



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, July 7, 2026

5:30 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

PUBLIC WORKS COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 5:00 P.M.

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

3. ROLL CALL (ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE) INITIATED AND CONFIRMED BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

Present 9 - Chris Moore; Chris Gibson; David McClain; Kevin Miller; Janice Porter; John Street; Charles Coleman; LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent 3 - Brian Emison; Joe Hafner and Anthony Coleman

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

[COM-26:038](#)

City Council Meeting Presentation - GOJO Public Notice: Proposed Transit Service Changes and Fare Adjustments

Attachments: [Council Meeting Presentation.pdf](#)

GOJO Director Lee Wells said, thank you all. I just wanted to come today talk about our public comment period that we're going to, we are in actively right now for our transit system. So with this we have some route changes that will be being made and some fare changes that will be being made. Our goals with this of course is to improve the reliability and expand coverage and ensure that we have that long-term financial sustainability. All of this is connected to our growth and what we're wanting to do here in the system. So with this we have a couple of items. Our pilot routes, which specifically is the ASTATE test routes that we have been doing. We are looking to have those become permanent fixtures in our service. This service has been, has gone off very well. We've had a large population, specifically the international students who have been taking advantage of this. We have been actively engaged with the college and the different organizations and try to bring awareness to the student population, specifically with the new student orientations that have been going on this year. And we've gotten a lot of positive feedback from this and we look for this to continue to be a great benefit for the students and the city as a whole. Our future route expansions and also our alignment plans - so with this we do have some expansions that we are looking to do. We're hoping to go into the Greensboro Village area at the Hilltop area. We're looking to get over into the Highland Drive, Culberhouse, Southwest Drive corridor in order to better serve some of those areas. We're also looking at Matthews and Annie Camp area again to better improve our service area. And then with the ASTATE integration, we want to tweak the directions and the routes that some of

the system was already previously doing. So we did have one route that was participating in that ASTATE loop in order to accommodate the students. Now with the introduction of the specific Red Wolf routes, we want to utilize that to go into the Hilltop area in order to reduce that wait time for the customers and really overall improve the service for everyone. This is going to you know help to get the neighbors and the neighborhood in areas where we haven't been going to, get them access to education, employment, health care, and entertainment opportunities.

With this proposal, we are also hoping to do a fare structure adjustment. So to my knowledge, since the service has started, we have not made any form of a fare adjustment. What we are wanting to do is to realign those adjustments to better work with rising fuel costs, rising labor costs, rising maintenance costs in order to really hope to try to keep this service a sustainable service as we continue to grow and expand. With this proposal, we are also looking at, or not looking, we are adding our tap-to-pay service which will include a fare card and that fare card will bring along with it the fare capping which is something we have not been able to do before. So previously what we did is we did passes for the riders. They could do a 1-day, 7-day, or 31-day, but they had to pay for those in advance. So they had to have the money to be able to buy that pass in advance, come to City Hall, purchase that pass, and then use it on our system. With this new system that we're doing in the fare capping structure, they will be able to get one of our transit cards and then they will just ride as normal. They're paying for every trip as they get on. However, the system has that smart tracking on their usage to know how much they've paid and how that compares to the pass structure that we had previously. So we'll actually be going away from the passes, there won't be passes, to purchase in advance anymore. There will be tracking that's done when you use your fare card that will keep you from paying more than one of those passes would be. So while this is an increase of our fare structure, we actually expect a majority of our riders are going to see a savings in what their daily cost is. Because once they've ridden those four or five trips for a week, the rest of the week, they're not going to be charged for. So that fare structure is going to allow those that have not been able to participate in passes to be able to benefit from that structure, but also to do a better job of allowing those commuters, those daily students, those workers, or those people that are getting to their health care appointments using public transit, a more efficient and effective way of using that system. So with that fare capping, the key is that no rider pays more than the cost of what that pass would be. But they're paying that as they go. So instead of having the \$15-\$20 that was needed for that pass, to have to pay for it up front, keep up with and use, you will now have that pass system that will track your ridership. So when you get on and you pay that two dollar fare for a standard fare, or you pay that one dollar fare for a reduced fare, it's going to track your usage. Another benefit of that is those cards, they will actually get a card that is associated with their usage. So if, for example, you qualify for a veteran discount, or you qualify for a senior adult discount, you can get that pass that will actually only charge you that amount. You can either load money onto it here at City Hall like most are used to, or at select retail stores, or you can tie a credit or debit card or I believe a bank account to that to where it will actually deduct that money for you as you use. With this, it's key, I know I said it a couple of times, but I do want to stress that no one is being charged more for their usage of the vehicle than what they would have if they were using a pass. So this is going to be a great opportunity for those that were not able to get passes previously because maybe they couldn't get that pass. It also gives a lot more accessibility with it. So the frequency of their usage will, of course, I think, increase our ridership over time because they'll be able to use that fare capping.

