



# City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center  
300 S. Church Street  
Jonesboro, AR 72401

## Meeting Minutes Public Services Council Committee

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Tuesday, August 15, 2023

4:00 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

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### NOTE: SPECIAL TIME

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

#### 2. ROLL CALL (ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE) CONFIRMED BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

**Present** 5 - Joe Hafner; Brian Emison; LJ Bryant; Anthony Coleman and Janice Porter

**Absent** 2 - Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[MIN-23:069](#)

Minutes for the Public Services Committee Meeting on July 18, 2023

**Attachments:** [Minutes](#)

**A motion was made by Brian Emison, seconded by Janice Porter, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Brian Emison; LJ Bryant; Anthony Coleman and Janice Porter

**Absent:** 2 - Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

#### 4. NEW BUSINESS

#### RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-23:150](#)

A RESOLUTION TO THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID AND ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO GIBSON SIGN-MART FOR THE REFINISHING OF SIX (6) WELCOME TO JONESBORO SIGNS

**Sponsors:** Mayor's Office

**Attachments:** [Bid 2023-18 Refurbish Welcome Signs Tabulation](#)  
[welcome sign star on left](#)

*Chairman Joe Hafner said, before I take questions from the committee, one question I had, and I don't know if this is for Craig or who, but I guess I would like more information about the rebranding. I've noticed on our website and some letterhead and stuff the new logos, but I don't think I've ever fully understood this rebranding, so if you could explain that to us, I would appreciate it. Jonesboro Unlimited Director of Communications Craig Rickert approached the podium and said, sure, I would love*

to. In 2022, Jonesboro Unlimited, as part of our new strategic plan, we said that Jonesboro needed to be rebranded, getting a unified look across all media, digital print, all these kinds of things. We wanted to come up with one unifying concept. So Jonesboro Unlimited hired a company out of Greenville, South Carolina—Arnett Muldrow. We paid to have them come in and do an assessment. We had surveys online. We had input public forums. Lots of people took part, hundreds of people took part in the online survey trying to determine what we needed to do to come up with that one unifying logo and brand. This is kind of an ambassador type brand, not the official city seal that is being replaced for official city business. Obviously that is up to you all to stay with the same people, pride and progress for official city business. But this is an outward reaching thing to help unify us like many other communities. As you probably know, the business of economic development is getting more competitive in recent years in cities that can show they are on one page through different agencies. In our case, we identified the city, Jonesboro Unlimited, the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Jonesboro Alliance, and A&P. We brought these five entities together, brought all their people on board, and with representation from all these different groups in the community and a steering committee working with Arnett Muldrow, we came up with this new look and logo, colors, palettes, fonts, and things like that. You've already seen a change so well on the city's website. The Downtown Jonesboro Association's colors match perfectly. The Chamber of Commerce is in the process of getting their website redone. Jonesboro Unlimited has redone theirs, and A&P has redone theirs. So now, when you come to Jonesboro, when people from outside come to Jonesboro, whether they find us online, they can see that there is intent in our messaging, intent in how we look. This is something that we are very proud of, but this is just part of that thing that kind of needs to be done in this time and age we live in for a community. For example, Greenville, South Carolina, where we visited a few years ago, everywhere you look in Greenville, you would see that G. You would see that color, that logo; and it just really gave you a sense that there is intent there to show that these different factions really know how to work together. It creates a good image for our citizens, for our people, and for people that come and visit us.

Councilmember LJ Bryant said, I'll just say, Craig, I know you all worked extremely hard on this. I sat in several meetings it seems like over the last ten years, but maybe it was just the last year, I don't know. I mean, but you all worked extremely hard on this and got a lot of input from folks. I was really impressed with the consultant that you guys brought in that had done so much work for other folks. So it is a nice product at the end. Mr. Rickert said, thank you, Mr. Bryant.

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, question, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if it's necessarily for Craig, but I was just wondering what the total cost of it was. Chairman Joe Hafner said, the total on the bid sheet is \$89,850, and A&P is contributing \$15,000, so that would be \$74,850? Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, okay, I see that. I'm sorry. I didn't see that attachment.

