



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Public Safety Council Committee

Monday, July 13, 2020

3:30 PM

Municipal Center

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

Mayor Harold Perrin was not in attendance.

Present 7 - David McClain; Mitch Johnson; Chris Moore; Gene Vance; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson and Charles Frierson

3. New Business

Chairman Mitch Johnson explained that before we move into the business part of the meeting, we have Doctor Shane Speights with us and we are going to let him give us a presentation.

Doctor Shane Speights said that he hoped that his presentation would be helpful to the group, and provide more understanding of how effective the use of a mask would be. Dr. Speights explained that we have been very blessed here in Northeast Arkansas, in terms of what we are doing and in what has been done. We too are seeing an increase in cases of COVID-19 even though it is at a much slower rate. These numbers will continue to increase in our community as the weeks and months go on, and certainly as we look at our schools opening back up.

Everyone wants to know why this is a being deal, why are we even talking about masks. It became more of an issue when the UAMS School of Public Health put out their predictions just on July 3rd. I don't know how many of you have seen that projection. This is probably the best look at what we in the State of Arkansas can expect to see in the coming months, and certainly over the fall period. Unfortunately it is not reassuring. This data shows that if we do not make any changes at all, a peak of about 20,000 cases per day could be possible by the end of September. So, what are some of the things we can do to maybe change this trajectory.

Let's get started with how does a mask work? By in large if you are sick most of the respiratory droplets that are exhaled fall to the ground within about three to six feet, we did not just make up the six foot recommendation rule. It's different for sneezes which can travel at about 200 miles per-hour. The idea behind this is if we wear a mask that will limit the spread of COVID too individuals who may be in that zone. The most common route of spreading COVID is through droplet transmission, or through speaking, singing, coughing, and sneezing, that sort of thing.

How a mask doesn't work. The research articles assume a person is wearing a mask appropriately, and that they are not wearing as an accessory. Masks should be worn

correctly, in which case it should cover your nose and your mouth so that the respiratory droplets of a virus is caught in the mask. There are different kinds of masks on the market. The N95 is the most heard about and talked about, it is mainly used in hospital settings and has to be fit tested for the user and it keep the wearer from getting sick. The surgical mask is a universal type of mask that you see in surgery's or other medical settings as well. Those you just grab one out of the box and put it on, it is to protect the wearer from getting sick too. The cotton blend cloth mask that is also seen a lot primarily protects others from getting sick if the wearer is sick and doesn't know it. It offers some protection to the wearer.

The university surgical mask is pretty effective in terms of you breathing in the virus. It will allow some of the virus to come through but the majority of it will not come through and be caught up in the mask. A N95/FFP2 mask is fully protective of the CORONA virus. The idea of a cloth mask is to keep viruses inside the mask so the wearer is not spreading it. In some studies of masks being worn up to three hours the cotton blend cloth mask captured more particles after a little bit of dampness had occurred in the cloth mask. In other countries we know that some have implemented some sort of mask requirement of some sort. Now, that's not the only thing, I want to caution you all on that. It's not that individually the mask wearing mandate, it was in addition to other measurements and other requirements that were being looked at.

Since April six states have mandated mask wearing in Public, with a total of 24 have some sort of ordinance or mask mandate. The CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO) those are the two most common. CDC recommends wearing a cloth mask in public settings and around people who do not live in your household, more specifically when other social distancing measures cannot be put into place. Wearing a mask is not instead of being six feet apart, it's in addition too. The cloth mask is not fully effective in terms of preventing the spread it is just one more measure we add to reduce the chance of getting it. The WHO said in June the general public should wear a cloth mask in public spaces when physically distancing is impossible for sure. The Arkansas Department of Health recommendations that came out in June with terms of wearing a face mask. The general public should wear a face covering in all indoor environments where they are exposed to non-household members and distancing of six feet or more cannot be assured.

