



# City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center  
300 S. Church Street  
Jonesboro, AR 72401

## Meeting Minutes Public Safety Council Committee

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Tuesday, July 18, 2023

5:00 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

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### 1. Call To Order

### 2. Roll Call by City Clerk April Leggett

**Present** 7 - Mitch Johnson; David McClain; Chris Moore; Brian Emison; Janice Porter; Chris Gibson and LJ Bryant

### 3. Approval of minutes

[MIN-23:062](#)

Minutes for the Public Safety Committee meeting on June 20, 2023

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

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

**Aye:** 6 - David McClain; Chris Moore; Brian Emison; Janice Porter; Chris Gibson and LJ Bryant

### 4. New Business

#### *RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED*

[RES-23:129](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO CONDEMN PROPERTY LOCATED AT: 227 Royale Dr. Jonesboro, AR 72401; Parcel # 01-143103-13400; OWNER: T.K. Restoration and Rentals, LLC

**Sponsors:** Code Enforcement and Finance

**Attachments:** [227 Royale Precondemnation Notice Affidavit](#)  
[227 Royale Returned B&S Cert Letter](#)  
[227 Royale B&S Affidavit](#)  
[227 Royale Inspection Report](#)  
[227 Royale Map](#)  
[Resolution](#)  
[WIN\\_20230620\\_10\\_30\\_00\\_Pro](#)  
[WIN\\_20230620\\_10\\_30\\_13\\_Pro](#)  
[WIN\\_20230620\\_10\\_30\\_36\\_Pro](#)  
[WIN\\_20230620\\_10\\_31\\_27\\_Pro](#)  
[WIN\\_20230620\\_10\\_34\\_35\\_Pro](#)

**A motion was made by Chris Gibson, seconded by Chris Moore, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

**Aye:** 6 - David McClain;Chris Moore;Brian Emison;Janice Porter;Chris Gibson and LJ Bryant

[RES-23:130](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO CONDEMN PROPERTY LOCATED AT: 1712 National Rd. Jonesboro, AR 72401; Parcel # 01-144223-18200; OWNER: Rodney Cranford

**Sponsors:** Code Enforcement, Engineering and Finance

**Attachments:**

[Resolution](#)

[1712 National B&S affidavit](#)

[1712 National B&S letter returned \(front\)](#)

[1712 National Inspection Report](#)

[1712 National Map](#)

[1712 National Precondemnation Notice Affidavit](#)

[1712 National Precondemnation Notice Returned Cert Letter](#)

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[WIN\\_20230227\\_15\\_34\\_43\\_Pro](#)

**A motion was made by Chris Gibson, seconded by Chris Moore, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

**Aye:** 6 - David McClain;Chris Moore;Brian Emison;Janice Porter;Chris Gibson and LJ Bryant

**5. Pending Items**

**6. Other Business**

*Chairman Mitch Johnson said, just to touch briefly, other business. I think most of you should have a copy of our fireworks ordinance in front of you. The mayor has tasked this committee to review this and come up with some solutions to beef up this ordinance. Obviously, enforcing an ordinance to this is going to be some magnitude to take care of. I think as it was mentioned, if we decide to turn our heads during fireworks that we decide to put a time frame on that to put a time limit on when fireworks would actually be beyond when they should be shot. I think another thing to consider is that our fan on this would be pretty low compared to what we need to put some teeth into somebody to discourage them. I mean, obviously, if somebody spends \$5-\$6 thousand dollars on fireworks a \$500 fine is not really that much of an issue. So the mayor has put that in our hands. I've given everybody a copy of that. If you'll look that over and we'll be looking at some input on some changes that we might be able to do to implement a difference in it as well.*

*Councilmember David McClain said, Mr. Chairman, again, I just want to ask a quick question about this one. Are we looking at putting in a timeline as far as you can't pop fireworks from this hour to this hour or as currently our ordinance you can't pop fireworks at all? Chairman Mitch Johnson said, currently the ordinance says you can't do it, but obviously it's being done. There's probably not enough, even if we had our*

pay plan in place, enough certified people on the street to enforce it. Councilmember Chris Moore said, that's exactly right. Nothing we do is going to stop it. We may be able to make some rules that kind of corral it a little bit. Chairman Mitch Johnson said, I think that's exactly the point. We need to try and make some concessions that if it's going to happen that it's something we can live with. Obviously, a fine increase would be the bottom line on that regardless. Food for thought for this body to look at. We'll certainly look at it and see if we come up with something to present to the mayor's office.

