



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Public Services Council Committee

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

4:30 PM

Municipal Center

ELECTION OF A CHAIR

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

Aye: 4 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Charles Frierson and Ann Williams

Abstain: 1 - Chris Gibson

1. Call To Order

Present 5 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson; Charles Frierson and Ann Williams

2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

Present 5 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson; Charles Frierson and Ann Williams

3. Approval of minutes

Present 5 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson; Charles Frierson and Ann Williams

[MIN-19:120](#)

MINUTES FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2019

Attachments: [Public Services Minutes 12172019](#)

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

4. New Business

RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-20:140](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AMEND THE JETS 2020 BUDGET FOR THE CARES ACT FUNDING

Sponsors: JETS and Grants

Attachments: [JETS Cares Act Funding 2020](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Joe Hafner, seconded by Councilperson

Ann Williams, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 4 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Charles Frierson and Ann Williams

5. Pending Items

6. Other Business

[COM-20:053](#)

PRESENTATION BY JETS DIRECTOR MICHAEL BLACK ON THE JETS CARES ACT FUNDING

Sponsors: JETS

Attachments: [JETS Cares Act Funding 2020 MB](#)

JETS Director, Michael Black gave an overview of the JETS 2020 CARES Act Proposed Funding Plan. Mr. Black explained that JETS started in May of 2006 and has experienced many growing pains. There are five fixed routes now. Three are on thirty minute loops, and two are on sixty minute loops. The service begins between 5:40 and 6:00 a.m., and ends at about 7:20 p.m., Monday through Friday. JETS does offer a Para-Transit system for those that are disabled who can't use a fixed route service. The total ridership for 2019 was 139,710, the current budget for 2020 is \$1.67 million, with a local match of \$180,000 from the city. We do have three Saturday routes, hours of operation is 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and all three are on sixty minute loops, and adjustments were made to these routes due to the current COVID pandemic.

Two years ago we began a partnership with Arkansas State University to develop a bus app, and one year ago this past April it was launched. A person can bring up the app and see the routes and locate where a bus is. The app updates every fifteen seconds. We have taken this a bit further, you will find in all of our shelters, and the more popular stops that do not have shelters we have put two QR codes up where people can scan those with their phones, one QR code will lead them to the JETS web-site where they will see route maps, the other QR code will let them bring up the bus app and they can choose the route that they want to look at, and see where the bus is in relation to where they are.

In 2019 JETS commissioned a study through Alliance Transportation Group for a ten year transit development plan. We have implemented some of those plan study ideas by extending our hours, and began our Saturday routes. The study was done to identify methods to better serve both current and future passengers. This study is available on the JETS web-site. The projected ridership for 2020 was expected to be 122,305. There has been a drop of 25% in the ridership due to the COVID pandemic, we had to restructure the way passengers sit for social distancing purposes. We did see an increase in the para-transit system. In 2019 this time last year the ridership was 6,922, and today in 2020 it is 8,193. That is an increase of about 18%. The explanation for the increase in para-transit is because we are fare free because of COVID pandemic. We have constructed a compartment that will keep the driver isolated from the customers and will began charging fare again on October 5, 2020. By going fare free it did effect the revenue for 2020.

Currently 22% of our bus stops are sheltered. The cost per shelter ranges from \$3,500 to \$8,500. We do have a bid from a local vendor to build shelters, like the one that is located in front of the Earl Bell Community Center for the \$3,500 each as long as we

purchase ten or more. Councilmember Joe Hafner asked if those are covered shelters. JETS Director Michael Black said, yes. Mr. Black explained that there was some maintenance issues with the one located at the Earl Bell Center when it was first put in. The company had used a corrugated fiberglass on the backside of the shelter, and when grounds keeping crews were mowing and or weed eating debris from the equipment would break the fiberglass. We have since gone through and put sheets of Lexan and bolted it on the back side of the shelters and have not had any more issues.

Councilmember Chris Gibson asked if that was why we got away from those to begin with because of the maintenance. JETS Director Michael Black said, generally if we do not have a lot of vandalism, the maintenance is minimal on those. We had them up for eleven years before we ever went through and replaced any plexus glass.

Through the CARES ACT Funding Plan it is going to provide \$2,633,991, at 100% funding. This money can be used for operations, fixed assets, and capital improvements. On the regular 5307 grant we have thirty-six months that we can move money around between operations and capitol, after the thirty-six months is up whatever category that money is in it has to stay. With the CARES ACT Funding there is no deadline how soon we can spend it and we are able to move it with no deadlines. With this CARES ACT Funding it will save the city \$950,000.

Proposed equipment purchases with the CARES ACT Funding include replacement of two buses, one para-transit van, and replacement of four service vehicles, fare box, ten bus security cameras, facility security cameras, and an office printer. Capital improvements proposed spending consist of sidewalks, bust stop improvements, and new shelters.

Councilmember Joe Hafner asked how feasible would it be to have a route out to the industrial park. Director of JETS, Michael Black said that he has met with Nestle to see what their shifts consist of. Mr. Black said that he has also looked at ways to continue expanding the routes. I would like to take route 53 and make a thirty minute loop to the NEA Hospital, then take the other half of that route out to the industrial park past MLK Drive (Commerce).

Councilmember Chris Moore said that he has spoken with Councilmember Hafner regarding this. One of the things we are trying to decide right now is whether or not we want to require all of the incoming factories to have sidewalks or not, we are kind of in a quandary about it. We really need some advice from JETS. One of the things that we are looking at instead of making all of the factories have sidewalks is having an "in lieu of fee", and use that money instead for a central JETS stop among several of the factories out there. Having a couple of primary sidewalks, as opposed to having sidewalks just blanketing the area with no real destination. Mr. Black stated that he would be willing to work with the factories to develop safe stops for their employees, and for our customers. Councilmember Chris Moore said we may be asking you to evaluate a project like this, and give us some advice on in which direction we should go.

Read

7. Public Comments

8. Adjournment

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

Aye: 4 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Charles Frierson and Ann Williams