All of this is a part of our public comment period which is currently open now. Our

public comment period will run until the end of the month, July 31st. With this presentation that we're having that's kind of kicking off this information, we are also going to be having a public hearing. That'll be kind of a town hall setting at the Youth Center at 1421 West Nettleton on July the 15th starting at 4 p.m. We will run that, you know, and I think we have until 6:30 p.m., I think, is what we've had that scheduled for. But, of course, we'll be available to answer questions to anyone. You can call, ask questions, feel free to stop by our office at 2630 Lacey Drive or you can email us any of your thoughts that are on providing feedback for these items that we're going through. And that email is going to be at GOJOfeedback@jonesboroar.gov. If you would include the subject line of 2026 system updates on your email, we will take a look at every one of those and we will take all of those comments that we receive into consideration as we look forward towards moving these things into fruition of how our service will run. So we do have, I believe you have a map that is listed on here which does show our routes. We will have a map, a large blow-up map at our town hall meeting and, of course, we can provide this to anyone if they need that. But we are just looking to be able to strengthen our ability to be able to deliver safe, reliable, and affordable transportation for everyone in the City of Jonesboro. This is just going to help connect our community and make us stronger as the city does continue to grow. So if anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to answer.

Mayor Copenhaver asked, Lee, if you would, please go ahead and address the updates on the stations. Mr. Wells responded, yes, so that project is ongoing. They actually have every one of the technology devices in our shelters. We are still going through the process of getting them all connected. We still have a couple that we're waiting for power to be turned on to. We have some lighting that we're still trying to get the kinks worked out on to make sure that they all function like they're supposed to. But you should be seeing at our new sheltered stops, all of those terminals. As those are connected and the software is updated, those will be tracking our buses. So if you are at one of our bus stops that has a shelter, you should see one of those display screens. That display screen will tell you what routes are arriving at that bus stop. It'll give you an estimated time of when that bus will arrive. And there is actually an ADA call button that you can press that will read out the information for those that are visually impaired. So that's going to be fantastic, especially once we get the lighting. I know I've talked about that, but until you see it, it's really impressive. Number one, they're all lit, which is a huge importance. But then that lighting and the RGB lights where they'll change colors, every route is associated with a color. So when that bus starts to approach that light will come on to tell you that it's coming. As that bus gets close that you need to make sure you're at the bus stop, that light will start pulsing to let the passengers know that, hey, you need to be right here. Because if you're not at the bus stop, we don't know if you're walking across the parking lot or if you're just hanging out. So that's key is to be at the bus stop when the bus arrives so we know to stop and pick you up. We are also currently working through our new signage. I know all of our signs at all of our bus stops currently still have the old logo and the route information. We have received all of our signs. We are currently in the process of getting them labeled for routing so that way the bus sign will say what routes are going there as well. That'll be important for the non-sheltered stops as well as the sheltered stops. So that way you can quickly identify if this bus stop is going to be utilized by route 17 or if route 17 doesn't stop at that one. You'll know quickly it doesn't have that number on it so I'll know if I need to get on that bus. And all of this coincides with our app that we have which is actively going. A lot of people are using it which does tell you all of that bus routing information in real time with a display of where the bus is. Even notifications on if the bus is full, partially full, or whatever.

Councilmember Dr. Charles Coleman said, I was going to ask on the purchasing of the