To mask or not to mask. The Journal of Infectious Disease looked at models of cloth mask use by the public, statistical and mathematical calculations were used from April of 2020. It estimated that 80% adoption of mask wearing by the population of masks that were 50% effective could prevent 17-45% of projected deaths in New York while decreasing the death rate by 24-58%. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United State of America (PNAS). Non-medical masks have been shown in small trials blocking the transmission of the coronavirus; and places and time periods where mask usage is required or widespread have shown substantially lower community transmission.

Some of the most common comments that were said was not to wear masks in the beginning, now we are saying we should be. One of the reasons that it was said not to wear a mask was that we didn't want the supply of the N95's and surgical masks to become critically low. No one envisioned a global pandemic where the N95 mask that could be purchased at most retailers would be in short supply for U.S. hospitals. Cloth masks offer some protection to the wearer, but primarily the person wearing a cloth mask is protecting others in case they are sick and don't know it yet. Wearing a mask is not in place of social distancing, it is in addition to. If the majority of the population committed to wearing a mask of any type while in public, it would greatly reduce the

number of COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations, and deaths in our community. We know that we would see an approximately 60% drop in the number of infections, and subsequent deaths if we had a large percentage of the population adopt mask wearing. The urgency is certainly upon us, I see lots of models, I watch these models frequently, it's not daily, and this is the only model that is specific to the state of Arkansas that comes from the state of Arkansas that looks at Arkansans. It looks at how many have heart disease, how many are obese, African American, versus Caucasians, and Hispanic. There is no secret that we are not the healthiest state in the US and some of those numbers are going to play into this. But, these are numbers that should be headed and looked at as a crystal ball in terms of things to come.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, Dr. Speights with all of the evidence you just presented, what is your explanation as to why the Governor hasn't issued a state wide ordinance mandate for masks. Dr. Speights explained that it wasn't his job to make policy, it's my job to inform policy makers. I don't have the pieces of the puzzle that you guys have in terms of what you are hearing from your constituents and from the other individuals. The evidence is pretty clear, in terms of the medical research side, of weather in should be adopted and what it should Intel. It doesn't mean that it's is always going to be embraced by the public as you guys know much better than I do. I believe the Governor has done a very good job. I am a Fan of Dr. Nate Smith, and what the ADH is doing. I think they've had quite a time in terms of managing this. It's easy for me to sit in front of you prescribe you a medication for your diabetes. But, it's different to know that you are going to go home, you are going to get the medication filled, and you are going to take it daily like I told you too. Just because I have the right answer doesn't meant that I am always going to be able to translate that to my patient. I think we are seeing that on a macro scale right now.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, part of the confusion is now, you see the Governor, and the Director of the ADH on the T.V. every single day and I haven't seen either one of them calling for a mandate for wearing a mask. Dr. Speights said, Yes Sir, and I would think that they would hope through the direction and guidelines being put out there that most people would adhere to that, and know that what they are hearing is good information and just adopt to it. I think on their end what they are seeing in terms of the cases, and in what they are seeing around the State is that largely it's not being adopted and that it is kind of hit or miss. Like you, I am seeing around our city, the county and our area in terms if adherence it is a hit or miss kind of thing.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, well Doctor here is where the rubber kind of hits the road. You are our Medical Director, are you saying we should adopt an ordinance of mandatory mask wearing. Councilmember Charles Frierson, said that is not a fair question, and that it was a political. Councilmember Chris Moore stated that it is a fair question. Dr. Speights said I can tell you based on Countries, States, and communities that have adopted this, and in addition to other social distancing measures we have seen a reduction in the number of cases of COVID-19. The evidence that I presented to you supports that. Councilmember Chris Moore said, Thank You Doctor.

Council Bobby Long said I have just a couple of questions. One of the slides that you first said that was the reason that the medical community did not suggest the public wear them, both reasons were non-medical. Both reasons seemed to me like were actually contraire to what should have been recommended, but were recommended knowing you could get a different outcome. One of the reason given was we had a short supply of masks and we didn't want the public to go out and buy them. The other reason given was that we should not wear cloth masks, there was another reason but it