Chairman Joe Hafner said, I have a question. Was there a request that this be walked on tonight? I know that was talked about before the last finance meeting, but the resolution wasn't ready. Chief Administrative Officer Brian Richardson approached the podium and said, I think that would be preferred. Obviously, whenever you put out bids like this, the bid amount has an expiration date. I know there is a desire to try to get all these completed by the time the Governor's Conference on Tourism comes around next year, so I would almost kind of defer to the vendor if they think that a walk-on tonight is necessary to be able to speed that process up enough to get that done. Chairman Joe Hafner said, if it is not walked on tonight, it would be at the first September meeting; and it would be effective immediately because it is a resolution. So you're talking about two weeks. Would that

*be fine not to walk it on? I'm looking at the vendor right now.*

*The vendor indicated that they could wait until the first council meeting in September. Chairman Joe Hafner said, okay, so we won't walk it on, so we can stay with the motion as it was originally done.*

**A motion was made by LJ Bryant, seconded by Brian Emison, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Brian Emison;LJ Bryant;Anthony Coleman and Janice Porter

**Absent:** 2 - Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

## **5. PENDING ITEMS**

## **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

[COM-23:038](#)

MONTHLY PARKS AND RECREATION UPDATE - PRESENTATION BY HALFF ASSOCIATES ON MASTER PARKS PLAN

**Sponsors:** Parks & Recreation

**Attachments:** [Jonesboro Public Services Committee 08.15.23](#)

*Parks and Recreation Director Danny Kapales approached the podium and said, I really didn't come for an update for Parks. Today I actually brought the group here for our master parks plan. I figured that is going to be a pretty good update from our department at this point. But as you all know, this year we budgeted for a ten year master parks plan, something that we have been needing for the parks department for a long time. I am just trying to get a blueprint in place, moving forward on where we need to go with the parks department, updates as far as the maintenance for what we currently have and basically where we need to be adding and making new within the parks department. These guys that are both sitting up here have been working on this for quite a while, and not that they are done, but we wanted to make sure that they came and presented where they are at this point so that you all had some ideas of what direction we are going. You all had some input on it and made sure that we are going the direction that you all thought was correct. We have three guys here. I want to actually bring up Christian first, and then he can introduce his team from here. Christian is here with Halff & Associates, and I will let him go from here.*

*Christian Lentz with Halff & Associates approached the podium and said, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you so much for having us this afternoon. It's a pleasure to see some familiar faces, so it's wonderful to get to meet with you and talk to you again about the Parks and Recreation master plan. You can tell when someone brings their drink up to the podium that they intend to camp out here for a while. So we will try to make this an interesting presentation for you. I did want to mention, just say a word about Danny's introduction and reiterate what he said. The intent of this afternoon is for myself and the other members of the Parks and Recreation master planning team just to provide you an update, because here in a couple of months we'll actually be completing a draft of the overall plan providing a series of recommendations for how you can improve your parks and recreation system service delivery. So it is going to be a lot to provide you, a lot to take in. We just wanted to give you that sneak peek so you had some context and you were familiar with the types of recommendations that a plan of this nature contains.*

*So with that, what we wanted to talk to you about this afternoon more specifically is*

*just give that general project overview, very quickly talk to you about the types of public engagement that have been utilized as part of the planning process, and then go through a series of different assessments that we have been in the process of undertaking on our team, and give you an idea of some of the preliminary recommendations of the preliminary results. Now, mind you, it's not the final recommendations. These are still things that we are working on, but I think we are going to be able to provide you in some instances a pretty good idea of the direction we are going when it comes to the types of enhancements and recommendations that we would make for your parks and recreation system.*

*As Danny has indicated, I am Christian Lentz with Halff & Associates. I am a principal planner out of our Little Rock office, and I am the firm's designated project manager for your master planning effort. I am joined this afternoon by Jordan Evans, a planner with Halff, and also by John Barnholt, a member of the staff with BRS. BRS is our architectural partner who actually is providing the information on your indoor recreation facilities and the types of improvements or enhancements that you may make to those facilities. John is actually going to make part of the presentation this afternoon. Jordan is here to help me answer any difficult questions that you give me that I might not be able to answer and keep me from looking like a deer in the headlights in those instances.*

*When it comes to your Parks and Recreation master plan document, I won't go down through everything on this particular slide, but you can see that it is going to contain recommendations on a whole host of issues. Really, one of the main things we wanted to point out is that park, trail and facility demand and access. That is really the backbone of any parks and recreation master plan that a community does. How much park land are you providing? How is that park land distributed? The same would go for different types of recreational facilities. Are you providing enough to meet the needs and the preferences of the members of your community? Are those facilities in good condition? Are those facilities accessible? Besides that, another key component of the parks and recreation master plan is to talk to you about recreational programming and see whether there are additional opportunities for you as a community to provide additional programs or provide additional events for people to meet ongoing public needs and public preferences. Finally, the third main component really is to talk to you about making recommendations on operations and maintenance. In other words, how are you as an organization going to be able to make sure that the delivery of parks and recreation services is always done so in as efficient of a manner as possible?*

