



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Finance & Administration Council Committee

Tuesday, August 30, 2022

4:00 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call by City Clerk April Leggett

3. Approval of minutes

[MIN-22:070](#)

Minutes for the Finance Committee meeting on August 09, 2022

Attachments: [Minutes](#)

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

Aye: 6 - Charles Coleman; Ann Williams; John Street; David McClain; LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

4. New Business

RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-22:148](#)

A RESOLUTION TO THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION, AN AGENCY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS TO SELL PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE CITY LIMITS OF JONESBORO

Attachments: [100657 Tract 85S Contract to Sell](#)
[Job 100657 Tract 85S Compensation Estimate](#)

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

Aye: 6 - Charles Coleman; Ann Williams; John Street; David McClain; LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

[RES-22:150](#)

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE WILLINGNESS OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE FY22 SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL GRANT (SS4A)

Councilmember David McClain asked, Craig, if you don't mind, is this mainly going to

construct crosswalks or what type of projects are we planning on using the money for? I don't even know if we have identified that and specified that in the application. Chairman Joe Hafner said, it is for new lighting. Director of Engineering Craig Light stated, it is for new lighting. Councilmember McClain said, it is for new lighting. Mr. Light said, it is for new lighting, street lights. Councilmember McClain asked, so no crosswalks? Mr. Light stated, it is to light up the corridor. I don't know if you have driven down that road at night. It is very, very dark. There are lots of pedestrian movements going on. There are a lot of statistics out there about roadway lighting and pedestrian safety and motorists. So, with the safety funds, we feel like it fits in with that grant really well. It is a project that we have talked about for a couple of years. I don't know if you have been up to Kennett, Missouri where on Highway 412, they have done a new lighting project down the highway. They have really added some light. I think they have green LED lights on the back of the poles. It kind of makes the whole corridor glow green. They really have some good stuff you can do with lighting along roadways now. I don't think that is what we are proposing to do along that corridor, but we are looking to install a uniform light fixture down the entire corridor. There will be lights on both sides of the roadway. Right now, there is some lighting on one side of the road and you go down the piece there is a little bit of lighting on the other side of the road. They are not uniform. They don't give off the same light intensity. We have dark spots and lighter spots. And, just for a visual appeal of the corridor, you will have uniform lighting down both sides. It will help with safety for pedestrians. And, mainly, when we are having our pedestrian accidents, along that corridor, is during the night time period. Councilmember McClain asked, are we planning to construct or looking at constructing crosswalks in the meantime or in the future, maybe in 2023? Mr. Light stated, we have had some conversations with ARDOT in the past about some pedestrian refuge islands down Johnson. They said they would not permit those because the speed limit was too high. We have now got the speed limit reduced to 35 mph. ARDOT has not come back and said let's resurrect this earlier project. Of course, we have not pushed that as a city either yet. Right now, the issue before us is we feel it's the lighting along the corridor. Take a drive down through there tonight about 9:00 p.m. Councilmember McClain said, no, I know, I know. Mr. Light said, it is dark. Councilmember McClain said, yeah, I know. Mr. Light said, it is a dark roadway and there is always somebody. Councilmember Dr. Charles Coleman said, we are just waiting right to come down that. Councilmember McClain, I guess that is why I am asking the question about the crosswalks with this. Mr. Light stated, it would light up the entire roadway so you can see pedestrians, period, whether or not they are at a crosswalk or mid-block, you will be able to see people on the roadway, along the roadway. There are not going to be any dark spots where you can't see where people are along the roadway. I'll be honest with you, a few weeks ago, I was driving down Johnson and I saw someone riding a bicycle on the sidewalk. I slowed down to 30 mph and the person fell off of the bicycle into the lane in front of me. And, I was being very cautious. I saw him and I had slowed down for him, but you know that could have been easily a pedestrian death or a bicyclist death just a few weeks ago. There are a lot of pedestrian movements along that corridor and especially at night and they are not using crosswalks. I mean there are some crosswalks along there, but people just dart across the road. I saw a group the other night walking from Sonic across the street, a group of four. There are no sidewalk crosswalks down there. We can't put crosswalks everywhere along the corridor, but if we can light up the corridor so motorists can see the pedestrians, then we can slow down when we see them and be prepared for them instead of them just coming out of nowhere in front of us. Councilmember McClain said, I understand people don't always use the crosswalks, but if we don't have them, they surely won't use them. Councilmember Coleman stated, I think the biggest problem with state highways because we have been fighting this battle for going on ten years now about crosswalks is the problem that the state highway is going to do what

they are going to do. And, I think this lighting is going to help us. And, I agree that we need crosswalks, but, I think right now, we need the lights. We have a surmountable amount of elderly people living particularly on the north side of Johnson that they use that quite a bit. And, so, we definitely need lighting. But, I am hoping, at the same time, that I am not sure about the changing of the MPO person, but we need to fight that battle a little bit harder with the state to put crosswalks across there.