was non-medical. It seems like to me the information that was put out for the general public created a sense of distrust because neither reason seemed to be medical in nature. The second thing that I wanted you to try to speak to, you had mentioned several of those article reviews. However, it doesn't take long to find people that are just as credentialed that say a different thing. Lisa Brosseau is a national recognized expert on infectious diseases, she taught for many years at the University of Illinois. She also did a deep dive in the articles and she doesn't come up with the same thing we are hearing. Doctor Sietsema who is also an expert on respiratory protection also says the same thing. There is a postdoctoral at Stanford University that says there is enormous amount of volume of studies that have been published, but many of them don't hold up and are methodologically flawed. So, when you are looking at an article and researching the article but the articles research is flawed how we can accept what the article research says. Another article at Stanford says right now there is no way to tease out how much protection masks offer versus physical distancing of six feet or more, or hand washing. It seems to that that is why there is so much confusion. Because, for every credentialed expert that is saying this, there is another credentialed expert saying something contrary. How are we supposed to make policy in all the midst of that?

Doctor Shane Speights said, I think I am very safe in saying the largest numbers in societies and groups that are putting fourth any kind of information or any kind of stance on this, most of those individuals that you described are individuals that have individual opinions that they are looking at the evidence differently. In medical literature we debate to a level where it has actually made a difference in large scale policy, we have these debates frequently. Simple things like taking an aspirin a day you might think that that evidence is pretty clear, it's not. Many things like the medications you take every day, you'd be surprised of the evidence that's either there or not, and the articles that come out for against it. We in the health care community, and certainly in Public Health take a culmination of all that information to try and make the best decision with the best available evidence. What I presented to you today is the information that I have found largely that has been adapted, or adopted or looked at by most of these institutions including the CDC, the WHO, and the ADH that they quoted as references. I also pulled from Journals of Medicine, and it depends on which journal to look at it. You are exactly right, that is why I tried to make not of look this is aerosols not droplets, this is looking at N95, this is not a cloth mask. All of the pieces matter. Again, you are right it's really hard to find good evidence of cloth masks because the evidence out there is largely supportive of and specific to N95, and surgical masks. So, we are kind of left out there saying okay is any of this evidence any good, and can it be extrapolated, and is it something we can use to prevent the spread of the disease. At the end of the day, which is where I started, why is this such a big deal now? Because, the number don't look good on terms of what is being projected by UAMS for this fall in this region or in this State. Are there things that we could do, in the UAMS publication, and I am happy to forward that, talks of the use of wide spread masking in the State of Arkansas, and the significant reduction that could occur if that's encouraged or utilized by the public.

Councilmember Bobby Long said, Thank You. One of the other recommendation that was not highlighted that would reduce the spread is closing all of our schools. Where would you stand on that? Dr. Speights said, are we talking about K-12 or Universities and Colleges? Councilmember Long said, schools in general. That continues to be a national debate. I don't know if you realize it or not we just had that information, or it just came out, certainly in California. The just decided to close Los Angeles schools for the entire fall. I think you will start seeing more of that in the coming weeks as schools get closer to opening. Nobody wants to close schools, the students do far

better in the classroom. However, it's hard to say you are going to open schools in the face of 500, 750, to 1,000.00 cases a day that continue to grow in your area, and you know it is only going to potentialite the spread of the virus. I know that right now at my school, NYIT, we are planning to have students, our students will be online but we will have small groups of interaction until we can or that it is not safe to do so. We feel like we will probably have to back-up here in the fall and go back to completely online. I think most K-12, Colleges, and Universities are doing the same thing we are. They are planning multiple different routes. Councilmember Long said, Thank You. There is one other question that I have. When we start looking at all of the different suggestions, and encouragements that has come down from the ADH, it seems to be that masks are third on the list. The first is handwashing, if we just did that we could reduce school absenteeism by 40%. 60% of men don't wash their hands after going to the bathroom, 31% of women don't. So, when you start looking at the things that we need to focus on, why do thing that masks are such a hot topic, and it's not handwashing or keeping some sort of social distancing? It seems like to me you could raise awareness on a much broader scale and do more good. Is it because the mask is a low hanging fruit that we can see when someone is not wearing a mask and someone is so we take notice of that? Is it because of maybe the one that is not wearing the mask also is not washing their hands properly, or possibly not social distancing all the time? What do you think is the psychology is that makes on want to focus on this rather than looking at a more generalized comprehensive plan of attack?