*The master planning process is divided into four general phases, and we are in Phase 3 right now. We are getting close to wrapping that up, and that is really identifying those recommendations and not just recommendations but in many cases priorities. I bring the issue of priorities up because as is the case with these types of processes, we identify a lot of things that you can do. As you are well aware as members of the council, those great ideas add up in dollars very quickly. Ultimately a plan of this nature, any long-range master plan ends up giving you a list, an extremely large list, of possibilities when it comes to public investments that you can make; but we certainly need to make sure that through the planning process we are identifying what those initial priorities should be so that we are developing or presenting you with a roadmap of the direction you should go initially when it comes to park enhancements, park investments in your community. In this slide, out of the nine overall phases or components of the process, we are coming to the end of developing our work program; and over the next couple of months before we come back to you as a committee and into the full council, we will have developed the entire list of recommendations and overall work program.*

*I'll touch briefly on public engagement, but obviously we are happy to answer any question you might have about participation. We started off the public process for your parks and recreation master plan meeting with a number of focus groups, actually meeting with those groups right here in these chambers in a very informal setting, really trying to get the pulse of the community when it comes to recreational services. The focus groups were compiled by city staff so that they represented a lot of the different individuals that are involved in parks and recreation services in your committee. We always start off with focus groups, because we find that nine times out of ten they pretty much know what people in your community are saying, what they want to see when it comes to the delivery of recreational services. Oftentimes the feedback then that we get from the general public, well, it's not always the same. By and large, it sort of affirms those clues, that insight that those stakeholder focus groups have given us.*

*We've been working over the last several months with an advisory committee that has been appointed by the city. In fact, when we're finished with this meeting, we are going to go right over to the conference room in which Jordan and I met with many of you previously, and we will be meeting with our advisory committee to give them a similar update that we are giving you right now. We actually issued and distributed a community survey and an interactive map, both online activities, and we had over 1200 responses to the community survey, which quite frankly we found to be in comparison to where we do that in other communities to be a fairly robust result, so we had a lot of wonderful feedback from the survey. Then we had the interactive map where individuals could go online and point to a specific park and identify specific changes, improvements, updates that they wanted to see at those particular locations; and in addition to those online methods of outreach, we had a number of public information booths. You can just think of them as open houses, but essentially we set up with the Parks and Recreation Department in a couple of different locations to be able to have in person interactions with people and have them walk up and ask us questions about the parks and recreation process, and also provide their opinions when it comes to the types of services that they would like to see, the community providing them. Danny, I think you and Brandon ended up having about four other public information booths after the two that we were at.*

*We found using the public information booths is always a lot more effective for us in actually getting people to participate because, as Danny was saying in regard to the locations, we go to where the people actually are at rather than asking them to come to some sort of room at a specific time on a specific date that most people can't make because they have their busy lives to attend to. The public information booths, I think, were very successful. We had a lot of great feedback, a lot of walk up traffic; but inevitably we tend to get a lot more participation through the online survey where people can just sit and click and provide their feedback.*

*As far as the vision statement that has been developed for the parks and recreation master plan, this is a vision statement that was prepared using the feedback that we get from the public in the survey. We try to identify key words or themes that are repetitive from the feedback that we get. Then we work with the advisory committee to come up with a vision statement that reflects that particular feedback. I highlighted a few words here, because these four words were really the types of words that we were hearing from individuals a lot when they said these are the things that we want or these are the things that we need in our parks system or in our recreational programming. A lot of people said we have got a lot of great parks, but there are certain parks that we just can't get to or we can't get to easily. So access was a big issue. Quality or making sure that parks are always maintained at a certain level was another issue that came up. Diverse, and when we say diverse when we talk about parks, we are just talking about a variety of different park types, a variety of different*

*recreational facilities, just lots of different activities that people can partake in. Then when we talk about activated, that goes to the issue of a lot of people saying, well, we've got a park, but there isn't really a lot to do there or there aren't things to do there for people in my age or with my particular interests. So we hope that the vision statement addresses or reflects those desires that we have heard from the members of the community.*

*That vision statement is supported by four guiding principles that essentially say this is how we as a community intend to address that vision. Those guiding principles, rather than reading them out on the screen, they are essentially divided into four items. Your parks and recreation master plan should deal with how you grow your parks system to ensure that it is accessible, to ensure that your parks are connected to the residential areas around them. The guiding principles talk about your investments, how you will improve those recreational assets that you already have as a community. The plan then will talk about programs. What types of programs and events are you providing, and are you providing them for residents of all ages and different abilities? And finally, as I talked about in one of the initial slides, that fourth guiding principle is that principle of operations and how you as a community intend to continue to enhance how you provide recreational services to the members of your community.*

