



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

5:30 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

PUBLIC SAFETY 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 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent 1 - Charles Coleman

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Special Presentation to Officer Ellison

Mayor Harold Copenhaver asked Police Chief Rick Elliott and Officer Troy Ellison to come to the podium.

Police Chief Rick Elliott said, thank you Mayor. Good evening Council. I would like to take this time to recognize one of my officers for an act that he did a few weeks ago back when we had the snow and ice. To Officer Troy Ellison, on January 20, 2024, Patrolman Ellison responded to the Gladiolus Apartments for a child that had fallen through the ice, unable to swim, unable to get out of the frozen water, Patrolman Ellison was the first unit to arrive on the scene and without hesitation or regard for his own personal safety, he slide out on the ice to prevent the child from drowning. Patrolman Ellison was able to safely remove the child from the frozen pond and get him pulled to the side. So, for his heroic efforts in the saving of this child's life, I present Officer Ellison with the JPD Medal of Valor. So, thank you.

Mayor Copenhaver said, and Council, if I may, I would like to add a few other comments. Officer Ellison did something that is usually under the radar, but this is what the City of Jonesboro officers do every day. It is an act of bravery, but this one was caught on camera. And, this is just a great tribute to you officer. It is also a tribute to all of the officers who perform feats of kindness and indeed, heroism, every day in our city. I stand firmly by the officers of the Jonesboro Police Force and appreciate them on a daily basis and I thank you and congratulate Officer Ellison for acting when no one else could save a life. Thank you so much Officer. Officer Ellison said, I appreciate it sir. Mayor Copenhaver said, you bet, my pleasure once again.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, to Approve the Consent Agenda. The motioned PASSED

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Coleman

[MIN-24:010](#) MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 6, 2024

Attachments: [CC Minutes 02062024](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-24:009](#) RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 300 N. THIRD, PARCEL 01-144182-18000, OWNED BY TYRONE L. FUTRELL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,792.19

Attachments: [300 N Third Invoice Letter](#)
[Council Letter Notice](#)
[Notice of Violation, Inspection Report, proof of service](#)
[Notice to Repair or Remove](#)
[Title Search](#)
[300 N Third Affidavit](#)
[300 N Third Council Letter](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-014-2024

[RES-24:010](#) A RESOLUTION TO THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH ATLAS ASPHALT INC. FOR THE 2024 ASPHALT MILLING AND OVERLAYS SELECTED CITY STREETS PROJECT - JOB NO. 2024:03

Attachments: [Bid 2024-03 Asphalt Cold Milling Overlays Tabulation](#)
[2024 Asphalt](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-015-2024

RESOLUTIONS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

[RES-24:012](#) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO ARKANSAS TO

ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH CITY, WATER AND LIGHT (CWL) TO APPLY FOR THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA), FY2023 BUILDING RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES (BRIC) GRANT TO REPLACE WOODEN UTILITY POLES WITH STEEL POLES

Attachments: [MOU CWL Received from Grants on 02272024](#)

Councilmember John Street asked to be recused from discussion and voting on RES-24:012 due to the fact that he serves on the CWL Board of Directors.

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

Aye: 10 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Coleman

Recused: 1 - John Street

Enactment No: R-EN-016-2024

RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-24:015](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT TO PURCHASE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 700 S. PATRICK STREET

Attachments: [Land Bank Minutes - Feb. 13, 2024](#)
[700 Patrick Plat](#)
[Letter from Mike Cone](#)

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, I do have a couple of questions, Mayor. First of all, let me say this, I do and I am very much so believe that it is apropos that we consider historic and heritage value, especially with this being what we consider across the country Black History Month. As a proud black man, I do appreciate even this opportunity to share and address, but as a businessman, I just want to know based on the information that is here that it was appraised, this particular value was appraised at \$31,000 and then they are requesting \$65,000. So, I would like to know what conversations were had, if there were any. And, I saw the notes that there were a couple of counteroffers and what that was and so on and so forth.