fare tickets, is there anything online that they're going to be doing or do they just have to they have to come to the city to purchase? Mr. Wells responded, there are some options for online as well. So you can actually on your smartphone, I believe, you can get the transit pass basically on your phone where it's not a card. It would just be an app type thing on your phone and what you would do is when you load the bus you would just pull it up. I actually have a QR code on my phone for my business card. It would be very similar to that. It would be a little scannable thing. When you go in, you put your phone, it scans it, it registers, it actually tracks your information to say hey this is the fifth time you've been on the bus so we don't need to charge you today. But it still tracks that you got on the bus, where you got on and things like that. It's a great question. Councilmember Chris Gibson asked, on the rate adjustments, how does that comp to cities similar to our size that offer transportation? Mr. Wells replied, it does comp very well with a lot of the other businesses, the other agencies that are in the area. I have done a lot of research looking on their websites. Some of the agencies that are not at the amounts we are at or proposing to go at, I have actually spoken with those agencies and they are also looking at adjusting their fares and these are rates that are kind of across the board. Councilmember Gibson said, pretty consistent across the state? Mr. Wells continued, now if you go somewhere like New York or Chicago, you'll obviously you'll see much different, but their transit also includes like the L lines and the subways and things like that. So just for, you know, standard bus transit, this is a pretty typical fare rate that you're looking at and especially with the fare capping. Some of the agencies and even with us, one of the major reasons why we have not looked in the past of raising rates to meet with the change in the economy has been because of the complication of making that sustainable and accessible to all of the public. With this addition of the touch-to-pay, tap-to-pay that is going to make that more accessible to the public that it makes it more reasonable for us to look at doing those things now in order to keep our service sustainable as we continue. Councilmember Gibson said, thank you. Mayor Copenhagen said, Lee, thank you very much and we appreciate your team and your efforts. So keep us updated. Thank you very much.

Read

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Chris Moore motioned, seconded by Councilmember Charles Coleman, to adopt the consent agenda with the exception of RES-26:070 and RES-26:071. All voted aye.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Dr. Charles Coleman, to Approve the Consent Agenda. The motioned PASSED

Aye: 9 - Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Kevin Miller;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 3 - Brian Emison;Joe Hafner and Anthony Coleman

[MIN-26:054](#)

MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON JUNE 16, 2026

Attachments: [CC Minutes 06162026.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

[RES-26:063](#) RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FY26 BRIDGE INVESTMENT PROGRAM PLANNING GRANT

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-083-2026

[RES-26:066](#) RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, DEPARTMENT OF GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO APPLY FOR THE FY2025 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, FEDERAL EMERGENCY AGENCY (FEMA)

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-084-2026

[RES-26:067](#) RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, DEPARTMENT OF GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO APPLY FOR THE FY2025 FIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY GRANT THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, FEDERAL EMERGENCY AGENCY (FEMA)

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-085-2026

[RES-26:068](#) A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE ATTACHED FEE PROPOSAL FOR CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING AND INSPECTION SERVICES FOR THE S CARAWAY ROAD WIDENING PROJECT

Attachments: [Fee S Caraway Rd CE and I revised 09222025.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-086-2026

[RES-26:069](#) RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2410 W. MATTHEWS, PARCEL 01-143143-01900, OWNED BY GEORGE HANNAH, SR. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,566

Attachments: [BILLING REQ_255464](#)
[COUNCIL NOTICE_255464](#)
[INVOICE 2_255464](#)
[INVOICE_255464](#)
[ORIGINAL VIOL_255464](#)

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-087-2026

RESOLUTIONS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

[RES-26:070](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO APPROVE THE ATTACHED PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES FOR THE PARK LOCATED ALONG DISCIPLE DRIVE

Attachments: [Disciple Drive Park Scope CDs - 06-2026](#)

Patti Lack, 4108 Forest Hill Road, said, thank you. Last week at the Finance meeting is that I know that Anthony Coleman raised the issue of that we were paying this company to have meetings with and I kind of dove into it a little bit more the other day. And so here it is \$136,000 that's on the agenda for today for the 17 acres. I know that this was talked about on February 4th of last year talking about that we had a grant. I could not find the grant amount on this item but it was the park out there by NEA Hospital there. When I started looking at what the attachment was for back in April which the price that you guys approved was \$243,800 and today it's \$136,000. And I compared the two of what the proposal was back then to what it is now and I have to tell you there are ten significant changes to what was proposed back in April to what is now and some of the differences is that if you compare the two of them, the south entry driveway no longer exists. There was a large playground submitted and a small playground submitted and now there's going to be an adventure playground. So there's not going to be two separate ones. The large dog park and the small dog park dog park is going to become one dog park. They submitted that there was going to be four pickleball courts. There's only going to be one that was submitted on the form that is submitted today. There's still going to be, there's going to be one full-size multi-purpose field and no two small half ones. There's not going to be a soft surface trail. The retention ponds, for two retention ponds on there, it doesn't show that we're going to have retention ponds. So I'm just comparing the two of them of what was back in April with we had to now on there. We're going to have a restroom and stuff like that, but the entry archway of the signage is not going to, it wasn't on the list. The conceptual coordination, the entry archway was not on there. A hydrogenic, there was another one on there and that's not even there. But that's ten different changes from what was in April that we paid \$243,000 for and now we're paying an additional \$136,000. So we're getting not as much. If you look at what was submitted online is that almost every single form on that, the assumptions, they have the design, the construction documents and all that. They have the attachment B right here, it's the same exact form that was on there. Okay, but what's worrisome and I think needs to be brought to your attention and I think this is something that we need to consider before you approve it, is that if you consider that April 2025 to today, the meeting that they charged us or the meetings throughout there is \$6,240. The meetings back in April was \$17,900. So we're still paying for those meetings, but they have a tree survey that they're charging us today of \$4,500. They have a tree survey back in April of \$16,000. So we're paying for two tree surveys. So it's costing \$20,000 for that. So we're getting double charged. So if anything, this proposal needs to be adjusted because I can't imagine paying \$20,000 to do a tree survey on this property, but also too on today's it says that it's an architectural construction document but if you look on the April one that we did last year is that it actually says architectural \$13,800; Geotech \$17,000. And, so we pay \$31,300 for I don't know what. So I'm just saying to you guys is that we're doing a \$136,000 today. There's nothing that's been done. The plans have been changed. I don't know what we're paying for, but I think the bottom line is is that to me that's a lot of money and if you look at the plan that was back in April, it was this and here it is right here you know but it still shows four pickleball courts and there's only one that they're proposing. So it's not, I'm not understanding why we're