*Let's go ahead and jump into some of the key findings when it comes to the parks master plan at this point. As I indicated before, the amount of park land that you have and the location of that park land, that consideration is really kind of the backbone of any parks and recreation master planning process. When you look at Jonesboro, you see that collectively you have almost 1300 acres of park land. That is just over 16 acres of park land for 1000 residents. When we compare that to a national average that is compiled by the National Recreation and Parks Association for communities of a similar size to Jonesboro, the numbers suggest that you are providing a really large amount of acreage for every 1000 residents in comparison to other communities. But we all know that numbers, as much as they seem to tell a story, they can tell a different story depending on how you look at them. So when we look at your parks, we know that a lot of your park acreage is invested in your regional park, or Craighead Forest Park. When you look at your community parks or your neighborhood parks, you're much smaller parks that are supposed to be more distributed around your community, the ones that people are going to go to just every day because it's down the street, the park acreage per 1000 residents for community and neighborhood parks is much lower. Now I will tell you that the percentages on this screen do not add up to 100% because there are a lot of parks, what we call special use parks like your shooting complex or the Joe Mack sports park, they are not classified as a regional park or community or neighborhood park. But these three park types are really the main park types in any municipal park system. But when you look at that, you see only about 8.5% of your overall park acreage is in community parks, and less than 1% of your overall park acreage is in your neighborhood parks, which are typically the parks that are most widely found in most of the communities that we go to.*

*So this plan then will make recommendations on what your target level of service, your park land acreage per 1000 residents, should be moving forward. Before I show those initial suggested numbers, I wanted to make sure I put this slide up because I want to make sure that everybody in the room understands that when we make a recommendation on what your target level of service should be for providing park land or providing recreational services that it is always intended just to be aspirational, and it is only advisory. We don't want anybody to say that, oh, well this plan says council in 20 years must have reached that threshold. No, it is a benchmark that you are striving toward; and as a professional planner, our*

*perspective is in ten years and twenty years if you have made progress toward that goal, then that is great, even if you haven't necessarily made that entire goal, that entire lead from where you are now to where as a community potentially you should be in growing your park system.*

*So for the three main park types in your system, at this point, we are thinking that the recommended acreage per 1000 residents for regional parks would actually be eight acres. That is actually less than you are providing today in regional parks. Now we are not asking you to make Craighead Forest Park smaller, but we are saying that the future goal for regional parks doesn't have to be as ambitious. We are suggesting at this point that for your community parks that you are looking at up to two acres per 1000 residents; and for your neighborhood parks, those most accessible of parks around your community, we are suggesting a target level of service of one acre per 1000 residents. When we look at those targets using today's population, as I said, you already when it comes to regional parks, you already have a surplus in acreage. That is not a target today that you have a deficit in. But if we applied those targets today, then you would be as a community a little under 50 acres in a deficit of that target. For neighborhood parks, as you can see, you are at about 68 acres of a deficit. Now, I am going to tell you, just about every community we go to, the numbers kind of look like this when you are establishing new target levels of service. There's always one or two categories where a community is at a deficit compared to the target that the plan is recommending they try to hit in the future. If we look at that target level of service in 2040 based on a projected population of over 105,000, then you can see also that there would be even greater deficits of park land acreage regarding that target. Once again, the target levels of service are aspirational. If you are working toward that target, then our view is ultimately that that is a success.*

*But we don't just consider the acreage, the raw acreage, because as we all know, we use Craighead Forest Park as the example, sometimes a community can have a ton of park land acreage, but it's all locked away in one location, in one corner of the community. So we also look at park land service areas, or the percentage of your residential areas that are within a five or ten minute walkshed of a park. When you look at a service area or accessibility to your park, you will see that there are a lot of residential areas that are outside of a ten minute walkshed to a park. In fact, over 88% of your residential areas are outside of a ten minute walkshed to your park. What the plan will ultimately do, and you can see on this map, it identifies just in a very generic way where those service gaps are concentrated. This plan will make some recommendations on where you may prioritize the potential acquisition of new land to build a new neighborhood park or to build a new community park within Jonesboro. It may make recommendations on the possible locations for two or three parks over a 10, 15, 20 year period that you don't have today; and what we are still working on is how we might prioritize those recommendations. We are just showing one map of different environmental justice populations and where those are concentrated in Jonesboro; but we are also going to consider in the recommendations when it comes to reducing that service area deficit, what is the population density of the different census block groups in your community? What is the growth rate, or the expected growth rate, of those block groups in your community as well? When we factor in those types of metrics, we will be able to come back to you in a couple of months with a recommendation on, in the near term, perhaps you should look at locating a new park in Location A. Then perhaps you should look at locating a new park in Location B, and so on and so forth.*

*The one topic that this parks and recreation master plan does not dive too deeply into is trails. Now that is not to say that we are not considering trails, because trails are an extremely important component of any parks and recreation system. In fact, trails are what actually help communities to get much closer to that service area issue and*