[COM-23:033](#)**VECTOR MOSQUITO CONTROL REPORT FOR THE CITY OF JONESBORO FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2023****Attachments:**     [Jonesboro June, 2023](#)

Chairman Mitch Johnson said, pretty interesting reading. Once again, they've had 13 light traps out this year. They've captured 696 total mosquitoes in those traps for the month of June, which seems a bit low to me. But, we've only got two mosquito species that have been collected this year. Eighty-one sites inspected for mosquito larva, six sites were treated. Truck routes this month, a total of 1,098.40 spray miles which equivalents to 39,937.50 acres. Chief Administrative Officer Brian Richardson approached the podium and said, I just wanted to add that I talked to Mr. Stark earlier this afternoon and had been kind of dialoging with him over the past week or so about their efforts and kind of follow up with Councilmember McClain's request at the last meeting. He was going to try and come tonight but circumstances didn't allow and said he would be happy to come to the next city meeting to help present some of their updates. He said that they do rotate out their chemicals every few weeks to help ensure that there's not an immunity built up amongst our little flying friends. They do have the manpower and capacity, potentially here in a couple of weeks, to apply some additional sprays if that's something we choose to look into and research. I know that to this point, they've been pretty far behind as far as like anybody else, they're having staffing issues, but he said that's something they could certainly look into. There's a good chance that if we're doing multiple flights in a week, it might be two nights in a row but they're in different regions of town, so I don't see how that would really be pertinent, as long as certain regions were getting treated, so if that's something we want to explore I can definitely reach out to Mr. Stark and get him at the next city meeting of our choosing to help review that. We did set aside some ARPA money last year that could just automatically be appropriated to it, that has already been appropriated by the council. Maybe that's just something that we move forward with depending on if he has the availabilities but I'll get ya'lls thoughts on that. I know the mayor was interested in kind of what some thoughts were from the council as well.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, Brian how many flyovers have they done so far this year? Brian Richardson said, I believe two to date and next week starts eight weeks in a row that they'll be doing aerial application. They've got one scheduled for this Thursday, weather permitting.

Councilmember L.J. Bryant said, Brian how much more have we done this year than last year? It seems like things are marginally better. Brian Richardson said, you know some days it seems that they are and some days they aren't. Talking with him and Dr. McKay from ASU, there's a lot of just coincidental issues that maybe be causing the up tick in mosquitoes or a low moment. Rice fields were flooded early this year which is going to create more larva and more conditions for mosquitoes. But also, when you get a well-timed rain it could wash away some of those germinating eggs to where they don't actually hatch. Again, there's only so many of those conditions that we can control. Like I said the last time and I'll stress, the number one condition that we all

can control is making sure our yards, and talking with our neighbors about their yards to keep stagnant water to a minimum, rather it be bird baths, water bowls, or whatever that might be, that's the most controllable thing that we can do in our immediate surroundings to help reduce mosquitoes.

