions could be answered. It also looks like we are into deficit budgeting, something that is never wise. Also, since in person attendance at the meeting is not allowed, and there is a problem with the tech allowing residents to ask questions, I would like to ask that this budget vote be delayed until such problems are corrected." Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Mr. Campbell and thank you Ms. Stevens for addressing in question.

A motion was made by Councilperson Charles Coleman, seconded by Councilperson Chris Moore, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 9 - Ann Williams;Charles Frierson;Chris Moore;John Street;Mitch Johnson;Charles Coleman;Joe Hafner;David McClain and Brian Emison

Nay: 3 - Chris Gibson;Bobby Long and LJ Bryant

Enactment No: R-EN-004-2021

[RES-20:244](#)

A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF A BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, FOR THE TWELVE (12) MONTHS BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2021 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2021, APPROPRIATING MONEY FOR EACH ITEM OF EXPENDITURE THEREIN PROVIDED FOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Attachments: [2021 Budget](#)
[PLack email 12292020](#)
[Downing email response 12292020](#)
[PLack email 01032021](#)
[HWeinstock email 01042021](#)
[PLack email 01052021](#)
[PLack email 2 01052021](#)
[IStevens email 01052021](#)

Councilmember LJ Bryant said, I pretty much made several comments on the other so I will try not to be repetitive and just focus kind of on the budget piece. On the budget piece earlier, I talked about the request of course for positions that we were not able to fund that was in our red binder whenever we had our budget working session. But, in addition to the positions, there was a wide array of other capital improvement projects, other positions to fund, cost of living increases, all of those sort of things, so I kind of come back and focus more on the budgetary side than actually the positions. But, that there is a 33% increase in salaries and a 66% increase to positions and things seem to be going well at the city, you know, late in the year and while the city has grown by about 28%, 26% I think it was since about 2005 if we were to pass this budget, it is a 26% increase in the size of the Mayor's Office so I think we are best spent to have our money out in the field in police and fire and 911 and so, for all of those reasons and those previously mentioned, I have concerns about the budget. Thank you Mr. Mayor. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember Bryant. I appreciate your comments.

Councilmember Bobby Long said, when I was looking at the budget, I noticed that on the shooting range, there was mention of FTE's and also, in the conversation you had said of course, the creation of a fire station is a main concern of yours. I would like to hear your thoughts on how we are going to open up a shooting range this year, or part of it without anybody assigned to it and also, what are your plans for or how do you plan addressing it on the fire station on the ISO rating in two years. From my understanding, it takes two years, one year to build it and one year to staff it and equip it and then it goes live on year three. At the end of year two, we are at an ISO rating and our city is not going to stop growing so the need is going to be that much more increased so what are we going to do in 2021 to prepare for those needs that we are going to need in 2023? Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, well thank you Councilmember Long and I don't mind addressing those at all. Matter of fact, Mr. Purtee would you come to the floor to answer any specifics regarding FTE's and things like that as we move forward. I had a conversation for this year's current budget, Councilmember Long, we have appropriated \$1.3 million for a new fire truck and \$500,000 of that I am very honored to say is a continuing relationship that we have with City Water & Light of Jonesboro, what a great partner we have. So, it is already appropriated in our budget this year for a fire truck where the city will be involved, I believe, for a little over \$750,000. In the process of moving forward with the ISO rating and my background in insurance, I totally understand the importance of that that need and necessity. That is why I see the importance of the CAO role with our community and moving forward for private, public partnerships, creating additional ways we can create revenue. It is going to cost \$3.7 million for a facility, a fire station. We do have land that we can put that facility on that will be at no cost, but we have some other things that we have to move forward to make sure that can happen in the following year. And, then to house twelve firefighters, now we are talking, that would be basically a week, we are looking at \$750,000 from that point on. So, a five-year plan, we are looking at \$6.7 million. Councilmember Long, I agree with you about moving forward. We are going to have to look at ways to increase our revenue in the community and again, it is important about involving

everybody and then when we are talking the shooting range, Chief Elliott, again, is exponentially trying to do outside of his normal hard work, he is working again to try to derive and bring in private/public partnerships and community partners as well going forward. So, again, this is a project that I have inherited as your next mayor. It is one that we need to see fit through the end. We are going to have to see how we can afford to do so. But, it is important and our community be able to finish these projects because that will generate economic return back to our community faster. So, Mr. Long, I am with you on our safety and we strive forward and do whatever and that is why I am enjoying and looking forward to working with you.