*reduce that deficit of neighborhoods that are not within a suitable watershed to your park areas. But the reason we are not necessarily going to delve into it very deeply is that you have a 2017 trails connectivity plan that was adopted by the city; and from our perspective, looking at that plan, the network that is proposed is extremely extensive and is a great network. There is not really any reason for this plan to contradict the recommendations of that 2017 connectivity plan. You've got just under 15 miles of trail today, and your 2017 plan proposes almost 80 miles cumulatively of multi-use trails through Jonesboro. The one thing we may do in this plan though is go back and look and make recommendation that you should be looking at constructing next.*

*The plan will also make recommendations on the target levels of service for recreational facilities. This particular table, obviously the list of recreational facilities that you could have in a park could be a mile long. This table is not a mile long. It is really all that fits on one slide or one page. But in all seriousness, what the plan will include is a table that says these are the types of recreational facilities that are commonly located within a municipal park system or included within that park system. So these are the ones that we are going to make recommendations on target metrics for. That is not to say that if a certain facility type is not on this list that this plan will not make a recommendation about it. It is just to say that we are not going to establish a target metric for that facility because it is not necessarily a common facility in a park network. Rather than have you read through all of these numbers, ultimately what the plan will include is it will include your current level of service of certain recreational facility types that you are providing per resident comparing that to the average communities or communities of similar size across the nation. Then we will make some recommendations on new target levels of service per resident for each of those facilities. In some cases that target level of service may actually be less than you are providing today. In other instances, it may be more than you are providing today or a higher rate than what you are providing today. As you can see, ultimately there are some areas where there is a deficit in comparison to other communities across the nation. But there are also a number of areas where we have the checkmarks. These are facilities that were identified as priority facilities by residents of the community through the public information booths we had and through the online survey as well. We haven't completed those recommendations yet. We haven't created those targets yet. We are in the process of doing that; but again, the final plan, just like with the park land acreage, will include those recommended targets for you as a community.*

*The plan also includes a conditions assessment that was conducted by the landscape architects that design and parks that are part of our firm. Our landscape architects went and visited every one of the municipally owned and operated parks; and this slide shows all of the different types of park elements that they were considering when it comes to condition. When it came to scoring, we have a five point scoring system; and actually Jonesboro by and large did pretty well. I am not going to name the community, but we just finished a plan where we did a conditions assessment for another community. That community's average score was a 2.3, and three on the scale is average. Jonesboro's score was a 3.6; and 3.6 actually, when we compare it to a lot of other communities we have been in, is a pretty good score for doing a conditions assessment for the first time on a municipal park system. So with the conditions assessment, although each particular park was ranked and each particular park has a list of improvements that should be made to it, (and yes, we do have a list for each one of those of near-term improvements and the costs of those near-term improvements) we can tell you that the overall themes across the park system that we found that needed to be addressed were a lot of parks did not have adequate accessibility between the park and the surrounding neighborhood. So, you know, some of these parks might be located in a neighborhood, but that doesn't*



necessarily mean that there was a safe, comfortable pathway for residents of that neighborhood to get to the park. So, in that case, the plan is making some recommendations off the park site actually along some of the streets that would link your residential area to the park itself. There was definitely the need for enhanced lighting, targeted lighting in certain locations. Then we also, going along the same theme of access to parks, we found that there are a lot of parks where they were lacking overall quality on pathways and trail ways within the park system. This also actually aligns with what we heard from the public, saying we want more pathways. We want more trails and walking paths within the different parks throughout our park system.

So, once again, when you look on the left side of this slide, what the conditions assessment will include in your final plan document is a list of near-term improvements, not just on these four topics, but a list of near-term improvements for each one of your parks that are recommended to help ensure that that park is elevated above the average score that it has today. What the plan doesn't do though, but will still make recommendations on is ongoing maintenance. A conditions assessment is just an assessment at one point in time. The conditions assessment does not predict the lifespan of a park bench or a water fountain or another similar facility. For that, ultimately, the plan will recommend that the city consider investing in an asset management plan for its park system facility so that you can anticipate prior to your facilities deteriorating, you can anticipate when those facilities or amenities would need to be replaced and be able to budget in advance for those replacements. In addition to that, there are some parks where we would say that you really do need to prepare a conceptual site plan, because although we went out and looked at the parks in regard to their current conditions today, there are some parks where it is very obvious that they really need a complete retrofit. I mean, we know that Northside / Crews Park, for example, had the baseball fields which are not in commission at this point anymore. So we certainly don't want to make recommendations on improving those if intent is not to utilize them in the same way. Ultimately, the plan says, in some cases, before you invest in these near-term improvements as a community, you might consider a very specific conceptual site plan for one or more of your park spaces to essentially identify a list of new enhancements that are going to update it and reprogram that park over time from what it has been used for in the past.