Dr. Shane Speights explained that Councilmember Bobby Long was correct in stating that in the beginning if you pulled any interview or comments they stated that washing your hands, and social distancing, keeping yourself healthy. There is no one individual piece of this that's going to make it all go away. From the very beginning I have been very clear on handwashing. I say it every year when I get interviewed for the flu season. There is a whole litany of things. The mask wearing is something fairly new, we always promoted handwashing. Social distancing is fairly new, but mask wearing is not something we've seen here in the US, that was something that occurred in other countries, and now that we start to embark on a large number of cases we are trying to say what else can we do to reduce the spread of the virus? We don't have a vaccine, and we don't have a medication, and we don't have a great way to test for it right now, it's in a timely fashion. So, what are somethings that we can do to protect ourselves and our families, and the community from the spread of the virus? To your point, handwashing and handwashing, the distancing for sure, stay at home if you are sick.

Councilmember David McLain said to Dr. Speights that he appreciated him for being on there today. As you said it's a combination of things, and I think that we have got to decide. The last thing that any of us want is those numbers to continue to increase, and really almost tippie where we are now. Should we take this step by step in terms of implementing something for a period of time and then revisiting it after thirty or sixty days? Dr. Speights explained that one of the studies he mentioned actually looked at the effectiveness overtime and he thought any of that would be helpful.

Councilmember Bobby Long said I have two questions. From the slide that you showed earlier, it seems like the number 1 contributing factor to the UAMS data was school starting back in the fall, seemed like things shot strait up. The second question is, we have been at this since before March. I am sure that UAMS and other models laid out different models at different times between the beginning of the year and now. Can you speak to the accuracy of the prior models, and to the main contributing factors of schools?

Doctor Shane Speights, explained that back when all of this started and the virus

moved from Europe into the East Coast that is when it seemed to catch everybody's attention. When the virus started spreading across the country it caused the Universities, Colleges, and K-12 to start shutting down, whether it was through a Government mandate, or on their own that happened within just a few weeks. Oddly enough that happened for the schools in Arkansas at the same time Spring Break was scheduled. What that did, because we know with kids they come from different families they are spreading the virus back and forth or amongst themselves, and then they are going back home and spreading it their parents, grandparents or whomever else they come in contact with. That is why you seen around the world the first things to close were schools because they are a virtual feeding ground for viruses. Now, knowing that the plan is to re-open schools is August everyone across the country expects cases to go up when that happens, and that is why you see that uptick on the UAMS model. In terms of other models around the country, and there is a lot of them.

A model is just that, it's an educated guess. Basically you put in as much information that you have and you run it through a computer system and tell it to calculate. I present information to the County and City leaders every couple of weeks, and actually just a few weeks back I presented them the model data of about nine different models from across the United States, and every one of those models showed an increase for the fall. IHME is the model that the White House is following. We in the Medical Community and the research side followed that with a little bit of skepticism because the numbers didn't really add up, the numbers seemed lower, and as this has played out the numbers were significantly lower than what are appearing across the country. They have adjusted their data since then. I realize from the stand view from the public side, you want answers of what is right and what is wrong, or what direction should we go in? This is still a brand new novel virus for all of us. and we still don't know what the long term affect are. Councilmember Bobby Long said how accurate have the UAMS models been? Dr. Speights said they released that data on July 2nd, and today is July the 13th and it is spot on.

Councilmember Bobby Long asked, how does this model compare the first model they put out 4 months ago? Dr. Speights said the only other that I am familiar with is the one they put out in the middle June. The one that came out in July was downgraded by about 15%. However, that is still about 20,000 cases per-day which is worrisome to the medical community.

