



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Finance & Administration Council Committee

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

4:00 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call by City Clerk April Leggett

Present 6 - Joe Hafner; Charles Coleman; Ann Williams; John Street; David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent 1 - Brian Emison

3. Approval of minutes

[MIN-23:020](#)

MINUTES FOR THE FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING ON FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Attachments: [Finance Minutes 02282023](#)

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

Aye: 5 - Charles Coleman; Ann Williams; John Street; David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent: 1 - Brian Emison

4. New Business

RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-23:055](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, FY22 STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) GRANT

Sponsors: Grants, Fire Department and Finance

Attachments: [FY 2022 SAFER Budget](#)

A motion was made by John Street, seconded by Ann Williams, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 5 - Charles Coleman; Ann Williams; John Street; David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent: 1 - Brian Emison

[RES-23:056](#)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO WAIVE COMPETITIVE BIDDING AND AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH FLOCK GROUP, INC. TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

Sponsors: Police Department and Finance

Attachments: [Flock Safety - Sole Source Letter 2023](#)
[Jonesboro PD Flock - Law Enforcement Agreement \(2\)](#)

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, I have a question for Chief. I am enjoying what I have read with the Flock Safety; and I was really intrigued with the integrated cloud software and hardware platform where it captures two lanes simultaneously on a single camera, blah blah blah. Is this something we already have? Police Chief Elliot said, we're just switching over to this company for LPR technology for our real-time crime center. Councilmember Dr. Coleman said, so this integrates with the old system? Chief Elliot said, again, we're currently using Flock, and we're tied into every Flock camera in the system across the country. So, as you can imagine, you look at the United States and there are Flock cameras all over the country. When I put a license plate number into the system, it's searching that whole database where that vehicle has been. It gives us a chance to track it and we get an investigative case. The other system that we were using did the same thing. It's just a little bit more cumbersome to use. We haven't totally abandoned that system. We still have cameras on that system; but as we move forward with additional cameras, it will be with this vendor. And again, several of our HOAs throughout the city as a group have already purchased this system on their expense, not ours, but the data comes to us for investigative reasons only. Councilmember Dr. Coleman said, great, okay, thank you.

Councilmember David McClain said, Mr. Chairman, if I may. Chief, how many are we planning to purchase? How many license plate readers are we planning to have? Chief Elliot said, I think there are 18. Councilmember Mr. McClain said, are these going to be in the cars? Chief Elliot said, no, these are fixed through critical points throughout the city, high traffic areas throughout the city. I do have a vehicle that is outfitted with LPR cameras. It drives around town capturing information to be fed into the system also. Councilmember Mr. McClain said, so you just have one? Chief Elliot said, I've got one. We do have the option with the new fleet camera system that has been put in the patrol cars. They do have the LPR technology capability. That's an additional expense to turn that feature on, so I have not crossed that bridge yet with the administration. But that's something we'll look at in the near future also. So the whole LPR technology and our real-time crime center concept, the dividends are really paying off, especially this past year. You know, over a thousand cases cleared. A lot of them are accidents, but for the criminal investigation side of the house, there's been a quite a bit. We've been able to link people and catch people in a timely fashion, so it's just made our job a lot more efficient day in and day out. That's what we're doing here, just going to a software that is easier to use by our analysts.

A motion was made by John Street, seconded by Ann Williams, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 5 - Charles Coleman;Ann Williams;John Street;David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent: 1 - Brian Emison

[RES-23:058](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO WAIVE COMPETITIVE BIDDING AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH AXON ENTERPRISES, INC FOR TRAINING EQUIPMENT FOR AXON TASERS AND SUPPORTING AXON SERVICES

Sponsors: Finance and Police Department

Attachments: [Jonesboro VR Quote](#)