That gets us to recreational programming; and we will touch on this very quickly because we are still in the process of working on the regular recreational programming assessment. Ultimately, when we look at the programs that a community offers, the first and foremost we like to take a look and understand, what are the core programs that the community provides? What are the programs that the community is putting the most effort into, whether it is literal dollars or just staffing time and energy? In working with Danny and his staff, working on the numbers, we identified eight different core programs that the city of Jonesboro focuses its energy on. But, of course, core programs doesn't necessarily mean that that is all the programs that residents of a community want to have offered to them. This doesn't take into account the fact that there are other programs that private vendors are offering. It is just taking into account those programs the city of Jonesboro is offering. But what we will do before we make recommendations on other types of programs or events that the city of Jonesboro may fill a niche on and address a preference or a need that has been identified by the public, we are in the process of conducting a handful of other analyzes as part of the planning process. We are conducting an age segment analysis which says, when it comes to your core programs or programming in general, which age groups are being served and which age groups are not being served in your community? Our life cycle analysis is looking at some of the enrollments in certain programs and the participation, and is the participation in a program increasing, or has it peaked and is it decreasing? Does that program

*potentially need to be replaced by something new that better reflects what people in the community are saying they would like? We are looking at service classifications. We are basically working with Danny and Brandon to identify those programs that are deemed essential for your community versus those that are value added. The best examples I like to use are usually a community offers youth sports as an essential service. This is a core value of us to provide athletic opportunities for youth; and oftentimes when that essential service is offered, the community is more apt or amenable to actually paying more the direct costs for offering that program. Whereas a value added service, in most other communities, I use the example of golf lessons. In this community, I could say maybe shooting lessons in Jonesboro, but basically that value added service is usually a service that is geared toward a very specific, small user group and is something that user group is willing to pay a premium price on getting that additional service. So we will work with Danny to identify those service classifications; and as part of that, make recommendations on how you as a community might recover more of the costs of certain programs than perhaps you do today.*

*Some of the recreational programming preferences that came up though, as we show in this slide, were actually what we find was not just programs, but a lot of events. People are saying that they want to see or have access to more outdoor music and concert, more holiday camps or summer camps, things of that nature. Of course, aquatic programs are always very popular; but in the case of Jonesboro, aquatic programs in general, more swimming opportunities, and even outdoor based water programs, I would assume probably on Craighead Lake being the best opportunity you would have here in Jonesboro. This is just a quick summary. We did also get feedback on the senior programs; but by and large, I would say that the responses we seem to get from people were really just acknowledging and desiring a continuation of the athletic programs that the city of Jonesboro provides. Now with that, I will take a breather here and let John go ahead and talk to you about indoor recreational facilities.*

*John Barnholt with Halff and Associates approached the podium and said, thank you, Christian and thank you, Council. A lot of the same processes that Christian just decided or just talked about, we did on the indoor facilities and, first of all, doing a facility assessment for all the facilities. That assessment was a visual inspection, and if there was any unseen, underlying sewer line or water line issues or electrical issues, those were relayed to us by the staff itself. So we are going to start out just with the field house. It doesn't exist, but it is planned. It is funded, and it is in the design phase and is going to provide a level of service to the entire community in some form or fashion. So we just wanted to say that it does exist, and the elements there are some of the elements that could or will be part of it are listed there. But we wanted to make sure that we recognize that. In looking at the pool, I think that some of the themes are kind of consistent. The overall conditions of the facilities are good, are really very good; and the access to outdoor recreation, which really relays to what Christian's focus is on is very apparent in most of the existing centers. The main issues with the pool, you know, there is no real accessibility to the pool other than some manual putting in ramps or using chairs to get people into the pool. We noticed that the pool storage issues being that some incompatible chemicals are sometimes housed in the same room; and we wanted that to be addressed just for safety reasons. Then there is some water damage that exists in the pool storage. The water damage is kind of consistent throughout because of your climate. When it rains, it rains hard; and sometimes taking care of that is difficult. The expansion of the site with the addition of the renovation of the gym and the turf and the new locker rooms and the new offices really makes that not a really high priority that you would go and make any more additional improvements to.*

*The Earl Bell Community Center, once again, over all it is in good condition. It does have access to outdoor recreation. It also acts as an emergency shelter. Once again, we have water intrusion on the east wall when the rains come. So the idea there is that we begin to mitigate those issues just for the wellbeing of the building. There are roof leaks that are isolated, and you can tell by looking at the ceiling where those are. The expansion of the Earl Bell Community Center is, I would say, difficult. It is or is going to be an historic designation; and once that happens, that does create challenges for making modifications because it has to meet the rules and regulations that will be put forth by the historical conditions that it is. The flow through the facility is a little bit difficult because in order to get to the climbing wall, you have to kind of walk through the gym. We thought maybe one of the side storage areas could be used as a walkway. Then when you get into the back of the facility, there is some community space that is accessed by going through a restroom, which makes it kind of strange to do that. Then, overall maybe provide a facelift to the lobby and the community room, keeping them modern and really making them inviting places for people to want to use and rent for their own use.*