[COM-20:031](#)

Presentation by Dr. Shane Speights on the Pandemic and Masks

Attachments: [City of Jonesboro Masks](#)
[COPH-COVID-Report-3july2020](#)

Read

ORDINANCES TO BE INTRODUCED

[ORD-20:026](#)

AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO ARKANSAS REGARDING THE USE OF MASKS IN RELATION TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

Sponsors: Ann Williams and LJ Bryant

Attachments: [Jonesboro Mask Ordinance Final Draft](#)
[Jonesboro Mask Ordinance Final Draft-Amended](#)

Councilmember Bobby Long stated that I think we can all attest to the number of e-mails, text messages, and phone calls that we have received concerning this topic. Public engagement has been outstanding, and that says a lot about our city. I have gotten several calls by residences who were adamant that there is some sort of enforcement mechanism tied to the boilerplate Mandatory Mask ordinance provided by the Governor. This is just not the case and is proof positive that adopting such an ordinance would prove detrimental and counterproductive to what our desired goals should be. It's my opinion, one of the central purposes for the boilerplate ordinance was to support and reinforce the commitment to local business whereby we, as a city, encourage our residence to respect and abide by the businesses individual mask requirements. That's it. That's all it does. That's all it was designed to do.

For several months now, our local cities and municipalities have depended on the Governor for direction and guidance toward protecting our residence and patrons from the continued spread of C-19. I feel the Governor did a good thing in allowing cities to determine the best course of action based on their individual circumstances. I, as a council member, support and welcome more governance at the local level. We are closer to the people and that's where governance needs to be when at all possible.

Now we, as representatives of the people have listened to the comments, suggestions, reasoning's, and admonishments, and now, we are here to do what we feel is the right thing for our citizens and our businesses. That can be a hard thing sometimes because, as you can imagine, emotions run deep and opinions run wide. However sincere, we should not and must not react to emotionally charged demands from either side of the debate. We should respond in a way that focuses on achievable goals. We could pass an ordinance that appeased many but would ostracize and demonized just as many. We could pass mask ordinance even though it had no enforcement capability. If that were to happen, I fear we would be setting our city up for outcomes that we do not need at this time. I fear it would cause, frustration from citizens who see no enforcement, frustration from citizens who are confronted by enforcement, and increased propensity of unnecessary altercations between citizens and police, increased propensity for accusations of racial targeting, possible economic downturn due to less shoppers, and another avenue for division instead of unity as well as pit citizen against citizen.

We must take the higher ground and act in manner that is measured and appropriate based on Jonesboro; Not New York, Not Florida, Not Conway, Not Rogers, but Jonesboro. I don't think passing a Resolution is enough. I think we can do more and I think the citizens of Jonesboro deserve more.

Councilmember Long said I think we pass a resolution with a three pronged approach which does two things. (1) Encourages support by our residence and visitors toward respecting and abiding by the businesses individual policies regarding C-19 precautionary measures whatever they may be. If you feel you cannot abide by the policies that is your prerogative to shop elsewhere. But don't be that guy who reads the policy posted on the front door then enters the establishment and is belligerent toward the workers there. (2) Place emphasis on those recommendations by the ADH as a whole instead of identifying the "low hanging fruit" of masks. If this is the avenue agreed upon, I will discuss my suggested amendments to the Resolution when we talk about that later.

I would encourage businesses to enforce those precautions that have posted on your window for patrons to read and consider whatever they may be equally and without prejudice. If you as a business owner state plainly on the door that you require a mask

to enter, it's my opinion that the policy should be enforce equally. Embark on an educational campaign that will require; no less than monthly meetings regarding the status of Healthcare facilities as it relates to their ability to properly treat and manage the sick in our community both COVID related and not. I feel the Public Safety committee, the Mayor's office, County Officials, along with our local state representatives and senators should meet regularly with Hospital officials who have data available which gives a fair and balanced true synopsis of the environment we in Jonesboro are in as it relates to COVID -19 and our capacity to treat the sick. From the data relayed in these meetings, we can then review the effectiveness of existing efforts for Jonesboro and our surrounding area. The outcomes of this review can then be communicated to the public along with additions and other suggestions.

Together, we can resolve to act in ways that are both mindful of others while maintaining those freedoms we hold dear. I expect this will not meet every demand or suffice every plea. What I feel it can do is provide common ground for us to springboard a real effort toward providing citizens of Jonesboro with effective education and information that is crucial to each individual who is making real life decisions for themselves and their families.

