



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Nominating and Rules Committee

Tuesday, June 19, 2018

4:15 PM

Municipal Center

Special Called Meeting

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

Present 5 - David McClain; Bobby Long; LJ Bryant; Mitch Johnson and John Street

Absent 1 - Joe Hafner

3. Approval of minutes

[MIN-18:055](#)

Minutes for the Nominating and Rules Committee meeting on May 29, 2018

Attachments: [Minutes](#)

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

Aye: 4 - Bobby Long; LJ Bryant; Mitch Johnson and John Street

Absent: 1 - Joe Hafner

4. New Business

RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-18:093](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS AS RECOMMENDED BY MAYOR HAROLD PERRIN

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

Aye: 4 - Bobby Long; LJ Bryant; Mitch Johnson and John Street

Absent: 1 - Joe Hafner

[RES-18:097](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO ESTABLISHING THE WOLVERINE PROPERTY DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR COMMITTEE AS RECOMMENDED BY MAYOR HAROLD PERRIN

Chairmember David McClain said I wanted to have some discussion before we voted. I'll open it up for anybody else to have discussion, but I wanted to go ahead and make sure we did have some discussion on this one. Mayor Harold Perrin and I talked about this a little bit. The main reason I was needing to and wanting to have a conversation about this board and, also, I ask that we add two additional names due to the fact that this board is a great board, but it's not diverse at all. Mayor Perrin and I talked about this and, by looking at the names, you can see that the board is not diverse. If Councilmember John Street would be willing to amend his motion, I would ask that we add a couple names to this board.

Councilmember Street said I would like to say that I have been on here 16 years and pretty much, regardless of the mayor, it's always been their prerogative to name those. They have always put out, I think, and Mayor Perrin has, too, that if you want to nominate somebody for these various boards you submit that name to him. It's always been the mayor's prerogative and our only role in this is to either vote it up or down. I've seen some things where I thought maybe somebody should be on a board, but again that's not technically by our rules a council prerogative. Mayor Perrin is free to do that if you tell him somebody and you'd like that known, but, pretty much, our job is just to vote it up or down.

Chairmember McClain said I know that, but at the same time, I think this board or this committee and every committee we put together should make sure it represents the city as a whole. For us to be leading the city, then we should make sure everybody is included in the decision-making. Councilmember Street said, again, that's something that should be discussed with Mayor Perrin prior. Chairmember McClain said Mayor Perrin and I had that conversation, but I would like to make some changes or additions. Councilmember Street said I think that would be up to Mayor Perrin. If he's open to that then that's fine. If that's his recommendation, then, again, I'd go with Mayor Perrin's recommendation because that's what's always been done, but that's always the mayor's prerogative.

Councilmember Bobby Long said there is one other thing. What type of insight do you think that those additional people would bring that are not already brought to the table by the existing board? What additional value of insight do you think they would bring there? Chairmember McClain said one of them that I would like to see recommended would be somebody who was a property owner on that side of the town, but somebody who also brings value in a different thought and different way of thinking. Do they bring value as far as are they a developer? One of them, yes. The people I would like to nominate have worked in economic development, as well. Not just locally, but district-wide, statewide.

Councilmember L.J. Bryant said I hear what Chairmember McClain is saying and I hear what Councilmember Street is saying and part of it is reality that is difficult. I remember when we had the Girl Scouts here. There was a little girl who asked Councilmember Ann Williams, why are there not more girls, and Councilmember Williams said I want more girls. That seems to be a challenge in this city is that when we look to a bank president or whatever, there's not as much diversity in those positions so I know it makes it more difficult for the administration to go out and find a woman bank president or a woman vice chancellor, or whatever it is. I know it's a difficult balance to strike, but I think to Chairmember McClain's point it is important to have diversity and Councilmember Street's point that we try to defer to Mayor Perrin, too. So, finding a balance is tough.