Councilmember John Street said, Chief, this is the virtual reality like they came up and showed us last year, isn't it? Police Chief Elliot said, yes, sir. This is the Axon VR product that they were here demoing last year, so we're in the process of moving forward with that acquisition. This is a great training for the officers. It has de-escalation techniques, use of force techniques. There is a wide variety of ways that officers can undergo training at a very minimal expense. Councilmember Street said, it was excellent. Chief Elliot said, it is. It's compact. It's easy to use, but what the officers take away from it will be very beneficial to them and the city in the long run. Councilmember Street said, it's actually pretty realistic. It will make you jump back every now and then. Chief Elliot said, it is. Councilmember Street said, now, is this money appropriated already in the 2023 budget? Chief Administrative Officer Brian Richardson said, yes.

A motion was made by John Street, seconded by Ann Williams, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 5 - Charles Coleman;Ann Williams;John Street;David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent: 1 - Brian Emison

[RES-23:059](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ALLOCATE \$1,306,525 OF AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS TO PURCHASE PUBLIC SAFETY, RADIO, ENGINEERING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS EQUIPMENT

Sponsors: Finance, Information Systems, Streets, Sanitation, Code Enforcement, E911, Police Department, Fire Department and Engineering

Attachments: [ARPA Spring 2023 Legistar](#)

Councilmember David McClain said, Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of questions for either Brian or Chief. It doesn't matter. I want to make sure I'm understanding. On the previous resolution, we're purchasing license plate reading cameras, and then also we're purchasing more here. It looks like we've got 18 we're looking to purchase. Is that in addition to? It's got 18 of them for RTCC and Engineering. Police Chief Elliot said, to back up, the Flock contract was replacing the existing Vigilant contract that we were with last year. So that was set up to be a yearly renewal; and we elected not to renew with Vigilant this year and go to Flock. So that was that contract. As we're moving forward with the real-time crime center, I will be adding additional LPRs under this grant to go along with those replacements. Councilmember McClain said, got it. So it's in addition to. Chief Elliot said, in addition to. Yes, sir. Councilmember McClain said, and also, Brian, if you don't mind speaking to this next question, or next couple of questions that I have. What is the process you guys have in place to request for anything through ARPA funds? Chief Administrative Officer Brian Richardson said, they've released multiple guidelines. They seem to kind of change each week as far as

what all is covered. For instance, these cameras and the safety equipment, obviously the PPE stuff is covered. But the safety equipment is justified through that it replaces or helps to fill the gap for existing employment issues related to Covid. So typically what we'll do is, for instance, when I talk to the chief and Assistant Chief Waterworth about potentially putting cameras on the ARPA funding, we would send that request to the Grants department and they do the research. They check to see if that is applicable under the rules. We've been pretty strict as far as what we've pushed through so far on ARPA, just because I don't think anybody wants to be in a position of getting audited by the federal government, then have to go back through and explain why something may or may not be covered. But those rules do seem to continue to relax and relax and relax, as obviously there are a lot of municipalities that are having trouble spending some of this money. Some of them have just reimbursed it all back to the city, but you know we prefer to keep that separate as long as possible so we can kind of see where this special allocation of funding goes. And we've tried to be as detailed as possible with that. The process would go, for instance, if you had an idea of something that might be interested in ARPA, then reach out to either me or the mayor or Tony and say 'hey, I've got an idea' then we could run it up the chain through Regina and make sure that it meets some of the federal guidelines that are in place. Councilmember McClain said, and I guess you guys know how much we have left. Where are we at on that? Mr. Richardson said, I'm going off memory here a little bit. We've appropriated I think 4.208 in ARPA funds. We've appropriated 4.2. Some of the stuff that we've appropriated money for came in cheaper, some came in a little more expensive, and some is just with the supply disruptions, the stuff hasn't come in yet. That's somewhere around 3.5. The original allocation was 15.57, somewhere in there, so roughly about \$11 million left that we have there. And just a point of clarification on the license plate readers, I think that was actually for 11, the previous one. And these 18, we recently got a lot of financial support for the real-time crime center committed from local banking institutions. A lot of those cameras that were identified as needs that were sponsored by the banks are going to be some of these license plate readers in and around those facilities in case there is ever a need for that. I think that their sponsorship is reflecting about \$105,000 worth of that \$334,000 appropriation for cameras. They have pledged about \$500,000 over the next five years in support of the system. So we're looking at about a \$100,000 each year off the current pledges that we're going to be trying to add to this crime center with.