City Attorney Carol Duncan said, Alderman Long I think it is important to note that the Craighead County Emergency Management Team already meets, I think weekly with a lot of the people you are describing. They are having those conversations about where we stand with our hospitals. I get an e-mail invitation to those meeting. Councilmember Long said, I have not gotten and e-mail invitation to those meetings. But, I also think that we as a Public Safety Committee, we as City Council of Jonesboro as making policy for the City, we need to be privy to some of that information. Some of that bad data makes for bad policy, no data makes for really bad policy. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, I am sure they would invite you, and I just wanted to let you know that they do meet weekly.

Chairman Mitch Johnson said, I would like to ask the City Attorney, how is the City going to act in a support capacity. Do you feel like the mask requirement will give us a false sense of security to the citizens? City Attorney Carol Duncan said, some of this doesn't seem like legal questions. Chairman Johnson said, will you expand on section 2 of the ordinance. Carol Duncan, City Attorney said, in the Model Ordinance that was proposed by the Municipal League, and by the Governor's Office it did not say not say the City of, it said the Police Department of whatever City. That it would act in the support capacity to local businesses that wish to enforce the use of masks upon their premises. It was requested to make that change to the City of Jonesboro. Mayor Harold Perrin, and the Director of Communications wanted the City to take the role of educating and encouraging the public to wear facial coverings via channel 24, and they didn't want to tax the Police Department. The business has the right to set their rules, and if they set their rules they have the right to ask you to leave. It's like NO SHOES, NO SHIRT, NO SERVICE. The business has the right to set that requirement. All we would be doing is to try to educate the public about the businesses right to do that to help prevent citizens engaging with an employee. Much like what Councilmember Bobby Long witnessed. As far as the last part in section 2, The City may additionally act in a support capacity to local businesses by educating individuals who decline to comply with the facial covering requirement of any local business that the individual must abide by that requirement or leave the premises. Obviously if someone was in a local business and is not wearing a mask, and is refusing to leave after being asked to the Police Department could be dispatched to talk to them about criminal trespassing. Councilmember Bobby Long said, can't that be done already. Attorney Carol Duncan said it could be done now, criminal trespass exists in State Law.

Chairman Mitch Johnson said, Once again, this ordinance is going to require the usage of wearing facial covering. To me, if we as a Council pass that the City is going to take full responsibility for enforcing this.

City Attorney Carol Duncan said, no. There is no teeth to it. There is no fine, there is no ticket, and no imprisonment. Chairman Johnson said be we are requiring it, and I realize that there are no ramifications. But, we are still assuming a responsibility to ensure the citizens that want this, which the city is going to react to this in some form of capacity to make sure that it is mandated. Also, in looking in sections two, and this may just be a typo. A local business that wished to enforce the use of masks, at the top in section one if we require it that will kind of take that wish out in section two. So, that is telling every business that you will abide by this. Am I correct in that question?

City Attorney Carol Duncan said, I think that what it is saying, there is no penalty to a business that does not abide in it. Chairman Johnsons said, that is not what I am saying. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, will it is though. Because, you are telling them that they are going to abide by it. We are not restricting commerce, which is why the Governor approved this model ordinance, Chairman Johnson said, I saw that in the Governors directive. Attorney Duncan said, well that is why he approved this. I didn't draft this as you know. I am only speaking to you based upon what has been relayed to me by the Governor's Office, and the Municipal League. All I can tell you is that there is no penalty to a business that chooses not to abide by this ordinance, there is not penalty to a citizen that chooses not to abide by this ordinance in the respect of a fine or a jail sentence.

Chairman Mitch Johnson said, that leads me to section three. We are requiring that the business display a copy of this ordinance in their business, but we aren't going to do anything to them. Carol Duncan, City Attorney said, when I described to you that only changes two sections, I guess that was not exactly true. I changed section three. Because, section three actually said the City Clerk would mail a copy of the ordinance to every business. I felt like that was cumbersome on the City Clerk's Office and not cost effective. Many other cities felt the same way, and made the change to the ordinance when they adopted it. But, once again if the business does not post it there is not penalty.