Mayor Copenhaver said, councilman, and we have. This has been going on for a long time. Any discussions we have had individuals in from even Chicago on the historical portion of it, but Brian can bring you a little bit of an update as well and we have Derrel for some other if you have any other questions. So, Brian, if you would? Chief Administrative Officer Brian Richardson said, sure and I may defer to Derrel if I am incorrect on this, but the appraisal was actually on the property that the two lots on which the house resides on. It did not include the adjacent three lots that kind of makeup that corner. So, the appraisal is not for the entire property. It is for that specific set of two lots where the house is. So, the rest of the property that is being actually considered here tonight consists of lots 1-5 and the appraisal was only on the two lots that are where the house is actually located. So, the \$31,000 appraisal did not reflect the vacant property that is included with this. That was at the time whenever we were appraising that for the original consideration. The house was in an estate that there was some discussion back and forth on about how those property sales were going to go and that they are trying to combine it all on one property. So,

that appraisal, I believe, was part of those discussions. So, again, the \$31,000 does not include the five lots as presented by council. Those have not been appraised, the additional three. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman asked, so to be clear, the \$65,000 will be for all three lots? Mr. Richardson said, correct, it is the entire yellow portion that is on the screen there behind you. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman asked, that would be five, five lots? Mr. Richardson said, yes. It is roughly 6/10ths of an acre, give or take. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman asked, with that being said, with the \$65,000, is that good based on whomever appraises or whatever did they think that it was a good amount? Mr. Richardson said, the \$31,000 was the appraisal with the lot that has the house on it and I guess I would kind of defer to potentially Councilman Street could help answer this. I am not sure if that house is a hindrance or on the appraisal in the condition that it is in or if the rest of the property is more valuable because it doesn't have a house that if I was buying it to develop, that would probably be one of the first things you would do is remove that house to build whatever property around whatever you are going to develop on top of it. So, that very well may be a hindrance, the non-recoverable house.

Councilmember John Street said, those lots too by their proximity to the other city property is worth more to us through plottage than it would be to somebody else if they just looked at those individual lots, but yeah, based on where it is at and the historical factor, I think it is well within the asking price on that. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, that is all I had. Councilmember David McClain said, I have a couple of questions. Mayor Copenhagen said, sure councilman. Councilmember McClain said, so, I want to make sure because in the Land Bank meeting, a couple of things that were pointed out, one was that the property will go to the Land Bank. And, then Mr. Thomas affirmed that the property will return to the Land Bank for use if the structure was not developed by the Parks Department. First of all, what does that mean? I want to make sure if we say, hey, we will buy the property for \$65,000 and we exhaust \$500,000 or \$1,000,000 trying to restore the home, do we then say, well, we spent too much, now it goes back to the Land Bank. Help me understand the plan there, if you could. Mr. Richardson said, I would say that scenario would be, let's say that we acquire the property and upon further architectural review, which it has been, Jeff Steiling, the Mayor, myself, Mr. Thomas and some other staff members went out and looked at the house and he actually restored, I believe, the Dyess House. So, he has had some experience in trying to bring these old historic structures back up to period correctness, but you wouldn't enter into trying to fund something that both without a significant grant to be able to pay for a lot of that cost or at least know what your final end goal was. So, I would say that the scenario in which it went back to the Land Bank would be that the house is looked at and no grants were possibly required and work couldn't start on the project really at all, not \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 into a project, you wouldn't just stop like that. And, not to put the cart ahead of the horse because we are just considering the actual property here, but I do want us to be aware that while we think and we feel confident there are significant grants out there to help pay for this project, we can't assume that those are going to automatically come through. It's just that those conversations don't really start until you own the property. So, there would be some due diligence to try to find a grant or foundation matching support which again there is a lot of that out there. But, until you start trying to ferret that stuff down, it's a bit of a hope that you will be able to find it. I can't imagine the City Council or the administration pursuing it with an actual construction project until those funds have been allocated or approved from other sources.

Councilmember McClain said, let me follow up with what you just said with this second question. It feels like to me we don't have a grasp on what it would cost to restore or whatever we are going to do and I honestly feel like we don't know what direction we are going with it because we don't know if it is salvageable. And, the reason I say that, Mayor, you emailed us and you told us that Jeff Steiling looked at

the house and estimated that the restoration and conversion to a public museum could cost in the area of \$1.5-\$2 million. So, again, what is the plan with the property? And, if we don't know what the plan is with the property right now, my suggestion would be number one: we hold on. We hit the pause button and make sure what we are going to do with this property before we say, let's just buy the property and then we will make a plan. Well, then, we will try and come up with something else. That's my suggestion.