**Filed**

[COM-23:035](#)

#### POLICE PAY UPDATE

**Sponsors:** Mayor's Office

Chairman Mitch Johnson said, mayor would you like to tell us where we're at at this point in time. Mayor Harold Copenhaver approached the podium and said, thank you council for this time of allowing us to be in front of your committee. I want to give you an update and I'm going to speak very slowly this evening because I want to make sure I get all of my words correct. This is a very due process that we have gone through from many standards. I want to update the committee on the most recent advancements on the police pay topic that we've been working diligently on. It's not an easy task, and when you layer in the needed adjustments for policy and researching fair incentives, it takes a bit to ensure that all is smoothed out and ready for a vote by council. Before I go on, I would like to lay the ground work for what I would like to achieve this evening. A general outline of the scale of pay for each grade, the funding mechanisms available, the over potential cost, and the time frame of which I would like to see this occur. I would like to thank councilmembers Mitch Johnson, whom is the Public Safety Chair and Joe Hafner, who's the Finance Chair, for their continued input in discussions on this topic. I know that they would be happy to help fill any questions or comments that you may have also in regarding them in chairmanship capacity. Also, I want to give a special thanks to the Finance Department and Steve Purtee. Every adjustment and scenario means a lot of time of entering data and numbers. It takes time and energy and they have gone far and above and beyond, and will continue until we work all the details out.

So, before I go on, I do want to point out, for those of you who don't know, our police pay scale is divided into six different grades. A U1 being an officer, a U2 being a sergeant, a U3 a lieutenant, a U4 a captain, a U5 assistant chief, and U6 a police chief. You'd be surprised how many people think that all officers are paid roughly the same. They are not, so working through the system can be quite complex, especially when considering additional special pays, longevity pay and longer tenured officers. Those titles are just what we use here. Other cities may call for different positions, something different, they may not have that rank at all, so it is an added challenge. I would like to also add, that I'm in discussions with the Fire Department on some issues as well, and I appreciate Chief Hamrick for his consistent advocacy for the firefighters and I would urge council that we need to continue to ensure our firefighters continue to be fairly compensated for their concerns as well. We don't need to get in a situation as we've been in in the past.

Pertinent to this evening, I'm excited to share that we are honing in on the starting pay for a certified officer at \$52,000, currently we're at \$43,260 and that's up from \$34,500 in 2020. We are looking at a max for the U1 classification in the high mid 60's, which includes holiday pay. Those exacts will need to be finalized as we polish up the year and the year step adjustments to make them more uniformed. Something I heard from multiple officers up the ranking chain, is that their jobs are more efficient if adequate staffing exists in the U1 level. I hope this accomplishes that. For sergeants, we are targeting a starting excess of \$60,000 plus in step one, currently at \$55,177 and a max in the mid \$70's, currently at \$66,238. The remaining U3, U4, U5, U6 designations will also see increases with starting rates at roughly \$70 plus, \$80 plus, \$90 plus, \$105,000 respectively. Current calculations show this effort to start out at an

*approximately economic impact of \$1.5 million adjustment for police compensation. When you figure in the city's additional 24% retirement contribution for every dollar for salary police that impact will be more than \$2 million a year.*

*There are a few different funding mechanisms in place that can absorb this for a few years. This year we're trending a little ahead of projection, so we would just need to amend the 2023 budget to roughly \$700,000. For next year, we would need to continue monitoring revenue performance and potentially allocate some reserves later this year. Another option would be to reduce capital and street projects to offset the cost. We will make those decisions, though, as we work through our budgeting in 2024 and may come back to council for allocations at some point this fall.*

*In addition, we're working on a few possible incentives to help encourage new officer recruitment. Monetary values assigned to those are still being worked out. Some examples of those being considered are bilingual incentive, Jonesboro residency incentive, a recruitment bonus, and so forth.*

*Now timeline wise, Council. I would anticipate a need to call a special Public Safety meeting sometime before the next scheduled meeting if all goes well. Actual implementation will take a bit for the Finance Department to plug into our payroll system and work the bugs out. Typically, this type of adjustment would be slated to start in the new year, but I tasked our Finance Department with expediting this process and we hope to make any adjustments, once approved by council, to be active in early September.*

*I would like to thank Chief Elliot, Assistant Chief Waterworth, and multiple officers, some of which are in this room, that I visited with from all across the ranks for their input and concerns. Now, I know Chief Elliot would like to make a few comments as well.*