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, I have a question, Chairman. So, just piggy-backing off of this. So I've been listening and I'm getting these acronyms, LPR. I've got it. So, I was looking at this and it shows for the LPR, the cameras. It has it listed yearly and highlighted. So what does that 45,000 mean? Maintenance or something? Mr. Richardson said, roughly, and correct me if I'm wrong here Chief, each of those LPRs are \$2500 a year. It's a subscription service, so you're not necessarily buying the camera, you're subscribing to the service. Some of you may actually have the Flock system in your neighborhood, but it's set up to where you essentially rent the camera. And if it ever needs to be replaced, there's technology upgrades, that's replaced. You're not really buying the hardware, you're paying for a subscription service. It's \$2500 a year. Councilmember Dr. Coleman said, I got you. I only ask because it was the only thing that was highlighted. Mr. Richardson said, I think it's worth noting that there is a reoccurring cost on that. As far as some of the other cameras go, some of them have reoccurring fees at \$50 a month or \$25 a month; but the LPRs were significant enough to highlight for you because those are the same amount each year. So, if you sign a five-year contract, that's five years of \$2500 a year.

Councilmember Ann Williams said, I just had a question out of interest. How much

can be allocated for safety infrastructure like for pedestrian safety in regard to where it is a safety issue? You know, like certain sidewalks that are needed for pedestrian safety? Mr. Richardson said, well, I can find that out and talk with Regina. I know that there for a while, there were some issues with being able to actually construct anything. Capital improvements were limited somewhat, but those guidelines have changed. We've done most of the street related projects just out of the general fund, but I do think that it's worth keeping a close eye on because obviously there's always a need for increased spending there. Councilmember Williams said, you know the restriction as far as capital improvement with that, there are some exceptions. For example, sidewalks to a bus stop, it's allowed under federal funding that we get for JETS. I'm thinking that there may be that kind of exception here with this for capital improvements. Mr. Richardson said, I certainly hope so; and if not, I hope it relaxes more so we are able to do that. That's why you haven't seen the administration jump out and be really anxious to spend a whole lot of this money just because I think it makes sense to kind of wisely put it out there to keep good things coming and also to wait and make sure that each project merits this type of attention. I do think that it's definitely something worth keeping in mind, and I'll check to make sure if that's freed up any. Councilmember Williams said, I have heard intimations that what we don't spend might be grabbed back by the government, not just a matter of us giving it back, but it might be taken back. Mr. Richardson said, well that's certainly our goal is by 2026 to have none of it left. So help us find good projects between now and then. Councilmember Williams said, okay, we'll work on that.

A motion was made by John Street, seconded by Charles Coleman, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 5 - Charles Coleman;Ann Williams;John Street;David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent: 1 - Brian Emison

5. Pending Items

6. Other Business

Councilmember David McClain said, Mr. Chairman, I had a quick question. I know we've talked a lot about some grants tonight; and Brian, if you don't mind, let us know where we were on some of the grants we applied for, mainly for trails, things of that nature. Have we heard back? And if we have heard back, where are we at and what were we planning to do if we don't have the grant funding? Chief Administrative Officer Brian Richardson said, Regina's not here. I would say that I think at Public Services a couple weeks ago, Regina kind of presented an update on where we were on grants. We have submitted the RAISE grant. That is now officially logged with the Department of Transportation; and I'll encourage each of you to send in letters of support if you want to. Councilmember McClain asked, when do they stop accepting letters of support? Mr. Richardson said, there is not a cutoff date for them. We're encouraging everybody to get them in though in the next month or so. They'll probably start reviewing and seriously considering the grants sometime in the late spring or early summer. We did recently apply for a Reconnecting Cities grant with the Department of Transportation also. We did not get that grant. That would have been for the flyover to ASU. So we're obviously looking at additional ways to be able to fund that project through the city. I can get you a rundown sheet though of other specific grants. Are there any of them in particular that you're thinking of? Councilmember McClain said, I