Mayor Copenhaver said, with the pause button, we hit the pause button, the property will be sold to another buyer. Councilmember Chris Moore said, I am pretty sure that one of my buddies would buy that tomorrow because it is five lots for \$65,000, that all have \$1,900 water meters on them. I am pretty sure that after it goes out tonight, if we were to turn this down, I mean, we've been down (sic). Councilmember McClain said, I am not saying that, but that's the (sic). Councilmember Moore said, you are saying there's not a pause. Councilmember McClain said, yeah. Councilmember Moore said, either we are going to buy it tonight or somebody else will.

Councilmember McClain said, I just don't think we should get into the business of buying properties that we don't have a plan or vision for. Now, I understand if there has been discussion, but if we don't have anything lined out or anything mapped out, I just don't understand, number one: we overpay in my opinion, again, for one piece of property or two lots and then we turn around also and we just don't know what we are going to do with it. If it is going to go back and be a part of the Land Bank, then (sic). Chief Operating Officer Tony Thomas said, that is the sole purpose of the Land Bank is to acquire properties for redevelopment within the City of Jonesboro. I mean that is their overall mission and their overall thrust is to locate properties that could be hindering development in certain parts of town, acquiring those properties and then making them available for redevelopment in our community. What we are saying as the City of Jonesboro is before you make that available for redevelopment in our community, that you give us an opportunity to take some archives that we have as a part of a community center in the City of Jonesboro and look at developing that property for that purpose in an effort to free up rental space in the E. Boone Watson Center that can be used for other purposes. That is what the request is tonight. Now, we have some preliminary estimates, but you know, preliminary estimates are just that, preliminary estimates. Once a property is acquired, my comment was correct, that if we got into this project, not that we are going to spend any money on this project, but if we have a plan to develop this property as an African American Cultural Center in the City of Jonesboro. If that is not cost effective as a part of the next steps that will occur, then that property is retained by the Land Bank and can be made available for their use or for a redevelopment in this critical core of Jonesboro, adjacent to our E. Boone Watson Center.

Councilmember Joe Hafner asked, couldn't it also be sold to another investor if the city decided they didn't want to develop? Mr. Thomas said, if the Land Bank, if the city choses to not move forward because of costs related to this project, this property remains in the hands of the Land Bank and then the Land Bank who purchased the property, then will decide how it moves forward. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, and they have way more restrictive guidelines on how it is developed than if it is just bought in the private market. Councilmember Hafner said, right. I guess my only point was if the city and Land Bank decides it is not a good piece of property for the city, we can get rid of it. Ms. Duncan said, the Land Bank does just what they do. Mr. Thomas said, an African American Cultural Museum is one aspect of it. But, as you have also heard, it is adjacent to the E. Boone Watson Community Center. So, I know as a part of that meeting, staff was there to talk about potential use in that way. So, I do think that there is a viable city use for this property, but in the event there is not, then they can make this property available on the market as they may do for other properties that they have acquired as a part of their work here in the city.

Councilmember Hafner asked, have any other locations been looked at as potential expansion place for the museum? Mr. Thomas said, we have not. We have had some discussions with the Arkansas State University Museum, but because of their limited space, they are not able to take the archives. I keep calling them archives for lack of a better word under their umbrella. Just when this house became available, just because of that site has historic value in the City of Jonesboro. The E. Boone Watson Center was the old Industrial High School here in Jonesboro from what I understand. So, when it became available, just because of its proximity, there is talk of the original owner or one of their family members who had ties to the school having resided there in that facility, so once it hit the market and we knew it became available, actually, the family reached out and we have been having conversations with them since that time. So, to answer that question, no. No other location has been considered because of the proximity to the E. Boone Watson Center which has significant value for the African American community and its location in the neighborhood.

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, I have a follow up statement. Thank you Tony for sharing, Mr. Thomas for sharing. My main concern was as a business standpoint. I just wanted to hear was it worth it and so now that I heard from my colleagues and others that it is worth it, I am good in that regard. But, my other concern is this, I want to see it happen. I want to see it followed up and followed through. I want to see it completed. I don't want this to be another project that we have 10, 15, 20 years down the road and then we are back in the same place. So, that is the only comment I wanted to make is to make sure that we follow up and make it happen. Mr. Thomas said, yes sir and I can tell you that this is not just a city driven project. Roger McKinney, who is in the audience, who is the current overseer of the project or the museum as it sits there, so it is not just a City of Jonesboro event, but there is a great deal of interest from the community in this regards. Once the property is acquired, I can assure you that we will pulling together a group that can spearhead a process in order to make this happen. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, great, I would love to be a part of it. I would love to be a part of it. Mayor Copenhaver said, and to add to that, we have already had curator interest from museums in Chicago and northern Illinois that have interest in this project as well and helping us. And, again, Mr. McKinney, is there anything that you would like to add? If you would like to come forward and address the council on the historical significance.