Finance Director Steve Purtee said, Councilmember Long, specific to your questions regarding the operation of the shooting complex, obviously, it is still under the construction phase. We do have a deadline and I would probably yield to our Chief Engineer Craig Light regarding that date, but it is my understanding that it is in the late summer, early fall timeframe that the facility needs to be operational to be in consideration of the grant that we received regarding that. You will notice in the budget, relative to that project, \$1.8 million is proposed in capital expenditures to continue that construction. We are also recommending and proposing that \$500,000 of the current budget will carry on over to the new calendar year relative to that project as well to wrap up some of the construction already underway. So, with those two things in mind, we will further progress this project. And, once the operational portion of it is determined, at that point in time, we fully expect to come back with concrete information in relative to its operation to its maintenance costs to the ongoing expenses which will be offset by some sponsorship revenue as well. We will have a complete package of both revenue and expenses for the operation of that facility closer to date being in operation.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, Steve, just to make sure that I am understanding your answer, I know a pro-forma income statement or P&L has been put together regarding the shooting range. But, if I am hearing you correctly, as the year progresses and the opening date becomes more concrete, at that time, you will put together what you expect will be the budget for the rest of 2021 and it will most likely be presented to the Finance Committee and full council as a budget amendment and that will include both the revenue and the necessary employees to run the facility, correct? Mr. Purtee said, that is correct. Councilmember Hafner said, alright, thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember Hafner for bringing that to the attention.

Councilmember Long said, so my understanding is, we know we are going to open in the Fall of 2021. We know that we are going to need employees in the Fall of 2021. We are not sure if we are going to need a CAO position or not, but we want to budget for that position. But, we know we are going to need employees in the fall to run the shooting complex and none of it is in the budget. So, explain to me what is different between the two. Police Chief Rick Elliott said, good evening gentlemen. To kind of clean up some of this, bear in mind this project does fall under the Parks Department and there is part-time money allocated in the Parks Department budget this year to offset these employees to get this facility open. So, as we look forward in moving forward to opening up this facility, hopefully sooner than later, at least on a part-time basis. We are using part-time money through the Parks Department's part-time budget. Now, a little bit progression on the range. As you know Mr. Long, the pistol-rifle section is complete, but the shot curtain, the poles for the shot curtain is up, the shot curtain is here. City Water & Light is to the point of getting close to connecting our electricity and basically, we will be ready to open to the public hopefully this spring instead of this fall. In which, we will start bringing a source of revenue back in to this project which will include a yearly membership fees, daily use fees, and

things like that would offset the employee cost from the Parks Department. So, to answer your question, yes, somewhere down the road, we will be looking at a full-time person or people to manage and run the facility, but as we move closer to getting this facility open as we are required to do under this grant mandate by this fall so we don't become default in that, we are ahead of schedule and we are at the point that we want to get this open, even on a limited basis, the three trap fields, the skeet combo and pistol, rifle, and archery as soon possible as soon as possible. But, again, by using budget, part-time budgeted money through the Parks Department, we can get staffing hired and facilitate that through the spring, summer and fall and then we get ready to go bigger, then we will come back to the council. So, hopefully, that answers some of your questions to you and the public are investing in because it is a big topic amongst the community. I get numerous calls or messages every week about an opening date. The good news is that I think it is going to be sooner rather than later. And, as far as they said about the budget, we do have money in the budget for a couple of the buildings next year to go ahead and get started. This has facilitated enough talk around the country that I have people wanting to schedule trap tournaments already this summer and fall and before it even got open. So, the eyes across the country are on this complex. The enthusiasm in the community and in a multi-state area has grown for shooting sports enthusiasts. So, hopefully we can all get a little bit excited about this and get this thing built out this year and have something that we can be proud of not only in Jonesboro, but this part of the country. Thank you very much. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Chief for your comments.