Councilmember Street said this is not a final decision by this committee. We make a

recommendation back, but the council, as a whole, the twelve of us, will ultimately make the decision. It can be amended in any way, and we can hear from anybody we would like to hear from. It's open to full discussion from the community when it comes before full council. Whether it's Mayor Hubert Brodell, Mayor Doug Formon or Mayor Perrin, we've always afforded them the courtesy of making their appointments to these commissions and boards. Councilmember Long asked Mayor Perrin what his thoughts were.

Mayor Perrin said Chairmember McClain and I talked yesterday and he had some good thoughts. I told him that this group is what I call flying at 30,000 feet. They are going to be looking at different types of businesses that might be able to go there. Then, after that is done and they come back, all those recommendations will come back here and I will have Chairman Mike Downing come back and explain all the things the board comes up with. Now, at that point and time, then the council could either form another committee, depending on what type of business it is, and then we could bring people in who are in that type of business that surrounds all this area. That is what I told Chairmember McClain yesterday. Again, I gave it real serious thought on this one because this is very important and Councilmember Chris Moore has been bringing this up quite a bit and I agree. The reason I chose Mr. Downing with Jonesboro Unlimited is because he's been in this business for 35 years. Mr. Jake Rice is the utilities and he has to know which way it's going to go. Mr. Jerry Morgan is tied into the Advertising and Promotions Commission and it depends on, whatever business it is, if we have any incentives, we might be able to get some funds from the A&P. Mr. Ted Herget, obviously, owns a lot of property in that area. Mr. Kelly Damphousse knows exactly the mission and vision, I would think, as Chancellor of Arkansas State University. Mr. Chris Barber, Chief Executive Officer of St. Bernards Healthcare, owns a lot of this property that runs almost all the way down to the Wolverine Property and he is continuously buying that property. Councilmember Moore, obviously, because he had brought this matter up, and Planning Director Derrel Smith because, whatever decisions they start talking about, he should be a professional to tell them if they're thinking about a certain type of business then let's look at the rezoning in that area. This is kind of a working committee of knowledge within that. Once they come back and say here is a list of the type of businesses that we think might want to go on this property, then, as I told Chairmember McClain, we might want to get another committee together and really get it tied into that type of deal. That was what he and I talked about yesterday. I appreciate him sending that e-mail to me, and we talked and had a good visit yesterday.

Councilmember Long said what are the deficiencies that you think these people would bring that are not already fulfilled by the qualifications of the people who were listed on the committee. Chairmember McClain said the main thing is a different look. If you look at the names and everybody who is on there, it's an all-white, male feel. All of them are qualified, but, at the same time, what does our city look like. What does the area we are looking to serve look like? For us to have the same thing, I think we need to have a few differences of opinion. Just some diversity, like age. I'm talking about those different things. Not just color or even gender. Just give us some differences. I don't know if you're open to it, Mayor Perrin, but like I said, just adding a couple names to this list. Not taking names away, but adding a couple names to it. Councilmember Long asked what are the qualifications of those people you are recommending. Chairmember McClain said one has done economic development and the other is a property owner, who has also done some developing on that side of town.

Mayor Perrin said we are talking about diversity and I agree with you on that. That's the reason, if you'll look on the last ordinance that you passed, when I spoke to the

Leadership Jonesboro class, I told all those people in there what I need from you all is more participation in city government. I also have a resolution that I picked up while I was in Little Rock that Little Rock passed that talks about the ages of its councilmembers and its administration, and giving these younger people more of an opportunity to participate in city government, which I think is good. I'm reviewing that and I may bring this back to the council for all of you to look at. Mr. Kapil Bajaj is at ASU with the New York Institute of Technology. He called me and volunteered, and sent me three resumes. His resumes fit in to this one right here, but I still have three more, I think, in the files I got from that Leadership Jonesboro class. It's very difficult to even get them some of these people to serve on some of these committees. I'm going to tell you, quite frankly, you put them on there like the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC), and we started paying them and I got to looking at the votes on that and you had nine on MAPC and one time you couldn't even get a quorum. That is ridiculous. I know Mr. Smith wasn't here at the time as the planner, but I told former Planning Director Otis Spriggs that we are going to have to do something here and that's why we changed the way we handle MAPC. They get a very small per stipend to meet, but if they have nine people, I don't want to see a 4-4 or a 4-2, which means only two-thirds of the people are here.