was just curious about all of our trail grants that we've applied for. I know we've had some I think through the state, but also I know through the feds also. Mr. Richardson said, we applied for a TAP grant for the Joe Mack connector. Craig, help me out here. Did they decide that grant yet? I think that one is still being considered. It would go obviously to connect the trail down from here to Joe Mack Campbell Park. I don't think that we've heard back on that. I know the next cycle of TAP grants is about to come online, and we're obviously planning on applying for some additional trail coverage with some of those TAP grants. Those are the only two that I think are even floating around at the moment for the trail grants since the Reconnecting Cities grant was declined. We did apply for a grant for an overpass on Gee Street, but that's still being considered. I haven't heard anything back on that either. Councilmember McClain said, yes, I would like a rundown on what we apply for and I guess what we plan to apply for as well. If there's a new section that we apply for, if there is something we currently are working on. I'd love to see that break down. Thank you.

Chairman Joe Hafner said, I know we did get the soft surface trail grant. That's what we're using to do some of Craighead Forest, correct? Mr. Richardson said, that was an ATV motorized vehicle grant; and that's doing some soft trail construction work around the ATV park. Now the city council budgeted money to pay for the soft trail system out at Craighead, and we're actually also in the process of requesting some private foundation matching funds for that as well.

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, it's not a question. I just thought about the resolution that we did pass, so it's not really in reference to that other than to say I see some fire personnel here. When it goes to the full council, I think one of the first questions I had was, and I didn't think about it until after we had gone to the next one, was that how competitive are we with our fire personnel with their salaries? Because I hear a lot from the police officers, but not much from the fire personnel. And I just want to make sure that we are competitive, and that it's not a large turnover rate. I hear a lot from the, like I said, the police department in that regard, but not much from the fire personnel, so I just wanted to hear that. I think it would be good for us to know if we're still competitive. Mr. Richardson said, I will let the chief speak on that. I mean, I do echo that I think we have to stay competitive; and I might be a little biased, but I think we've got the best fire department and the best police department in the state. I thank the council and everybody involved for allowing the resources to make sure that we're competitive. But right now, I think we're doing pretty good as far as retention and turnover goes in that department. I know there is a bi-annual testing for additional firefighters, so if you're interested. Fire Chief Hamrick said, we are very competitive right now with everyone else in the state our size or even a little larger. Our starting pay getting bumped up this last June really helped out a lot. We traditionally don't have a lot of turnover because we have the best job in the city; and when people start, they make it to their finish line at the end of their career. So it's very seldom that they leave one fire department to go find another one. So we don't experience what PD does at all as far as turnover. So we're in pretty good shape. Councilmember Coleman said, thank you. I just thought we ought to share that.

[RES-23:057](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO WAIVE COMPETITIVE BIDDING AND AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE OF A PICKUP TRUCK FOR THE CITY OF JONESBORO

Sponsors: Finance

Attachments: [img20230313_09243108](#)

A motion was made by Councilmember John Street, seconded by Councilmember Ann

Williams, to suspend the rules and walk on RES-23:057. All voted aye.

A motion was made by John Street, seconded by Ann Williams, that this Resolution be Recommended to Council. The motion CARRIED with the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Charles Coleman;Ann Williams;John Street;David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent: 1 - Brian Emison

7. Public Comments

8. Adjournment

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

Aye: 5 - Charles Coleman;Ann Williams;John Street;David McClain and Anthony Coleman

Absent: 1 - Brian Emison