Councilmember Ann Williams said, it is a different subject, but as far as like a traffic light on that stretch from Marion Berry to Patrick is a long stretch. Is there any consideration of adding a traffic light in that really long stretch there where there is no light at all? Mr. Light said, at one time, there was a proposal and I think we still have a sketch of it to extend University Loop out to Johnson Avenue and align it with State Street and at that point there could potentially be a traffic signal installed at that location that the vehicles would warrant a traffic signal. Right now, none of the side streets are being delayed to a point where they're not functioning without a traffic signal. Councilmember Coleman said, I don't want to prolong the conversation, but I have to make this statement. Its strange when they put that semi-caution thing up there was absolutely wonderful. I keep wondering. We pay state taxes and we pay all of that money and they spent all of that money to put that up there which was actually doing a great job, but then they took it down. I mean, how do they just throw away money? I mean, I know you probably can't answer that question, but how do they just throw away money like that? And, then take something away that is actually potentially good for the community and just tear it down? Mr. Light responded, that was installed temporarily. It was a temporary installation for a specific study period and the results of that study I believe have been provided, but they didn't come back with any clear direction on what to do. So, that is when this City Council asked for them to lower the speed limit and it has been lowered to 35 mph. You know, in my opinion, it is time to start revisiting with ARDOT about pedestrian accommodations along that roadway. Most likely, they are going to come back with, well, why doesn't the City of Jonesboro take over that roadway and it becomes a city street and we will move Highway 91 on some other route. So, we need to be prepared for that. I am sure that they would might be willing to do that. They might be willing to give us that roadway and then we could make whatever decisions we wanted to, but then it would be fully on our dime to maintain it. Councilmember Coleman said, yeah. I don't think we have the money.

Chairman Hafner asked, since we are talking about pedestrian safety, I know one of the ideas is has been pitched about, you know over the years, was a pedestrian overpass, like just a walkway over, but wasn't that a price tag of like multimillions, \$7 million-\$8 million. I am just going from memory, but for a single walkway, it was a lot of money. Mr. Light responded, I don't know that we have looked at a walkway on Johnson. There's just not an ideal location on Johnson where you would put one that could accommodate everybody. And, then, what do you do? Do you build a barrier wall to funnel people half a mile to a walkway, an overpass because it is such a long corridor? I know that we looked at some pedestrian crossings at the JETS Transfer System over the railroad tracks to tie into the intramural fields. You know the Creath Street to ASTATE, that one was about \$8 million was the estimated cost for that project. I wouldn't think that a single pedestrian overpass on Johnson would be \$8 million. The issue would be how do you provide ADA accommodations. Do you have to put an elevator into it? Can you build a ramp long enough to get somebody up that high? So, there are definitely some physical constraints that you will have to deal with. It could be fairly expensive if you did have to do an elevator type to get up over it. Chairman Hafner said, I know there is a bridge and I can't remember if it is the Broadway Bridge, the bridge that goes from North Little Rock into Little Rock. I know it has a very long ramp system on it. It doesn't have an elevator, but it does have a long

ramp system. It seems like that has been discussed in the past, but the price tag and the location and all of the factors that you mentioned were considerations in how would it be feasible. Mr. Light said, I have been with the city for a while now and I don't remember having seen an actual cost estimate. I know we have discussed where would you locate one and how would you funnel people to it and there's just isn't a single location that you can say well this is ideal for everybody. And, then, what do you do with the rest? Do you fence it off to keep people from jaywalking? And, I don't know that that's the way we want that corridor to look either. So, we did get the speed limit dropped to 35 mph. I think with these lighting changes if we get this grant and then obviously we can continue to have those conversations with ARDOT about how do we provide more pedestrian accommodations. I don't know that we are ready to just drop a traffic signal in at a location that doesn't really meet it for any. There is pedestrian traffic at Scott Street that is not enough at this point to warrant a signal. There is not enough vehicle traffic there to warrant a signal. We have not built the roadway to University Loop so it may be premature to just go and start throwing up a traffic signal in there. Councilmember Williams said, State Street may be getting more traffic now because of the loop around where faculty housing used to be. Mr. Light said, I think the closest the last time we looked at it and it was when Mark Nichols was still here, the closest that we would want a signal to Marion Berry was around Scott Street. Once you get traffic signals within a quarter mile of each other, they begin to cause congestion. They begin to be overlapping and make issues and really delay traffic more than what you intended. So, you really want them about a quarter of a mile apart and that would be about Scott Street would be the location the next traffic signal on there.