*Police Department Chief Rick Elliot approached the podium and said, well again, thank you mayor, Mr. Chair, councilmembers. First, besides saying I can't say thanks enough for coming to the table this quick with a plan that actually exceeded my expectations. When visiting with the mayor and I first saw the numbers, I know the mayors about public safety and Jonesboro has led the way with a real-time crime center, first in the state. We lead the ways in a lot of ways, and he wanted to lead the way with this salary plan. Let me tell you, when you look at the comparison across the state, there's nothing better. We're topping Little Rock, northwest cities. The only thing that's got us bet right now is a few hiring bonuses at a few cities, but right now where we're sitting with this proposed plan we'll be one of the most sought out agencies in the state to come to. So thank you mayor.*

*I know it's been a long process. Over the past several months we started this and in April 2022, trying to catch up because of the crisis of shortages, not only here but across the country. When the mayor came in office we were behind. He brought us up 10%. He brought us up again in April. I know the mayor's been very proactive. We had many conversations on this matter. We're both very concerned, so to have this resolution in this timely manner is appreciated. The incentive plan was icing on the cake. I think that's another thing that we had years ago and lost, but adding that back in is just another tool that we can add to our recruitment. Again, as the mayor said, they're finishing a few things up but what I've seen so far and as things are laying out it appears to be a fantastic pay plan. I want to thank the mayor, Steve and his staff, and everyone involved in getting us to this point. So again, thank you.*

*Chairman Mitch Johnson said, exciting times for Jonesboro for sure and something well deserved. We look forward to getting our final numbers tweaked and getting Finance to get that implemented, and bring back the solid plan to this body and as soon as we get to that point where we have everything finalized we'll certainly call that special called Public Safety meeting where we'll have time to sit down and look over*

*those numbers and for everyone to be happy before we proceed on to general council.*

*Councilmember David McClain said, Mr. Chairman I have a quick question. I was trying to make sure, I was doing some quick math, but do you have percentages in terms of where we are, where we're going, mayor, that maybe you could maybe articulate to us, what we're looking at right now? Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, once we finalize those, councilmember, then I'll be more than happy to get that. That information is going to be different among the U ranks and I think that's imperative. I mean that's one of those issues in the business world. What I'm pleased with is seeing that the numbers have increased, and we've done it in a way and I think the recommendations from other councilmembers that have been involved in this process and the chief, they're pleased with those numbers. So I'll be happy to once we get the final numbers, then we'll have those percentages there for you. Councilmember David McClain said, ok and one thing I want to make sure before we move on with those numbers, bumping up the bottom is great and I think we should and I think we should make ourselves competitive, but I also want to make sure that a starting certified officer doesn't come in and make the same or close to what a sergeant would make, especially with supervisor role and all that. I know this would bring us up but at the same time, we're still looking at some room to go in terms of some cities around us and even cities in the state. Like I said, I want to make sure that we're taking care of those folks that have been 10 or more years that have given their years to this city. I want to make sure that we're doing that and if we look at it percentage wise I want to make sure the bottom doesn't get the biggest jump. That we don't give, I don't know the number, my math, 20% versus 10%. Again this is quick math, if we're going from the \$50's for certified to \$60's, sergeants \$60's to \$70's. Again, my quick math said around 20% for certified officer versus 10% for a sergeant. I want to make sure that it's fair across the board. Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, and as I've said, please you're more than welcome to come up to my office and we will obviously go over all these numbers with you so you can understand them as well. My door's open. Councilmember David McClain said, I think that's fair but I also think we should have a conversation here. Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, I totally agree. I'm very pleased to where we are.*

**Filed**

## **7. Public Comments**

## **8. Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Chris Gibson, seconded by David McClain, that this matter be Adjourned . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

**Aye:** 6 - David McClain;Chris Moore;Brian Emison;Janice Porter;Chris Gibson and LJ Bryant