Councilmember Gene Vance said, you were talking about the city support earlier, if I read it correctly Fayetteville has put maybe \$80,000 into mask and distributed those out to the businesses. But, that is one of the ways they supported this effort. We can't let nor expect the businesses to enforce this ordinance, there is just no way. Businesses are scrambling right now to have enough business to keep themselves afloat. The problem is on both sides, is those people who don't want to wear the mask don't want to have their rights taken away. The people on the other side feel like they have the right when they go in public and encounter a person not wearing a mask to infect them. Everybody has rights, but everybody has to respect their fellowman, and we in the City of Jonesboro is not respecting each other at this time. We have the responsibility to be a good citizen. This ordinance gives us a good vehicle to tell everybody but, it does not give us the ability to address that respectability. I was in Hardy this last weekend, and at two different restaurants, one of them was totally outdoors, you could not even go in to use the restroom, only the employees were allowed inside. The next night I went to another one that required a mask, and they told you when you came in the door set at this table, and leave your mask on until you receive your drink. They were enforcing it, while we there at least two, maybe three groups came to the door and was told they could not come in without a mask. They did not like it, and one person in the group once they were seated ripped the mask off and

threw it across the table. But, they respected that business enough to put one on.

Councilmember David McClain said Mr. Chairman a couple of questions if I may. Councilmember McClain asked City Attorney are we able to put a time line on this? Or if we put it in place is it there long term. City Attorney, Carol Duncan said, if you pass the ordinance the Council has the ability to revoke that at any time. It would just be like amending items as we do at times. I think the Governor has out a sunset clause in this after he has lifted the State of Emergency it would end. The City Council would have the option to end it sooner if it is adopted. Councilmember Gene Vance said to Councilmember McClain that your motion to amend this would be that we revisit it in no less than sixty days, but probably even in seventy-five days, and make it mandatory that we do revisit it, and vote it up or down at that time.

Councilmember Bobby Long explained that when we make policy I think it's important that we try to anticipate what we feel like the changes are going to be in our community based on those policies. What do we expect to see differently on the doors of our businesses, and how do we expect people to act differently because they now have an ordinance posted on the door. Along with probably with the same requirements that they have now. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, I am surprised that Councilmember Chris Moore hasn't said anything yet, but there is a point of order, and that needs to be voted on before you can discuss any underlying issues.

Councilmember Gene Vance said, I personally would hope that it wouldn't be the businesses that acted differently. I would hope that the residents of Jonesboro would act responsibly. If the citizens sat and listened to Doctor Shane Speights surely they could see that that wearing a mask would be helpful in the spread if the virus. Chairman Mitch Johnson said, I think that would be true whether we passed an ordinance or a resolution.

Councilmember Bobby Long said, that was not the question. The question was, what do we think is going to be different. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, that they would post the ordinance on the window. Chairman Mitch Johnson said, which you just told me that they didn't have to. Attorney, Carol Duncan said, I didn't say they had too. Chairman Johnson explained that as I have listened to this question there is no way for this business to enforce this other than to call the Police.

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, or try to enforce it themselves. Which we certainly don't want. City Attorney Carol Duncan said the discussion amongst everyone including the AML is that citizen complaint would not be responded to by the police.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said to Chairman Mitch Johnson, I know I am not a member of this committee but can I make a comment. Chairman Johnson said, yes. Councilmember Hafner said, I think it is important to wear a mask, and I am going to be wearing one. I think if we pass an ordinance that is not enforceable we are setting ourselves up for a lot of headaches, and we are setting our Police up for those headaches as well. In these times our Police are already under a lot of scrutiny. If the goal of this is to increase the percentage of citizens to wear a mask we can do that with a resolution. As far as the education, as Chairman of the Finance Committee I would be willing to speak to the Mayor and his Staff, Bill Campbell, Director of Communications, his department about what sort of funding that they think they would need to have enough educational materials to educate the public on the importance of wearing a mask. But, I think passing an unenforceable ordinance is not a good idea. Councilmember Chris Moore said I agree whole heartedly. Attorney Carol Duncan said, we did try to do some research on how Police Departments in other cities were being affected by their ordinances. None of them have expressed that they were taxed.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, but it only takes one.