paying this amount of money and we're not getting what we really need to be having. And, I look at that money and you look at how much we can put \$136,000 because if we can't start that park right now, you guys, let's not do things halfway anymore. If we can't get that park started for our kids because we want it and I'm totally for the parks. This is a lot of money paid but I think what I'm concerned about is that I don't understand why we're getting charged \$20,000 twice or \$4,000 and \$17,000 for a tree survey on that. It doesn't, something's not right with this and I hope that you take this and maybe table it and maybe make a proposal that that gets reduced. So thank you.

Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you for your comments. Councilmember David McClain asked, is that correct? Mayor Copenhaver said, Craig, can you come and address this. Councilmember McClain continued, you might as well. Mayor Copenhaver said, if you want the overall wish list and have everything on this project is \$14 million. And, so obviously what we're doing is revamping it to get it to where it's feasible, falls in the guidelines of what the requirements are. Craig, if you would please go ahead. Engineering Director Craig Light said, the original agreement with Halff was to take us to 60% plans for the ideal park facility along Disciple Park. And, as the Mayor said, the estimated cost was just shy of \$14 million to put all of the improvements onto that piece of property that we'd like to see at some point. Right now, we have the grant in hand that we need to spend. It's about a \$1.6-\$1.7 million. There's some additional funds that are available for the project, but we're capped at about \$3.7 million for the project. And, so what this does is take us to 60% plans to 100% plans on those items that we feel like we can build for the \$3.7 million that we have available to us today. And, the clock is ticking on the grant money. So we have a little bit of time to get it done, but we don't have years to get it done. So, we're hopeful that we can get this contract executed, get those items that are in the original Parks Department grant from the state and get those items that we're required to build, built and then we can look at funding for the other pickleball courts and other amenities that we'd like to see at this facility at some point in the future. It is a 17 acre or so site. So, there will be plenty of opportunities to add amenities to it as time goes on. Any other questions? Councilmember McClain said, yeah, thanks for the explanation. I think that helps. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you councilman.

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

Aye: 9 - Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Kevin Miller;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 3 - Brian Emison;Joe Hafner and Anthony Coleman

Enactment No: R-EN-088-2026

[RES-26:071](#)

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE JONESBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR NEW HIRE INCENTIVES

Attachments: [INCENTIVE PROGRAM JPD FINAL](#)
[Incentive Repayment Agreement FINAL](#)

Councilmember David McClain said, Mayor, real quick, question, comment. I understand the need for our recruitment efforts, especially being down 24 officers. My question, the biggest question I have, is what are we doing for our officers who are already here who are carrying the load? You know, they are working overtime, they're running thin. So what are we doing to help keep them here? I think the biggest thing is we can recruit, but if we're losing after three years or five or ten, we lose a lot of experience, we lose a lot of important things that make our community better, and so I

want to make sure we're going to look to take care of them. Mayor Copenhagen responded, you and I both, and I think the priority...Chief, are you in the room? If you would please come forward and you can help assist in this as well. The priority right now is to fill positions, obviously, if those positions that would be on our street personnel. The good thing is the positions, sergeants, lieutenants, those positions are relatively full, and any overtime that has been worked, they've been paid, and I want you to know our officers are being compensated for the work that they're doing. And I think incentives is another avenue that we're going to reassess, and that's what Chief and I have discussed when it comes up to the next budget cycle is on retention and other avenues that we can provide those additional things at that time. Now, Steve will be happy to address if there's any funding. Our concerns are obviously on the budgeting concerns where we might not be able to meet those requests if we were to offer payouts at this point for individuals, but that might be something that we can address in the upcoming budget in doing so for those. Chief, do you have anything to add?