Councilmember John Street asked, is Chief Miller there or with us on zoom? Mayor Copenhaver said, he is not here. City Clerk April Leggett said, he is on zoom. Councilmember Street said, I just want to preface this and ask a question. I know Chief Miller is not a bashful person and he is a champion of the Fire Department and the needs of the city for our ISO rating and all of us there as we worked hard to achieve that, him included and want to maintain it. But, I would ask if you would allow him a minute or two to set forth the timelines that we are facing with regards to our ISO rating maintenance at a number one. Mayor Copenhaver asked, Chief Miller would you be able to address that please? (There were some technical difficulties so Chief Miller called in.) Councilmember Charles Frierson said, ask him to bring it to us later. Councilmember Street said, my point in that Mayor is that Chief Miller is going to be in front of us if we are facing any kind of a shortfall. I mean in a crunch timeframe. We actually need two fire stations, one in the southwest part of the city and one in the northeast part of the city. And, building the fire stations is not a problem. It is staffing it and equipping it. Mayor Copenhaver said, that is correct. Councilmember Street said, I think we are all committed to maintaining our Class 1 fire rating. Mayor Copenhaver said, and to follow up with that Councilmember, I had that discussion earlier this morning with Chief Miller and the direction of that for Fire Station #8 and Fire Station #9 as well. So, I consent with that, yes sir. We have Kevin Miller on the phone.

Fire Chief Kevin Miller asked, Councilmember Street, what was your question again? I mean, absolutely, you know I am all about doing whatever we can to improve the fire safety for the citizens of Jonesboro. Yes, we had a very good discussion with Mayor Copenhaver today about the future and the needs we are going to need for additional stations. Councilmember Street said, that is correct. Do you have a timeline on what ISO requirements are before we start endangering our ISO rating of one? Chief Miller said, we are looking at about two years. We have about a two year window where we need to start making some type of significant investment towards trying to build a station and add staffing to be able to cover that. We have roughly a two year window. Councilmember Street said, okay. I was giving you a plug Kevin because you are the expert. Chief Miller said, I was listening to it. Sorry I wasn't able to login. I'm sorry

about the technical issues. Now, keep in mind, if and when this station we try to move forward on that, things will run concurrently. I am looking at a one year process. If you say go today and we start actually physically building the building, it is going to take approximately a year to get it done. During that same period, we would also have to hire the people and the equipment so when the station comes open, we be able to staff it, man it, and operate it at that time. So, you are looking at a one year time line to basically get everything operational from the time you say go. Councilmember Street asked, do you have the land already picked? Has ISO pinpointed the locations? Chief Miller said, one of the stations that we are looking at in the Southwest part of town, yes, we have a location. We already own the land. The other Station, we don't own the land yet, that is on what we call the Highway 49 Corridor out past the hospital and we are looking at areas around that area. And, that is something else that we are discussing potential budget aspects of being able to go ahead and buy the land, whether we buy in one year, two years, three years, whatever, but have the land locked up before someone else buys it and develops it, and be able to build on it in the future. Councilmember Street said, thank you Chief. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you Chief and I appreciate you taking time and calling in comments and again, thank you for your open communication this morning as well in bringing me up to date. Chief Miller said, absolutely.

A motion was made by Councilperson John Street, seconded by Councilperson Mitch Johnson, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 10 - Ann Williams;Charles Frierson;Chris Moore;John Street;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Joe Hafner;David McClain and Brian Emison

Nay: 2 - Bobby Long and LJ Bryant

Enactment No: R-EN-005-2021

[RES-20:251](#)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH MCP INVESTMENTS, LLC FOR THE SALE OF PROPERTY

Attachments: [Appraisal, 2.86 acres on Neil Drive, January 2013](#)
[Map, Neil Drive Property](#)
[Contract with MCP Investments to sell property](#)

Councilmember John Street said, Mayor, I would motion that we postpone this temporarily until we can evaluate this a little better. Councilmember Chris Moore said, second. Councilmember Joe Hafner asked, can there be discussion on a motion to temporarily postpone? City Attorney Carol Duncan said, there can on temporaries. Is it a date certain? Councilmember John Street said, one month at our next regularly scheduled council meeting two weeks from now. Councilmember Chris Moore said, postpone temporary, I agree, is not debatable. Ms. Duncan asked, is it to a date certain was my question? Councilmember Moore said, I can hear what you are asking me Carol. Ms. Duncan asked, are they postponing to a date certain? Councilmember Moore said, the motion was to postpone temporary. No date was stated. Ms. Duncan said, I thought postpone temporary required a date. Postpone indefinitely does not require a date. Councilmember Moore said, I don't believe either one, let me look. Ms. Duncan said, you have to know when you are sending it to. Councilmember Moore said, postpone temporary simply states to defer consideration of report or motion until the council chooses to take it up again. Ms. Duncan said, right. Councilmember Moore said, the old form was to lay it on the table. It doesn't require. Ms. Duncan said, for the City Clerk's purpose, I know that for Legistar, we need to know where it goes. I know