*E. Boone, once again, the overall condition is very good with access to the outdoor elements. We have water intrusion at the base of the west wall and the floor slab. Once again, we need to kind of figure out how we can mitigate that and get the water pushed away from the building. The expansion of the site is difficult, and this is really for the rest of them. There are challenges with expansion on metal buildings. They are really specifically designed for what they are being used for, and adding weight, adding new additions to it, it is not impossible by any means. But it is difficult. Then along with this facility, there is the historic house that has been talked about being renovated. We would consider that a very major undertaking to make that into a functional, usable space. It is in pretty rough condition. So some of the improvements include relocating the museum. I think that has been discussed to create an additional community room. Once again, facelifts to the lobby and the kitchen, and there is really kind of a lack of lighting in the parking area. That would probably be very useful, especially in those months where it gets dark very early.*

*The Parker Community Center, once again, great condition, great access to park amenities. Maintenance issues, there are no accessible water stalls, shower stalls in there. Some exterior doors could use a threshold and weather stripping. Once again, when the rains are really heavy water is coming into the building. Once again, we have that challenge with it being a metal building and the ability to expand on that. Once again, not impossible, but you know there are certainly architectural solutions to make things happen if that is the direction that you want to go. Once again, a facelift to the lobby, community and the kitchen, modernization of the locker rooms and the restrooms; which I am not sure if that is going to be...are the lockers going to have access to the new pool? The bathrooms and the locker rooms and the existing Parker are not what I would call very inviting to be honest with you. And as I just asked Danny, the new pool is being planned and funded, which is great. That is going to add a whole new dimension to the building itself.*

*Allen Park, once again, good condition, good access to the outdoor elements. The maintenance issues that we see are once again water intrusion on the floor slab, roof leaks, and that is apparent by looking at the ceiling tiles, kind of maybe a moldy smell in the building. That is probably potentially from the roof leaks that are happening in the building, so that should be looked at and addressed. Once again, challenges to the site expansion to a metal building is difficult. The improvement possibilities include a facelift to the lobby, the community room, the kitchen. Once again, upgrade those, make them really inviting for the people coming into the building. Update and modernize the locker rooms and the restrooms. There is an additional aquatic that is planned for the park and/or an addition to the community center, and my*

*understanding is that it is not funded at this time.*

*So when you think about level of service much to what Christian was talking about, we talked a lot with the park staff, and once again, this aspirational would have people have access to a community recreation center in about a five minute drive. So if you look at the map there, all the blue stars are the existing centers as they are now, and the black star in the middle, that is the future field house. Once again, that field house is going to serve the entire community in some form or fashion either through tournaments or programs given what amenities are going to be in it. Then on the right side of that is within that five minute drive the population that they serve, the median age of the people living within that five minute drive, and the median household income that is in that five minute drive. So the existing ones are serving this good portion of the community. Then we talked about, okay, if we want to do a five minute drive, and this map starts to get pretty busy here, where do we put some new centers? We would think maybe about the southwest area, or up in the northwest area maybe a possible new center. The northeast center, the yellow that's on the right, and then our south center. Once again, these are not in any kind of priority. It's just in order to help fill the gaps of where people may have that aspirational opportunity of driving within five minutes of some type of indoor recreation facility, these are some areas that they might be located. Once again, there is no specific point or anything, it's just kind of in the area on that.*

*Once again, on the right side with those centers, those are within a five minute drive, the population, and the median age, and the income of those areas that would be primarily served by those areas. But we see we start to fill in the gaps of where people live and where their access is to potential indoor recreation.*

*One of the things we looked about is the aquatics level of service, and looking at this map here, the orange circle there (and we did about a two mile radius) is the existing pool. Up there at the top is the Parker Recreation Center. That is being funded. That is what is being covered there. The green one would be the Allen Center if that was planned, which is kind of being planned or is funded within it. This is access within a two mile radius of the aquatics and also the field houses in there also. And then what is not popping up here is if you put a two-mile circle around the potential future recreation centers, that would pretty much cover the city. When we think about aquatics, I think there is a full breadth here. Are we talking about indoor leisure? Are we talking about a sprayground? Are we talking about a small lap pool? The aquatics thing is kind of wide open as to what type of aquatics component would best serve the area within that two mile radius.*