Mr. Roger McKinney said, good evening. I am the supervisor and the curator of the E. Boone Watson Community Center. I have been there 35 years. This house that we are talking about in particular, when the old Booker T. Washington School was located on the site of the E. Boone Watson Community Center, this house was also built in 1924 and it was the Principal's house. That is the significant value about the house. It was the Principal's house. And, a lot of my fellow members that went to Booker T. Washington, they would love to see this converted into a museum because this is the only standing property that ties that area to the African American high school here in Jonesboro and northeast Arkansas. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Mr. McKinney. And, I can assure you the interest obviously in this project is to start and to complete that project.

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: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Coleman

Enactment No: R-EN-017-2024

6. NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

[ORD-24:005](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-1 TO I-1 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5709 E. NETTLETON AVENUE

- Attachments:** [Rezoning Application](#)
 [Rezoning Plat](#)
 [CWL Signed Notification](#)
 [Rezoning Sign](#)
 [Receipts](#)
 [Staff Summary - CC](#)
 [Publication Receipt](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Brian Emison, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-24:005 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

[ORD-24:001](#) AN ORDINANCE FOR A MICROBREWERY-RESTAURANT PRIVATE CLUB PERMIT FOR DEFENDING ADVANCEMENT, INC. d/b/a LEBOWSKI'S INC. TO BE LOCATED AT 1514 SOUTHERN RIDGE BLVD., JONESBORO, ARKANSAS

- Attachments:** [Application Redacted](#)
 [Publication Receipt](#)

Held at second reading

[ORD-24:002](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM AG-1 TO I-1 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 6725 E. HIGHLAND DRIVE AS REQUESTED BY GARRETT DUNHAM OF FISHER ARNOLD ON BEHALF OF PLATINUM PROPERTIES OF NEA, LLC

Attachments: [Staff Summary-CC](#)
[Rezoning Plat](#)
[01032024 Certified Receipts](#)
[01042024 Certified Receipts](#)
[Platinum Properties Cover Letter](#)
[Platinum Properties Property Owner Notification](#)
[Platinum Properties Rezoning Application](#)
[Staff Summary \(6\)](#)
[6725 e highland](#)

Held at second reading

[ORD-24:003](#)

AN ORDINANCE FOR THE APPROVAL OF A PRIVATE CLUB PERMIT FOR JONESBORO KIDS D/B/A SOUTHERN BBQ HILLTOP

Attachments: [Southern BBQ Hilltop Private Club_Redacted](#)

Held at second reading

[ORD-24:004](#)

AN ORDINANCE FOR THE TRANSFER OF LOCATION OF A PRIVATE CLUB PERMIT FOR 1812 PIZZA COMPANY

Attachments: [Private Club Relocation Application](#)
[Publication Receipt](#)

Held at second reading

8. MAYOR'S REPORTS

Mayor Harold Copenhaver reported on the following:

So, Council, in February, our neighborhood cleanup produced 6.45 tons of trash hauled off free of charge. It was held at Southside Softball Complex and we had more than 50 tires. I think many of you all heard from Director Roper earlier this evening. This has been ongoing for 14 months and it has really been a fabulous success. I want to thank our Code Enforcement, our Sanitation teams, Keep Jonesboro Beautiful for this success. Our next cleanup is 8 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Saturday, March 2, 2024, at the Rock Church, 4318 East Johnson Avenue. So, if you have anything to get rid of, this is the time and place. Again, that will be at the Rock Church on Johnson Avenue.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority celebrated 116 years of service. And, with its Annual Founder's Day event, we were all proud of the organization and the entities and what they continued to do and invest in Jonesboro. I was proud to honor the Kappa Omega Chapter last week with a proclamation, but I must say, originally, they had 15 founders at Arkansas State University and only a few of them are still alive to this day. But, what they have done is grown in the capacity of over 100 women who have served our community in multiple areas, especially hunger and other capacities in the African American population and in the City of Jonesboro. So, I always commend them.