that may be under Robert's Rules, but for Legistar, I mean it has got to know what agenda to appear back on. Councilmember Moore said, just as a point, the rule I quoted was from the procedure from the Arkansas Municipal League. Ms. Duncan said, I understand. They follow Robert's Rules. Councilmember Moore said, I would agree with the City Attorney. Councilmember Street said, I don't have a problem amending my motion to state the first meeting in February. Ms. Duncan said, okay. Councilmember Moore said, I will second that. Councilmember Joe Hafner said, if I may make a comment. Councilmember Moore said, it is not debatable. Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, that is correct. It is not debatable. Councilmember Hafner said, okay. I misunderstood what the Clerk just said. Councilmember Moore said, the City Attorney was simply asking a date be appointed to the postpone temporary and Mr. Street changed his and I changed my motion to reflect that and now we have a motion to postpone temporary with a definitive date and that is not debatable. So, I would ask the Mayor to call for the question.

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Moore to postpone temporary until the 1st meeting in February. All voted aye.

A motion was made by Councilperson John Street, seconded by Councilperson Chris Moore, that this matter be Postponed Temporarily . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Ann Williams;Charles Frierson;Chris Moore;John Street;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

6. NEW BUSINESS

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON THIRD READING

[ORD-20:053](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO VACATE AND ABANDON A 15' UTILITY EASEMENT ACROSS PARCEL Number: 01-144154-00910 OWNED BY JONESBORO 2015, LLC; BEING LOCATED WEST OF THE PROSPECT FARMS SUBDIVISION AND EAST OF WOLF MEADOWS SUBDIVISION IN JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AS REQUESTED ON BEHALF OF JONESBORO 2015, LLC

Attachments:

[Notice](#)

[Abandonment concurrence Marshall - Wolf Meadow - Prospect Farms](#)

[Petition Executed\[29203\]](#)

[Jonesboro 2015 parcel](#)

[Utility Letters](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Mitch Johnson, seconded by Councilperson Chris Gibson, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Ann Williams;Charles Frierson;Chris Moore;John Street;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Enactment No: O-EN-001-2021

8. MAYOR'S REPORTS

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, I do have a few comments that I would like to say in moving forward.

First of all, I would like to say thank you to everyone here. It has been a very action packed first few days in office needless to say, but this community is, I can't say enough of the excitement moving forward in the administration will have. I would also like to mention with heavy heart about losing a friend this week. He was a civic leader and our prayers go out to the Stem family. Sean was involved in our community and he also represented us on committees as well. And as that with deep heart I want to say that.

I look forward to working with Tony Thomas as Chief Operations Officer. I am very excited about this in moving forward with Tony. I have watched him grow in our community and he is going to represent our city and our community well.

Again, I would like to thank Councilmember Chris Moore for his tenure as Pro-Temp and I look forward in working with him and his advice moving forward.

In the coming weeks as we anticipate a continued emergency situation of our city, city departments will rotate city staff who can work from home and prevent spread of the coronavirus.

I want to say Regina Burkett's application with CDBG and public facilities improvement programs and public service program funding online at the Grants and Community Development Department webpage at Jonesboro.org. Eligibility is limited to nonprofit organizations in which at least 51% of beneficiaries are low to moderate income persons. Applications are due on January 11, 2021 which is the coming Monday.

Our live Christmas trees are being picked up by our Sanitation Department until January 15, 2021 which is a week from Friday. Decorations and lighting must be removed from the trees and they must not sit close to a tree, a garbage bin, or any other structure that inhibits the grasp of a knuckleboom truck that picks them up. Artificial trees and large decorations cannot be picked up, but must be taken to Legacy Landfill.

I want to say thank you to Adam Sartin, as well as, our Parks and Recreation staff for their incredible work with their Christmas at the Park. This is Adam's baby and the 2020 event throughout this covid situation, he came through once again, even at a higher level. It raised \$1,500 for CityYouth Ministries and almost \$600 for the Hope Foundation of Northeast Arkansas. Christmas at the Park hosted 62,763 visitors. This is a major success and I cannot thank Adam and our Park team enough.