Jonesboro Police Chief Rick Elliott, said, yes, in short, the topic has been brought up by Councilman Emison in the past. And, the first step is getting out of this deficit and the shortage. So this is the first step in this. And, we're operating this incentive under the current budget. So there's money in there to cover these incentives even if all 24 were filled by certified officers at those numbers. So the next question is, after these 24 positions are filled, and then we look at our overtime budget, which has gone over. Mayor Copenhagen responded, so we've already hit that for this year. Chief Elliott said, so now we have to pull from the regular salary budget to cover that. So at the end of the day, when we look at your projection on this being filled, what money is left in the salary line item that you have to work with if you're wanting to do as a council, do any kind of incentive under this current budget year. So that's the big question. If the dollars will allow that or not allow that, that's a council decision. The Mayor and I have discussed, you know, we are looking at a one-time stipend type incentive, but also we're looking at... Councilmember McClain asked, one time for who? Chief Elliott said, that has not been defined yet. This has been, the talk in the past just in general discussion in the council is, hey, look at doing a one-time stipend. It didn't say for who, at what rank level or not. And, you know, if I just hired somebody that got a hiring bonus under this plan, they would not qualify for whatever kind of stipend. So the question is, this formula or this plan would have to be developed and then come back as a separate resolution by the council because those terms and agreements have not been laid out yet. Because I don't know, I mean, we do we want to do a stipend for just patrolmen only or the whole department. I don't know what that looks like. Again, we're talking about dollars and then the salary line item that's left. So working out of those parameters, I don't know what those numbers look like. Here we are in July, we're in the mid-year. You know, right now, the surplus that we have will certainly cover this and probably may cover the other. But we have to also look at the money we've spent on overtime that's coming out of that also. Councilmember McClain said, I think the biggest thing is I'd like to see if you and Steve, y'all working on something to help us make an informed decision because I don't think any of us want to see us losing officers. And, you know, to me, that's the biggest thing. Because if we lose, I mean, any business or government entity, the experience can sometimes, you can't put a dollar value on that. Chief Elliott responded, well, I agree 100% and always have and always will on that fact. I've been saying that for years. On this last pay plan that we did a couple years ago, we did institute an incentive plan of \$3,000 per officer. They're eligible for up to \$3,000 in incentives. The talk, as we were talking over this, is, hey, do we want to take money that we go for this and do it for the long-term every year to maybe increase those incentives to a higher number. So pay officers more for their college degrees or some of the other things that we incentivize and boost that number,

which would be every year.

Mayor Copenhaver stated, I think, relatively speaking and speaking with Finance, it's going to be hard for us to decipher what the next six months hold until we get to the year-end budget. So with that, obviously this is our priority is to get boots on the ground. Then we are assessing the request of council to see how we can financially move forward. Steve, is there anything you'd like to add? (Off mic, Finance Director Steve Purtee said no.) Okay. All right, I appreciate it, Councilman. Councilmember McClain said, like I said, I wanted, like nothing else, just wanted for us to make sure we're going to come back and address that. Thank you. Chief Elliott said, again, I think you and other members of the council have raised the same question and that is certainly worth a deeper dive into and start gathering those facts and figures to see what that's actually going to look like. Mayor Copenhaver respond, councilman, I think this is true for all of us. You know, let's be involved in the budget. So this is the importance. What are your priorities? What do you want to see? These are the things that we can then address to you at that time through the budget process, get you engaged, so you can see where the numbers are, where we're leading to, and everything else. So we want to see the year-end results, but obviously this is a priority in all departments to be able to look to see what we can do to make improvements. Chief Elliott said, I would like to state that I've made a statement during the Finance meeting that once we kind of announce this incentive out there, our applicant pool went way up, and especially certified applicants. And if we stay on the projected path that we're on right now and if the majority of these pass the background, we stand to be fully staffed by November, December. Councilmember McClain responded, that's good. Chief Elliott continued, so this concept has had the desired effect, so getting people in the door, and the second problem is, yes, I want to keep people that's already in the door, and that's always a work in progress. We started the 11-hour shift a couple years ago. That's been a big factor. Our mental health and wellness program, that has been a huge factor in helping us retain officers, because we're having them leave at three to five year burnout that's due to all of the stress and trauma that they've seen in those short few years of their career. And, many just can't process that and get out of the business. And, that's not only here, that's across the country. This, what we see in Jonesboro in recruiting and retention is the same problem every chief and sheriff in the United States is currently having. Nothing new, but we're all trying to look for the magic number of fixing that. And we have taken those first two steps and this is the third big step in getting people in the door. Councilmember McClain said, thank you.