Councilwoman Ann Williams explained that the issue here is as far as encouraging, that supposedly has been going on here for a while. There is such a low percentage of people wearing masks here. People can't shop because they are scared. Language of encouragement is not working. Chairman Mitch Johnson said, I don't think as a Council body have endorsed any kind encouragement. Chairman Johnson explained that he has gotten call from businesses that do not want this to be a mandate. Councilmember Gene Vance said, our local businesses have tried to comply, but our big box stores have made absolutely no effort in encouraging the public to wear a mask. They make their employees wear a mask, but they do not enforce the public too. This ordinance would tell those big box stores that you need to post this on your door. I think it will help raise the percentage.

Councilmember David McClain said, Mr. Chairman before we jump into the public comments. I know we received a ton of e-mails. Chief of Operations Mike Downing said maybe state just who was for and who was against the ordinance. I don't feel like it would do it justice if everyone in attendance who were there against would have a voice versus those the ones sending the e-mails. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, we received upwards of 700 to 800 e-mails. Chairman Mitch Johnson explained that all of those e-mails are duly noted.

Jane Rees, 3920 Brandywine is for masks.

Chief of Staff Mike Downing commented that we are not using Facebook Comments.

Donna Puryear, 2710 North Church Street. I see a lot of confusion watching it online. I think that wearing a mask is for everyone's safety.

Karen Newberry, 3625 Blue Ridge Circle, I am a small business owner and am for this ordinance.

Bob Hester, 7096 CR 333, against any type of masks. It projects dark consequences that were not true.

Ben Derrick, 5207 Harrisburg Road, does not support this ordinance.

Barry White, 2210 Old Greensboro Road does not support masks, and will not shop here.

Councilmember Chris Moore clarified there is no enforcement, there is no fine. Chairman Johnson said correct. Councilmember Bobby Long Big Box Stores should be following the rules by the State. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, I am not going to lie, and don't know if there is a requirement for Big Box Stores.

Rhett McGinnis, Bono. Feels it should not be enforced. Doesn't live in the Jonesboro City Limits.

Lindsey Goff, lives in the County, but does not feel it should be enforced.

Councilman Bobby Long stated there is a list of reason why, or exceptions to the rule of wearing a mask listed on the ADH website.

A motion was made by Councilperson David McClain, seconded by Councilperson Gene Vance, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The

motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 4 - David McClain;Chris Moore;Gene Vance and Charles Frierson

Nay: 2 - Bobby Long and Chris Gibson

RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-20:100](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO ARKANSAS REGARDING THE USE OF MASKS IN RELATION TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

Sponsors: Mayor's Office

Attachments: [Jonesboro Mask Resolution Final Draft](#)

Councilmember Bobby Long asked City Attorney Carol Duncan if this is forwarded on would I be able to submit recommended amendments, and those amendments be considered as well. City Attorney, Carol Duncan said you make a motion for your amendments. City Attorney said to Councilman Moore, if you agree with me. This is a special called meeting, and I am not sure you can strike and replace. The only one to be considered before the Council is the resolution. You could make a tiny amendment, but I think you will agree with me your changes are pretty significate.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said to Chairman Johnson I will be real brief. The resolution is something more along the lines to support instead of an ordinance with no enforcement. Councilmember David McClain said, will you read that last section again. Councilmember Gene Vance asked if business today on their own to require a person to wear a mask? City Attorney, Carol Duncan said, yes.

Citizen Robin Crisp, I am not for mandatory wearing of masks. Wade Dowdy, 2118 Trinity Oakes, not for wearing of masks.

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Gene Vance, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 5 - David McClain;Chris Moore;Gene Vance;Chris Gibson and Charles Frierson

Nay: 1 - Bobby Long

4. Adjournment

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

Aye: 6 - David McClain;Chris Moore;Gene Vance;Bobby Long;Chris Gibson and Charles Frierson