If you are wondering whether our camera system is working, all you have to do is ask the folks at Plato's Closet. Thanks to a report by a brave employee, our police department tracked the robbery vehicle and arrested the suspect within an hour.

Many of you have probably heard the story from Chief Elliott. But, again, good job by JPD and thank you to all of the staff at Plato's Closet. Hopefully, any potential criminals will think twice about showing up at your store again and in our community.

Last week, Miss Steele Capital, Erica Parker of Arkansas State University, dropped in to discuss her community service initiative, career ambitions, and Miss America opportunity. I was proud to hear of Erica because her championing is volunteerism for all ages.

As you know Council, the Great Eclipse is coming and April 8th is just around the corner. Schools, businesses, and the City of Jonesboro are all preparing for this historical event when darkness will descend on our city. A total eclipse will last in Jonesboro for a little more than two minutes, but the sun will be partially blocked for almost three hours. We have special glasses required to watch the eclipse and trust me you don't want to try it without them. So, pick up a pair at the Municipal Center, Chamber of Commerce, and the Public Library. You can even order some t-shirts if you would like.

Next week, Jonesboro plays host to the Governor's Conference on Tourism. It is the 50th such event and it will be celebrated accordingly. We expect more than 500 tourists and they are going to spend a few days in the City of Jonesboro. On the luncheon with the Governor is one of the many highlights on tap starting next weekend. We look forward to a big crowd and putting on the great event and will further establish Jonesboro as a destination for visitors around the state. A&P is hosting this major event and I want to thank Craig Rickert, Jerry Morgan, and all of the volunteers who have taken leadership roles in making it a success. And, I must say the committee has been working on this around the clock in many circumstances we are looking forward to participating in our community, whether it is downtown, whether it is Craighead Forest Park, and other amenities that the City of Jonesboro has to offer. And, you are going to be seeing a lot of things done by our Streets Department, cleaning up efforts as well. So, again, I commend for all that are taking special part in this event.

It is always an honor to address our veterans and today I was pleased to tell the Northeast Arkansas Military Officers Association about what we are doing in the City of Jonesboro. These are men and women who served our country in the way that the rest of us will fully never understand. But, we will always hold them in the highest regard. They care about their country and you best believe they care about Jonesboro.

Just to remind everyone, we have a CDBG Grant Public Hearing at 10:30 a.m. Friday at Parker Park Community Center and another at 6:00 p.m., the same day at Magnolia Road Church.

And, finally, applications are on the next youth council are now open for students in 9th through 12th grades. It will be the fourth class and the first three have been a great success. All students, public, private, and home school are invited to apply. So, just go to jonesboro.org and fill out the application form.

9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Chris Moore said, yes, I would like to thank the Mayor and his staff for coming to the West End Association meeting. We discussed it in Public Safety earlier. Due to the efforts of the Chief and Scott Roper, the calls for service in that area were 65 for the last year. So, that is pretty extraordinary and everybody down there anticipates good things so having it cleaned up and safe is top too. The other

thing that I wanted to mention, two weeks ago, I called you on a Sunday morning about the damage to the soccer field at the YMCA. I have been concerned about that because Danny and them are in the process of a million dollar synthetic turf field out at Joe Mack. And, just a few months ago, somebody damaged the Jonesboro High School field and did over \$100,000 worth of damage. I think it is very important that we catch whoever did that and we are going to have to send a message because that same instance out at Joe Mack would have been several hundred thousand dollars in damage. I mean it was just senseless destruction. They came in, tore the field all up. Danny is putting up a fence to try to barricade it off. So, that is a good effort, but I hope we make progress on finding out whoever did that.

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, I would like for Danny to come up and just give a brief synopsis of the tournament activity that we have had in Jonesboro over the course of the last two or three weeks.