*So based on the input that Christian did and our conversations with staff, our conversations with the advisory committee, we kind of put together a model, if you will, a model example of what a new community center may look like, or what some of the additions may be part of the existing centers. Working clockwise from the gym, we think that at least a one court, two court gymnasium with potentially enough area for a walking track because the walking track came out very high on the community survey that was conducted. Some type of aquatics component again, leisure pool, outdoor sprayground. Possibly not a full size, but a nice size little turf area primarily for practices and maybe camps. Indoor playground came out pretty high on the survey, also on the public engagement efforts and with the advisory committee. And then some community space with a kitchenette. What is not pictured here are the locker rooms and the administration that would naturally go along with any of this. Maybe this is the model that we can shoot for. We may not have everything, but one thing that we talked about with the staff that would be really great is if each center had its own unique little something that made it different from each one, and it's not just totally cookie cutter. Some other features we do that came out in discussion are*

*potentially a climbing wall, some type of fitness and cardio space, something small, not anything large, not anything big. An ice rink came up pretty high on the survey, believe it or not. Child watching and indoor event space on that, and so that would be maybe some of those that might be a unique feature that is part of either an expansion or something new.*

*Christian Lentz with Halff & Associates approached the podium and said, I've only got a couple more slides. You would be surprised at how popular ice rinks are all over the place. So it's not a huge surprise. As I said, just a couple more slides. The last assessment that we've initiated here in the process of conducting as part of the plan is the operations and maintenance assessments. So we don't really have a lot at this point. We are not at the point where we are ready to make any initial recommendations, but there are a couple of things that we wanted to bring to your attention. When we looked at your operating expenditures per acre and per capita, we compare those to national medians. But what the numbers suggest are that Jonesboro's numbers as far as spending is significantly lower than that national median. Now again, this is a national median, so we don't expect Jonesboro to be spending dollars on its park land in the same way that Martha's Vineyard or Monterey, California is doing. So we have to take all of that with a grain of salt; but there is a significant enough of a difference to where we know that there is the potential that this assessment may need to make recommendations on some additional operating expenditures for your parks and recreation system. I am not saying anything is as dramatic as that deficit you are seeing on the slide, but it is certainly a guide towards some of the recommendations that we may ultimately make in the plan.*

*Now, not all is lost though, because one thing that I am actually not showing on here is that when it comes to staffing, Jonesboro stacks up pretty well. Actually when we consider full-time equivalent staff members for your park systems, Jonesboro actually exceeds the national medians when it comes to staffing sources for your parks and recreation system. Then also, when it comes to ensuring that a certain percentage of your park expenditures is offset by direct revenues, we also find that the numbers suggest that Jonesboro really does pretty well when looking at your peer communities. So just a little bit of information, some of the initial findings that we have been able to generate based on the data, the information that Danny and his staff have been able to give us. But again, we don't really have at this point when it comes to that operations and administration assessment, we are not at the point yet where we have preliminary recommendations to suggest to you. So over the course of the next couple months before we visit with you again, our next steps are to complete that recreational programming and the operations and maintenance assessments. Once those are complete, in addition to the recreational facility assessment and the park land and access assessment and the conditions assessment, all of that will be compiled into a work program that provides you the roadmap both near-term and long-term for where your investments, where your time and energy should be placed in the community when it comes to growing your parks and recreation system and also enhancing what you have. All of that information then will also be taken from the work program; and we are going to compile that into a very abbreviated summary plan for you and for the community to have as a reference guide as well. The intention for our contract is to be back visiting with you by October, November. Certainly the intent is that this entire process is completed, and with luck results in a park plan that is adopted by you as a full council prior to the end of the year. But as I indicated when I started, we just wanted to give you a sneak peek at the direction the plan was going, provide that context for you, and John, Jordan and myself were certainly happy to answer questions you might have.*

*Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, I just have one question, Chairman.*

*When you use the term field house, is that the same as the sports complex? Mr. Lentz said, yes. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, same thing? Okay. Just wanted to make sure.*

**Filed**

[COM-23:039](#)

MONTHLY JETS UPDATE

**Sponsors:** JETS

*JETS Director Michael Black approached the podium and said, not a lot has changed since I was here last time. I will give you our updated numbers. Year-to-date, we are at 49,056 trips. That is about 7.5% above where we were this same time last year. We have provided 426 trips on our summer youth program. We have hired two full-time, fully licensed drivers that actually just started yesterday. We still have six in the entry level driver training awaiting state testing. Beginning now, we are starting to work on our Red Wolf Express. We've got three home games back to back to back, the ninth, the sixteenth, and the twenty-third. We are looking for pretty heavy ridership on the ninth. Every time Memphis comes to town, we are loaded out there and back, so we are going to start working on that pretty hot and heavy. Thank you.*

**Filed**

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Anthony Coleman, seconded by Brian Emison, that this meeting be Adjourned. The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Brian Emison;LJ Bryant;Anthony Coleman and Janice Porter

**Absent:** 2 - Chris Gibson and Ann Williams