9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember John Street said, in keeping with our protocol with setting up the council at our first meeting of the year, I call to nominate Chris Moore as Mayor Pro-Temp for 2021.

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember LJ Bryant, to nominate Chris Moore as President Pro-Tempore for 2021. All voted aye.

Councilmember John Street said, I would echo your comments. Chris Moore has done a great job with the Mayor's illness while he was out and represents us well. I would also like to welcome you aboard Mayor. I look forward to working with you in the future. I am sure we all do. I would also like to welcome Councilmember Emison. Congratulations sir and I look forward to working with you as well. Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember. I appreciate your comment.

Councilmember Mitch Johnson said, I would just like to echo Mr. Street's comments. I am looking forward to a great year with you Mayor. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember.

Councilmember LJ Bryant said, I would just welcome all three new elected and particularly Mr. Emison. I no longer have to be the new guy so thanks for that Brian.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, I will be brief. I just want to echo Mayor Copenhaver's condolences to the Stem family and also the Warren family. We don't need to forget that there were two lives lost yesterday. Mayor Copenhaver said, that is right. Councilmember Hafner said, I knew Sean better. Sean was a great person and he will be sorely missed. Thank you.

Councilmember Bobby Long said, I want to say congratulations Mayor and Councilmember Emison and also to you April. Congratulations and I look forward to working with all three of you guys. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember. City Clerk April Leggett said, thank you.

Councilmember David McClain said, well, Happy New Year to everybody. I just want to echo what everybody has said. I also want to echo the sentiments about Christmas at the Park. It was really awesome and I hope we continue to fund them and support what they are doing and make it even bigger. I would love to see it bigger. I know we had 62,000, but it is a really neat thing and so I am looking forward to it being bigger this next year. I am looking forward to Mayor Copenhaver, your administration and seeing what you have in store and plans and all of that good stuff. And, so, I am excited and look forward to 2021. Mayor Copenhaver said, I look forward to working with you Mr. Councilmember. Councilmember McClain said, thank you.

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, yes, just a couple of things. Nominating and Rules shifts over to the this side of the council chambers today. So, in efforts to organize committees, I would like for everyone to email me the committees that they would like to set on and on our first called meeting, I will pass those on to the newly elected Chair of that committee. And, Mr. Mayor, from a Public Services Committee standpoint, as Chairman of that Committee, I know you are drinking water through a firehose right now trying to get acclimated, but I want to keep it in the forefront of your mind the conversation that we had in regards to the heaters to the JETS Program at the City Pool. And, that is all that I have. Mayor Copenhaver said, duly noted councilmember.

Councilmember Ann Williams said, I just wish everyone a happy new year and look forward to 2021.

Councilmember Moore said, yes, just a couple of things. I would like to thank the councilmembers for electing me Mayor Pro-Temp one more term. I would also like to thank Adam Sartin. The Lights in the Park was pretty fabulous. But, one of the items that was kind of overlooked was JoyFest downtown. My wife and I and our daughter, we attended JoyFest and then went back the next weekend and multiple people from other towns including Paragould and all over Greene County came downtown to ride the

Farris wheel and the carousel and the carriage ride so it was also a great success, but it seemed like most of the people did most items. They went out to Lights in the Park and they came to JoyFest. So, I would like to try to continue both of those projects in the future. A couple of weeks ago we had a citizen call and complain about the condition of the property and the grass from the train derailment and I know that Craig was working on finding a solution with Union Pacific or Burlington Northern, whichever it may be. Have we made any progress on the restoration of the retention pond and the grass from the train derailment? Maybe Craig is online and can answer that. If not, I will take an answer at a later date. Director of Engineering, Craig Light, said, I am here. I have talked to Union Pacific. I believe they have come in and done a little bit of cleanup work. I do need to get out there and look at it. I have talked to some of the residents as well about their responsibility to keep their areas mowed and maintained even after the cleanup is done. But, I will get out there and check and see what the status is of it. Councilmember Chris Moore said, alright, thank you. That is all I had Mr. Mayor.