Parks and Recreation Director Danny Kapales said, I will just kind of start off with part of the tournament conversation. It started when I called Mr. Gibson on a Saturday morning and informed him that we were going to be filling up one of his parking lots because we had overflow from Parker Park where we were having a volleyball tournament. All of a sudden, I looked over and this parking lot was getting full, the Parker Park parking lot was just full and people were looking for a spot to park. But, I just want to give an example of what our volleyball tournament is doing. I know I got to speak with you at one of them. And, fortunately at the first tournament on January 13th, we had 103 teams in town and I believe 57 of those teams were from out of state, here in town enjoying the weekend. They start that morning and they finish that evening so they stayed Friday and Saturday nights enjoying Jonesboro. I called the hotels through the week trying to get rooms for officials and they were full. I was having to go to different hotels to find space for them. The same thing happened on February 10th. We had a tournament called "We Care." At that point, I had 81 teams for that tournament. Now, granted, I wasn't the only one filling up the weekend. I believe we were also hosting the state Thespian Troupe. Basically, all of the high schools were here in town for that event out at ASU, but all of the hotels were packed. I ended up, one of our local hotel owners found a couple of spaces, called him and he found spaces for our officials that were traveling in from over four hours away and needed a space to stay the night and he got us a couple of rooms and he got them taken care of. But, the same thing with that event, over half the teams that were here were from out of state. So, those were folks that were coming to town to enjoy what we had and have competition. And, that was having tournaments at multiple schools. It was Jonesboro Schools, Valley View Schools, Nettleton Schools were helping us with that tournament, making sure that those happened. So, just knowing that down the road, we are going to have a large facility for those events to happen and we will be able to have more than just two of them. We will be able to have hopefully, six, seven, eight of those types of events, transitioning into basketball tournaments and other types of activities. I know this weekend coming up, it is February, and we have got a baseball tournament this Saturday. So, we have got 25 teams on turf that are playing baseball. So, come on out to Joe Mack. You all asked for tournaments to happen, we are trying our best to make sure that we have events and activities happening all of the time. On top of that, I think we have had three basketball tournaments. All three of those ranged from 60-80 teams in those basketball tournaments and those were ages, grades 3rd through 6th grade only that filled up the community centers and some of the schools that we utilized. So, we are doing everything we can to have activity within the facilities that we currently have. And, that is not just the weekends, it's during the week you will see activity within the gyms, whether it is practice, games, things of that sort. So, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to come up and speak on that. Councilmember Gibson said, Danny, I thank you and I think this just speaks to the question of need for the

facility that we have in question. So, thank you for comments. Mr. Kapales, said, absolutely, thank you. Councilmember Chris Moore asked, Danny, is that what was going on two weeks ago at the YMCA? I saw it packed all weekend. Mr. Kapales said, it was. We had 16 year olds in that facility and it was kind of nice because they played on the new court and the teams that were not playing were sitting over on the turf and basically warming up or practicing or hanging out. And, at one point we had our travel soccer teams come in for practice. So, we had travel soccer practice happening on the turf while we had a volleyball tournament happening on the other side. So, the facility was absolutely packed full. Councilmember Moore said, yeah, I saw the parking lot was packed Friday night, Saturday, and I think even some on Sunday. Mr. Kapales said, we had practices and things going on Sunday. So, yeah, there is, our facilities are staying full at this point. Councilmember Moore stated, that's good. Mayor Copenhaver said, while we are on that, I want to commend your staff as well Danny. And, obviously, we talk every Saturday for a length, but just to bring it in order here, he's talking ten different facilities in one weekend that he had to coordinate with his staff in order for these out of town guests to participate in and again, getting referees at these ten different facilities. It is really a logistical nightmare to say the least. And, so, Danny and his staff have done a great job and so we appreciate it. And, like I said, the Thespian was going on all weekend as well. We had over 500 additional students along with their families here in the community. And, so, Jonesboro is booming on weekends. But, again, we are also doing other things during the week as you mentioned at Parker Park and Allen Park with our City Stars Basketball League that has started up as well and now baseball. So, Jonesboro is on the move. Mr. Kapales said, it is and to just add to that, we run the junior high soccer and softball programs. And, as I was telling you earlier today that both of those programs are up in numbers and both of those programs, I do have new coordinators in place and they are doing a great job reaching out, getting schools. When we say junior high programs that is all of Northeast Arkansas that comes to Jonesboro to participate in those programs. They use Southside for the softball program and then the junior high program. We will go out to the other schools, but they will be playing out at Joe Mack and we will have tournaments off of those programs also and it is just a build up getting our high schools ready making sure that they have players in place for the high school when the time comes around. Mayor Copenhaver asked, Danny, why don't you give them an update real quick on the Governor's Conference. Several of the facilities, city facilities that we will be utilizing during that time. Mr. Kapales said, you are absolutely right. And, as you said earlier, a lot of volunteers, a lot of people are in place for that. So, a lot of thank you's go out to many, many folks, but on Tuesday morning, we will have a large group going out to the Shooting Complex. They will be utilizing that facility, busing between the trap fields and the pistol/rifle end, and so they get to see what we have as far as that facility. And, I know that we will probably mention more about it, but that facility was also an award winner this past weekend. On Friday night, they won the Arkansas Delta Hospitality Award. So, that facility won a great award. It was an honor for them and hopefully I will be able to show you all more from that group that went and collected that award. And, then also, at 9:15, we will take at least 100 folks are going out to Craighead Forest and we are going to have them do a bike tour, a walking tour. We have got Shadrach's serving coffee. We are going to have some fire pits and s'mores will be cooked out there. So, we will have a large group just enjoying the park, seeing what that park has to offer as far as a tourism park. And, then downtown, add to that. I know Monday night they will be down here and the way I understand is the folks, all 500-600 folks will be going to the different restaurants downtown enjoying dinner, but also, just being, floating around downtown seeing the different shops and that's another big tourism piece for Jonesboro. It's just continuing to make downtown a spot for folks to go and to enjoy whether it is to eat or shop or just to hang out. Mayor Copenhaver said, so, a big deal. Mr. Kapales said, yes. Mayor Copenhaver said, appreciate you sir. Councilmember Gibson said, thank you Danny. Mr. Kapales said,