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

Aye: 9 - Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Kevin Miller;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 3 - Brian Emison;Joe Hafner and Anthony Coleman

Enactment No: R-EN-089-2026

6. NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

[ORD-26:017](#)

AN ORDINANCE MODIFYING ORDINANCE 24:037 WHICH ESTABLISHED AND CONSOLIDATED SPECIAL TRAFFIC PATTERNS NEAR JONESBORO PUBLIC

SCHOOL CAMPUSES

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember L.J. Bryant, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-26:017 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

[ORD-26:019](#)

AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO PLACE VARIOUS TRAFFIC SIGNS AT DESIGNATED LOCATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE TRAFFIC CONTROL COMMITTEE

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember L.J. Bryant, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-26:019 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

[ORD-26:021](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, ARTICLE III, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-3 TO C-3 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2911 BROWNS LANE

Attachments:

[26139 -ORD-RZ.doc](#)

[Browns Lane Rezoning.pdf](#)

[26139 Hasley Brown39s Lane Rezone Packet.pdf](#)

[Staff Summary RZ 26.pdf](#)

[26139 - Halsey Brown's Lane Mail Receipts.pdf](#)

[associated.pdf](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember L.J. Bryant, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-26:021 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

[ORD-26:018](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-1 TO PD PLANNED DEVELOPMENT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1004 N. CARAWAY ROAD AS REQUESTED BY DAVID TAPP

Attachments:

[Staff Summary RZ 26-08](#)

[Rezoning-Application 1004 N Caraway](#)

[Plat](#)

[Certified Letter Receipts](#)

[MAPC Approved Rezoning 6.9.26 Minutes](#)

[1004 n caraway receipt](#)

Held at second reading

ITEMS THAT HAVE BEEN HELD IN COUNCIL

[ORD-26:013](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A SPORTS TOURISM COMMITTEE; PROVIDING FOR MEMBERSHIP, PURPOSE, AND DUTIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Attachments: [ORD-95-645 originally numbered 2607.pdf](#)

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, Public Services and Parks Advisory Board met yesterday. I think it was a very productive meeting on both sides. I think we've come to the conclusion that we're going to try to move forward in a different direction. So I would like to make a motion to table this indefinitely.

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson LJ Bryant, that this matter be Postponed Indefinitely. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 9 - Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Kevin Miller;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 3 - Brian Emison;Joe Hafner and Anthony Coleman

8. MAYOR'S REPORTS

Mayor Harold Copenhagen reported on the following:

I just want to begin this evening. Before I get going in tonight, I want to make everyone aware of changes for the delivery of the Mayor's Monthly Reports. After a couple of months of evaluating, we've decided to provide those at the second City Council meeting of the month. The reports will be for the month prior. This will allow all the numbers from the prior month to be accounted for and adequate at the time of the reports to be created. So expect the next report to be July 21st Council meeting.

I'd like to take a few moments to share some updates on what's been happening throughout the city since the last Council meeting three weeks ago on June 16th. First of all, I want to encourage everyone to participate in the Plan Jonesboro, our community's comprehensive planning initiative. The summer public survey is now open at planjonesboro.com, and we want to hear from as many residents as possible. This is a new survey that's been updated since the input of our original meetings and first survey. Every voice matters as we work together to shape Jonesboro's future. In addition, I encourage anyone interested in our city's growth to attend the upcoming market analysis webinar where Sharon Woods, president of Land Use USA Urban Strategies, will present findings from the residential target market analysis and housing study. This information will help guide future planning and development decisions for our community. Sign up for the webinar now on the city's website.

Construction continues to move forward at the Jonesboro Municipal Airport. The new terminal is now approximately 40% complete with crews installing climate control systems and electrical infrastructure. While recent weather has delayed some of the project, significant progress continues. The new aircraft hangars are approximately 50% complete and remain on schedule for completion in the fall. Our primary runway also entered the next phase of reconstruction. That project is now about halfway complete and expected to reopen in the fall. We've got a lot going on, folks. During construction, airport operations continue safely along the secondary runway, allowing businesses to continue as usual.