Councilmember Dr. Charles Coleman said, I just want to thank the city for what they did and in helping the kids with Christmas at the same time. The Lights out at the Park was great. I am part of that Rotary so he does a really great job. Also, I want to say congratulations to you April and Brian Emison and the Mayor at the same time. I want to ask that everyone keep Gene Vance in their prayers. I have talked with him several times each day. At least a couple of times each day, I text him. He is in the hospital with some issues. I wish everyone a happy new year and whatever I can do, I will do. Thank you. City Clerk April Leggett said, thank you Dr. Coleman.

Councilmember Brian Emison said, thank you everybody and just to echo everything that everybody has already said. I think that we have pretty much covered everything for the City of Jonesboro tonight. I am excited for working for each and every one of you. I know that I have got some big shoes to fill up here. Congratulations to Ms. April and also to Mayor Copenhaver on your recent elections. It's time for me to get started to work for the City of Jonesboro. And, to all of the citizens out there, I look forward to working with each and every one of you, along with these great individuals that serve on the Jonesboro City Council. A lot of you have kind of already paved the road for me and have given a lot of good advice and I just want to say thank you so much for that. And, LJ, you are right. I definitely feel the new guy weight that is sitting on me right now. I hope I don't say anything wrong. But, I sure do appreciate everybody and if there is anything that I can do for anybody listening out there, the citizens of Jonesboro, Department Heads, anybody, I can't wait to be your city Councilmember and to help make Jonesboro, not only a great place that we have all grown up in and have lived in, but continue to make it a better place that we will continue to raise future generations. Thank you. City Clerk April Leggett said, thank you. Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember.

Councilmember Charles Frierson said, I waive a heartfelt goodbye to 2020. It can't be worse. It is going to be better in 2021. Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, thank you Councilmember.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kimberly Chase, 204 E. Nettleton, Director of the HUB which is the Homeless Resource Center here in Jonesboro, said, towards the later part of 2020, I have been speaking about the issue of the unsheltered population in Jonesboro. Tonight, I would like to take a few minutes to again address some things. I believe I am one of the voices of our unsheltered population and I speak on their behalf. I am here to tell you

just how desperate the need is for a shelter. I am deeply concerned for our unsheltered population. The temperature at night in Jonesboro is dropping to the upper 20's and lower 30's. Daily, it may get to the 50's. Have you pictured how it must feel to sleep outside? What it must feel like to try to stay warm in the current weather? To not know where your meals are coming from or where you will clean up or shower? During the summer, we face challenges of overheating, bugs, sun exposure, and dehydration. During the winter months, it is hypothermia, frostbite, maintaining body weight with good nutrition and avoiding illness. Now, throw in a raging, global pandemic on top of that and we have a recipe for disaster for our unsheltered. As I have said before, resources that were once available, meals, clothing closets and warming centers are now unavailable. And, while the resources are necessary, one of the goals of the shelter is not to enable the homeless, but rather give them tools to really make positive differences in their lives so they may not return to homelessness. Jonesboro has the best, most perfect opportunity right now to move forward with a shelter. We are at a crossroad. We can go down the same path that we have in recent years and let the issue die or we can chose a different path and move forward with this shelter. Mr. Campbell said he doesn't want to be talking about this issue in five years, then, let's do something different in 2021. Tonight, I am not here to ask for support of the shelter location. I am here tonight to let everyone know that no matter what location is chosen, there will be needs afterwards. Our need will not stop at the location. The shelter will not be intended as an emergency shelter, it will be a long-term residential type program where our population can learn life skills, improve education, gain employment, and receive mental health and substance abuse counseling. I believe taking a holistic approach improves the chance at success. This answer is not to stop it with throwing a blanket to them or giving them a hot meal while utilizing wishful thinking on what could be done and call it fixed. While these are important, that should not be the only thing. And, that is the first step. If this is all we do, then nothing changes. However, with a program that addresses co-working conditions, we can assist our population to the ultimate goal of stable living. With this type of program, it really will take a village. Thank you to all of you who have been supportive and looked for solutions to our own shelter needs in Jonesboro. Thank you. Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, thank you Ms. Kimberly for addressing this council and we take your words wholeheartedly.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson LJ Bryant, that this meeting be Adjourned . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Ann Williams;Charles Frierson;Chris Moore;John Street;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

_____ Date: _____

Harold Copenhaver, Mayor

Attest:

_____ Date: _____

April Leggett, City Clerk