thank you so much. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you councilman.

Councilmember David McClain said, the only thing I had, it looked like, was it Arkansas Business or Arkansas Talk Business, there were some grants given out throughout the state. I didn't know if we applied for any for parks and tourism or parks and rec or whatever. I was curious and you don't have to give me anything now, but I would love to see what we applied for maybe via email or something like that. Mayor Copenhaver said, and we have some other grants in the application process. Councilmember McClain said, got it. From this process, something from the state? Mayor Copenhaver said, yes, from the state, but it is a different grant that we are asking for on that. Councilmember McClain said, okay. Like I said, I would like to have maybe an email update or something like that, I don't know.

Councilmember John Street said, this last weekend was Make-a-Wish Friday. If you haven't seen or heard it, it was very successful. It made quite a few more thousand dollars than last year, but it is just one more thing that makes you proud to call Jonesboro home and Northeast Arkansas. What an orchestrated event. It always is every year, but there are so many volunteers and people who come forth and do such wonderful things for the kids who are definitely in need of something like that. And, it's not just the people who put it on, it is the people who give here, freely give. It just makes you really proud. We even had Bill Campbell show up and carried a bucket for a while. It was a great event and it does make you proud when you look at that and look at the people, your neighbors and stuff that make that possible and give freely to help these kids. It is just a wonderful event. And, everybody that puts that together, I mean, I don't even know who all does. It is just incredible, but every year they do a wonderful job. The same volunteers that come back with additional volunteers. Again, it just rolls out like crazy, but everybody here gives freely and it is wonderful. Mayor Copenhaver said, I also want to say that I think they raised a little over \$460,000 and assisted over 31 wishes. And, I appreciate you as well giving up your time. I saw you in your uniform. Councilmember Street said, we had some people who were granted wishes, we always do every year, come back and they were actually out there manning the buckets which is another thing that makes you feel like wow, how appreciative they are. Mayor Copenhaver said, it is an amazing thing. Councilmember Street said, they come back later and do that themselves. One little girl, I can't remember her name, but she was out there in a wheelchair working the curb. But, it is amazing. It is a wonderful thing. Mayor Copenhaver said, we are blessed in so many ways. Councilmember Street said, yes sir. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you councilman.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Roger McKinney, 104 West Alpine, said, I would just like to add to what I said earlier. This is Black History Month and I have been giving tours at the Washington Center like crazy. Jonesboro High School brought 60 kids out. Nettleton brought 40 kids out. Wynne Elementary brought 42 kids out. CYS came out today and the Jonesboro Probation Office, they brought kids out. So, there is a need for a larger facility because the E. Boone Watson Center has outgrown itself. We don't have any more room. People have been donating stuff, so much stuff and I don't have any place to put it. So, there again, that is another reason why we need a larger facility to house the E. Boone Watson African American Culture Center. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you Mr. McKinney and I appreciate your passion and you are so much a part of that, so thank you again sir.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by

Councilperson Brian Emison, that this meeting be Adjourned. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Coleman

_____ **Date:** _____

Harold Copenhaver, Mayor

Attest:

_____ **Date:** _____

April Leggett, City Clerk