At Craighead Forest Park, improvements to the ATV trail are entering the final stages. This project was made possible through the Arkansas Recreational Trails Program

with 80% funded through the Federal Recreational Trails Program grant administered by ARDOT and the remaining 20% by the City of Jonesboro. Craig, when is that? Did we sign off on that this week? (Off mic, Engineering Director Craig Light said, Friday.) Friday. So if anybody wants to go out and take a ride around the trail, you're more than welcome to on Friday. In addition to improving the trail system, this project enhances emergency access for first responders through newly established access points throughout the park. We're looking forward to announcing the project's completion through the final walkthrough this Friday.

Also, I'd like to recognize our July employee of the month, Travis Williams, our outstanding radio technician. Travis' dedication and professionalism helps keep our public safety communications operating efficiently every day. Congratulations, Travis, and thank you for the service to the City of Jonesboro. We also extend our appreciation to First Security Bank for continuing to sponsor that.

Since our last meeting, our community has been incredibly active. City employees and city council attended the Arkansas Municipal League Convention, celebrated Juneteenth with our community parade and fireworks events, hosted first aid, CPR, AED training for our city employees, celebrated the topping off ceremony of the First Community Bank Sportsplex, gathered to honor in the life of Ben Owens, enjoyed a National Guard C-130 flyover, welcomed thousands of people for Meet Me on Main and Match on Main World Cup festivities, and broke ground on our new E-911 Center, which has been long awaited, a monumental day for the community, and celebrated Independence Day with America's 250th festivities that included a car show, Delta Symphony Orchestra, a corn hole tournament, and fireworks. First of all, I'd like to also give a personal thank you to Katie Dorton because she spearheaded two events within the last week for watching the World Cup downtown. I really appreciate her efforts in doing that, and that's what it takes, and I appreciate the uptick for our downtown businesses. I know they appreciated it as well.

Jonesboro was thrilled to host a NASA astronaut, aerospace engineer, and retired U.S. Navy officer Commander Susan Kilrain. She's the youngest person and one of only three women to pilot the space shuttle. Susan spoke at a free event hosted by the STEAM AI-verse at Valley View Middle School inspiring many. Looking ahead, listen, this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet a true pioneer among women in the field of aviation and aeronautics. She was truly amazing. It was a blessing to have her in our community, but it really set you back to understand and see what individuals can strive and do if they set their mind to it, and she's one leading by example.

Our community cleanup will take place on July 11th from 8 a.m. to noon at 2650 Lacey Drive. We encourage everyone to come drop off your bulky trash and help keep Jonesboro beautiful.

The Next Gen Cadets program begins July 13th for students entering grades 3 through 5 with grades 6 through 8 participating on July 20th. This is a free program presented through DARE, which gives young people the opportunity to interact with our law enforcement officers, participate in on-hands activities, enjoy lunch, go swimming, and build leadership skills in a positive environment.

As always, thank you to our city employees, community partners, volunteers, and residents for making Jonesboro stronger, safer, and more vibrant to live. Together, we continue to build a city that we can all be proud of to call home.

In closing, I'd like to make two statements. I want to take a moment to honor the

Marked Tree police officer, Trevor Howard, whose funeral procession passed through Jonesboro today. We pause in honor for a young officer who gave his life in service to others. May Officer Howard rest in peace. May his family, friends, and fellow officers find strength in love and support surrounding them.

Also, I would like to close with an honor to another public servant whose contributions to this community will be greatly seen for many lifetimes. A leader who helped build a legacy that saves them, and that was Ben Owens Sr. And if you notice, Ben Jr. is in the room with us tonight. He was a friend. He was a friend to our city. He was a pillar to this community. His many accomplishments helped shape St. Bernard's Medical Center into the regional lifeline and healthcare force that it is today. He served on various City of Jonesboro committees and served as a personal advisor to civic leaders across Northeast Arkansas. Mr. Owens lived to put our community first. Ben, one thing that I really took from this service was when Chris Barber said he stood behind his employees, he also stood behind this community. And that is a true public servant. He always looked for what was good in people and he looked for what was good in our community. Our condolences are extended to his wife Dixie, Ben, Nancy, and all the Owens family as they grieve his loss. We as a community are grateful for his many contributions. Mr. Owens' life legacy is one that should challenge all of us to carry on. May we honor his life by continuing to apply many of the values he held dear by working hard, taking care of our neighbors and community, and planning not for tomorrow, but for the next generation. May we live as a true public servant. Thank you, Ben, and we're here to honor your father tonight. We appreciate that.

