



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Public Services Council Committee

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

4:30 PM

Municipal Center

Election of Chair

Councilmember Ann Williams nominated Chairmember Chris Gibson as Public Services Chair for 2018, seconded by Councilmember Bobby Long. All voted aye.

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

Present 4 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

Absent 1 - Charles Frierson

3. Approval of minutes

[MIN-17:143](#)

Minutes for the Public Services Committee meeting on December 19, 2017

Attachments: [Public Services Minutes 121917](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Ann Williams, seconded by Councilperson Bobby Long, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Frierson

4. New Business

5. Pending Items

6. Other Business

Councilmember Joe Hafner said I saw the update in the paper regarding the Parks and Recreation Director position. It will be interesting to see how that works out. It seems like there is a lot of interest in the position, and I know Interim Parks and Recreation Director Danny Kapales has been working very hard in that position for the last couple of weeks. Chairmember Chris Gibson said I have had several phone calls of individuals who are interested in the position. Councilmember Hafner said it's going to be a very good position for someone to have whether that be Mr. Kapales or somebody else.

Councilmember Ann Williams said I would like, maybe at the next Public Services Committee meeting, to have a lay out of the long-term plan for Parks and Recreation, and the city, as far as the focus. People in the north and eastern part of the city have expressed to me that they think it's great that we have Craighead Forest Park. It's the jewel in our crown as far as our system, but they would like to see some sort of resources applied to other parts of the city, including a possible swim facility. I think there is some question as far as where in the future the city might want to put swim facilities. Councilmember Hafner said our next regularly scheduled meeting will be in June, so hopefully by then the Parks and Recreation Director will have time to work with the mayor and others to get his feet wet and get caught up to speed, and be able to give input on that situation.

Councilmember Bobby Long said I have asked several times about the lack of parks out by NEA Baptist and that seems to be a big growth area, but, in all actuality, it is severely underserved in parks. I believe this would go along with the sidewalk ordinance and I think it would be great to have a Parks and Recreation plan that includes some sort of connectivity to where residential neighborhoods could access parks easily and effectively. They don't have to be big, about three to five acres. I even sent Mayor Perrin some suggestions on park design that would include amphitheaters, a couple of pavilions and maybe a bicycle rest station on three to five acres of land. It wouldn't take a whole lot and it would be less maintenance, but we could have pocket parks in different areas of our city, because right now, if you live out by NEA Baptist, there is nowhere to go. There is absolutely nothing out there. So, I totally agree and would like to see some sort of plan to where we could identify pockets parks in some of those underserved areas. It wouldn't cost a lot to do, low maintenance, but it would be something where families and others could get to and jog if they wanted to, picnic and do community events out there for that specific area and I think that would be wonderful. Chairmember Gibson said I agree.

Councilmember Williams said the person who brought this up to me is actually in your ward, so it's the area you were talking about that they were expressing a desire to have something in terms of a park. Because, quite frankly, Joe Mack Campbell is not terribly accessible to people in some parts of the city. Councilmember Long said it is not. Councilmember Williams if we're talking about a swim facility there, quite frankly, that is not accessible for the people in the north and eastern part of the city.

Councilmember Hafner said back when I was on the YMCA Board and we were looking at things we could do as far as for the city and the pool that the city now owns. I think at that time, and this may have been 10 years ago, a city our size should have at least three pools. Councilmember Williams said they say one for every 25,000 people. Councilmember Hafner said that's probably about where we are. Councilmember Williams said we are close to that point. Councilmember Hafner said they don't have to be aquatic centers, just pools.

Councilmember Long said even some of the smaller cities have outdoor pools. They don't have to be covered. I think we could put those in, and if not even that, at least splash parks out there would be great. I am in total agreement with that. I have been told we've been looking for land out there and apparently, that has been a hold up, just the availability of land. I think if we really set our mind to it, we could find something. I am all for Craighead Forest and expanding that, but still, let's take a look at some of these other areas where the growth is phenomenal, but there's absolutely nothing to do outside without having to drive all the way across town. I can get to Paragould before I can get to the other side of town. Councilmember Williams said exactly.

Jonesboro Economical Transportation System Transit Director Michael Black said we looked at numbers recently and we are just a little over what we were last year as far as ridership. We did finish 2017 at over 132,000 trips. Chairmember Chris Gibson asked what is the total was as compared to the year prior. Mr. Black said I don't have the exact totals on the year prior, but we were 18.7% above what we did in 2016. Right now, we are 1.7% above what we did the same time last year. So, we are continuing to grow. On April 7, we will begin our Saturday service. I have the routes finalized and the timing set. I am going to get all the information put together, and get with Director of Communications Bill Campbell and get it on the city website. We will get maps printed up to put at the transfer station and shelters around town. Through the Communications Department, we are going to put a big blast out that we will begin Saturday routes on April 7. We will initially start with a 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. service and work from there. Chairmember Gibson asked if there was any anticipation of ridership on Saturdays. I know we have had some demand. Mr. Black said I believe if we get word out then Saturdays will start out strong and begin to get stronger throughout the year. Also, with the City Council's approval and allowing me to bring on four more full-time employees, I have been able to reduce my need for part-time. I have it fixed now to where I have an A.M. shift and P.M. shift for my fixed route, and probably in May, we are going to extend by one hour, so we will go out of service at 7:30 p.m. instead of 6:30 p.m. Chairmember Gibson asked if this would start May 1? Mr. Black said I haven't actually put an exact date to it. We are taking this in increments. We have just now started our new employee schedule. We are utilizing a little bit of the overlap right now for training. When my full-time folks were there from four days a week, ten hours a day, training was an all-day adventure. Now, with this little overlap, we're doing some heavy-duty training for probably the next three weeks, and then we will make that move. We will do the same thing through the Communications Department to get that information out to residents.

I did get final okay from the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ArDOT) on a contract with a transit development company called Alliance and I'm going to get with City Attorney Carol Duncan to help me get a resolution together to get that in front of the Council to begin our 10-year transit study by the next meeting. Chairmember Gibson said very good.

7. Public Comments

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilperson Bobby Long, seconded by Councilperson Ann Williams, that this meeting be Adjourned . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Frierson

Note

Meeting went into Recess

Note

Meeting Reconvened