Councilmember John Street said, I was just going to say that Craig, you are at our MPO meetings a lot and probably almost every other one we are discussing crossing on Johnson. We pushed hard to get that lowered down to 35 mph. They really didn't want to do that, but they did. They just about eliminated any possibility of any lighting down there where we had the temporary structure which that was temporary. And, like Charles said, I think it did some good, but it wasn't a permanent structure so they pulled that. But, we enhanced the lighting at that particular crossing. City Water & Light did that for us and it helped some, but I think this is one of the better alternatives we can have. Brad Smithee, you know we always hit him. In fact, there was a pretty heated discussion between Brad and Hall from ASU, you know, over some more crossings down there with ASU. And, I mean as justified as they are, ARDOT has been very resistant to that and we have worked on that for years, but I think this is going to be a big step here along that Johnson corridor for safety for pedestrians, but ARDOT is coming along, around a little more to increase awareness of pedestrian safety. So, hopefully, that is going to change over the years. We need it more than just on Johnson. We need it out here on North Church. We need some on Stadium. Some of those crosswalks out there are just terrible, I mean very dangerous. And, you have got people crossing not at a crosswalk. You can't make them as he said they are kind of going here and there and everywhere, but that lighting on Johnson, especially, given that people aren't going to go down to the existing crosswalk will probably tend to lend itself more to pedestrian safety than we could do at this particular juncture. That and along with the lower speed limit of 35 mph, we are dotting the I's. Councilmember Coleman stated, I don't think that 35 mph is really doing any good. Councilmember Street said, well, I know, but it does slow some of them down. I mean I have even driven it and I thought well that is not going to do any good. Councilmember Coleman said, it's not going to do any good, ten miles per hour anyway. But, I'm talking about the people who drive it every day going all the way from here to Paragould. Councilmember Street said, well, yeah, they fuss about it. But, hey, we are doing everything we can do within the guidelines of our ability to work with ARDOT on it. It's

their road. So, basically what you said is they are going to do what they are going to do and we just have to keep pushing. But, I think this lighting is going to be a big help. Councilmember Coleman said, I do too.

Mr. Light stated, I noticed personally that there's a lot more foot traffic between Caraway Road and Greensborough Village down Johnson. I've seen several people walking down the north side of the road where there is no sidewalk, kind of up in the grass. If they are coming to J-Town Grill or just walking to the movie theater, but there has been a lot of foot traffic. There is actually a trail where you can see they have been walking through the grass starting to develop. Councilmember Coleman said, I am not going to prolong this, but we also had a gentleman come to a City Council meeting to talk about the ethnicity of a certain group of individuals in that area that they are afraid to go any place because there isn't enough lighting on Johnson. And, so, I think it is a great thing that we need to do. I mean everything is going to cost money lately or even more. We are in a trend of everything going up and it is not going down. Councilmember LJ Bryant said, one last big open ended question, so sorry for that. But, do we have any comparisons off of the top of our head of how much state mileage we have in our city limits versus other people? Do we have a disproportionate amount if you compared us to Conway or Benton or whoever? Mr. Light said, I don't know in terms of percentage of our overall roadway systems. I don't know that I have ever looked at that. I know that a lot of our major arterial roadways are state routes. Highland, Southwest Drive, Johnson, Red Wolf, those are all state roadways. Chairman Hafner stated, but as much land as we cover, we probably might have less as a percentage because we have so many miles of roadway because we are 81 square miles. Mr. Light said, our major roadways are typically state routes. I mean we have Caraway. We have Nettleton. There are other high volume roadways. Even North Church is a state highway. The majority of our higher volume arterial roadways are state roads. Councilmember Bryant said, I guess that leads me to my second question, which sorry, is open ended too. Are there some roads long term that we do want to figure out a way to absorb? Mr. Light said, well, we are going to absorb 226. We are going to absorb South Culberhouse. Those agreements are already in place. But, as soon as MLK is completed and done, those become part of the city inventory.

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

Aye: 6 - Charles Coleman;Ann Williams;John Street;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

[RES-22:153](#)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND ACCEPT THE FY22 LOW-NO EMISSIONS GRANT

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

Aye: 6 - Charles Coleman;Ann Williams;John Street;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

5. Pending Items

6. Other Business

7. Public Comments

8. Adjournment

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

Aye: 6 - Charles Coleman; Ann Williams; John Street; David McClain; LJ Bryant and Brian Emison