[COM-26:037](#)

MAY 2026 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Attachments: [May 2026 Financials.pdf](#)

Filed

9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember John Street said, I'd just like to say I'm very excited with the progress that our transportation system is achieving. It's taken a while, but nothing's fast, but I think it's going to be great. Mayor Copenhaver said, Lee and his team did a great job. Councilmember Street continued, Lee's done a great job in leadership of that. Mayor Copenhaver responded, thank you, Councilman.

Councilmember L.J. Bryant said, I saw Jeff Bezos gave \$30 million to Little Rock today. It'd be nice if we got \$30 million from somebody, but I will say I guess the county net-net gave Monette \$500,000, so on proportion, if you take their 2,000 people and take our 82,000 people, I think they owe us \$5 or \$6 million.

Councilmember David McClain said, the only thing, I had someone I want to give kudos to Nathan from our Street Department. He mentioned how they fixed an issue, fixed his yard and was very prompt and got back to them pretty quick without them having to really reach out more than once, so kudos to Nathan.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, I just want to mention, Harold, you might have to call Mayor Mamdani in New York. I noticed right before I came down they had a 38-story building that bricks were starting to fall off and they think it's in danger of collapsing. Mayor Copenhaver said, one and done. Councilmember Moore continued, right down town Manhattan with about this much room between nine other buildings. So it's funny that some of the problems we have are the same problems you have in a big

city. So I appreciate you getting our building down. I hope they get theirs down safely. Mayor Copenhagen replied, thank you.

Councilmember Janice Porter said, I'd like to offer a shout-out to our churches, the public library, the Parks Department, and other organizations that are offering free and low-cost enrichment activities to our children over the summer. I'm thankful that our community values our children and demonstrates that in such a tangible way. Mayor Copenhagen replied, thank you, Councilman.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Marilyn Copeland, 1602 Honeysuckle Lane, said, good evening. I guess I want to give a shout-out to the work that's been done by Mr. Gibson, Parks and Rec, Jim Stearns, A&P, on working on this tourism committee because what I've seen is that we've kind of been in satellites, and it's helped a lot for us, the communication, to come together. We don't know what other people are seeing. Yesterday, we all saw, those of us who have worked on this, got an email from Jerry Morgan that explained things that I knew nothing about, yet I've been very active in this committee. So I'm just here to stress that I think the new direction, and I apologize for missing the meeting yesterday. I've been out of town and got here this afternoon, but that the ideas of maybe us sharing membership on these different committees to be able to work together, and hear what, I mean, my last Parks and Rec meeting, there were a lot of things that came up that I wish A&P could have heard, and I wish that Public Service could have heard, and I think it's vice versa. I sometimes would make assumptions because the communication is not there. And, I look forward to seeing what we can do as far as increasing that communication by maybe having mixed membership like Public Service having some A&P on it, maybe Parks and Rec have an A&P and maybe some public service on it, and see what we can do to move this forward, to make this very successful sports tourism committee because that's what we want. We want that to be success and we all want our Parks and Rec with local to be a success, and I think it's very possible to do both. I just think it's going to be working together. And, then a minute ago, you talked about grants. I've been very fortunate. I've lived off of grants since the 70s with my jobs. And, I know when you write a grant, if you can show partnerships, and you can show partnerships within the city, your chances of getting those grants accepted are tenfold than if just Parks just goes for it. I can see a future of an A&P and Parks grant going forward that would just be magnificent. And, so I want to thank those who have worked so hard on this and I want to encourage that we integrate this communication and we work together to move this forward. Thank you. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you for your comments.

James Elywn Hinds, 508 Ridgecrest, said, for those that worry because I've been here the last couple months, I'm still alive and well. First, let me say I have nothing against sports tourism. I think there's some good to be said for that. However, I want to emphasize, whenever it comes to Parks and Recreation and all that, the thing that ought to be front and center is not money we can make off of people visiting our city. These sports teams are great, but they constitute a very small portion of our children that are involved in that and anything that is done along Parks and Recreation and all that, the kids need to come first. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you for your comments.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson John Street, that this matter be Adjourned. The motion PASSED

with the following vote.

Aye: 9 - Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Kevin Miller;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 3 - Brian Emison;Joe Hafner and Anthony Coleman

_____ **Date:** _____

Harold Copenhaver, Mayor

Attest:

_____ **Date:** _____

April Leggett, City Clerk