Councilmember Street said with a lot of the other commissions and things, too, and I have served on as many as you have over the years, a lot of them are appointed and they don't show up the first time or they show up once and they won't come back. These are fairly serious. You're wasting the committee's time and everybody else's involved if you don't have people who are involved in the process and committed to helping make a decision. Again, I think it's the mayor's call and I say that even having supplied names to Mayor Perrin myself that he hasn't put on some of the committees, but again, that's his call. I haven't fought over it or anything. He has a list of people and I have to trust he is trying to do the best thing for the city, as well.

Mayor Perrin said I visited with Mr. Downing and Mr. Mark Young, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce, today, and next week on June 24th and 25th, they have a very high-powered planner coming to town to look at our town and visit. That is why, whatever you do tonight, I want you to pass this on, if you don't mind, please, so I can get this committee together. This gentleman wants to interview this committee while he's here, not only with the Chamber of Commerce, Jonesboro Unlimited and going out and looking at industries. He's going to interview plant managers, Chancellor Damphousse, who is on this committee anyway, and some other places to get a sense of this town and what direction he should go in. That's the same reason when I was at Mercantile Bank and this bank here, we hired Mr. Michael Anderson, who works for St. Bernards Healthcare, now, and he took an assessment. We brought everybody in, every school superintendent, all those people in leadership and asked what we needed to do. We are not getting industry. What should we do? It came back very clearly that he said the only thing we should be going after is food processing. We have the lowest utilities in the United States. We have a water supply and, during a depression or anything in hard times, people have to eat. Mr. Anderson still works for St. Bernards Healthcare. When we did this, the first industry we got was Butterball, and from that, we got two in one year. We got Nestle and Frito-Lay. You can see the expansion we got there. I think it's about time the Chamber remount and take a look and that's why they are bringing in this planner to help us decide do we stay with food processing or do we look at other areas? Our last industry that Interim Chief Operations Officer Roy Ockert helped break ground on was Risever from China. That is in the steel industry. The reason for this is because he's close to Blytheville and Osceola, and he has a major contract with Caterpillar. I understand why he located in Jonesboro. He didn't want to locate in Blytheville and he

didn't want to locate in Osceola. He wanted to come to Jonesboro. The reason for that is several things. The first was education at Arkansas State University. He wanted his middle management to be able to continue their education. The second thing was our workforce development center. He fell in love with Shelle Randall, Director of Workforce Development and Existing Industry, who is over all the training, welding, etc. It was education and workforce training. It's difficult to go find somebody today when you're unemployment is below 3%. Good news, bad news. Good news is we are at 2.3%. Bad news is where are you going to get your labor force?

Councilmember Long said one other thing, Mayor Perrin. How many do you have listed on that group? Mayor Perrin said with this here. I'll just have to count them. Mike Downing, Jake Rice and then you have Jerry Morgan, Ted Herget, Kelly Dampousse, Chris Barber, Chris Moore and Derrel Smith. So, that is a total of eight. Councilmember Long said okay eight. Did you mention that one of them was from NYIT? Chairmember McClain said no, it's the previous one. Mayor Perrin said Chairmember McClain mentioned diversity and I said before I looked over on this one for the Craighead County Regional Solid Waste Management Disposal Board and what I was trying to get out is that I am trying, in this administration, to reach out and do exactly what Chairmember McClain was saying. I took his phone call very dear in the fact that that is what I've been doing now is that everywhere I go, I reach out to these young people and diversity. Just like when I spoke to the Hispanic Center of Jonesboro the other night and let them know that they need to get involved in politics. When I was looking at that audience around there, it wasn't just Gina Gomez, Executive Director of the Hispanic Center. I was looking at the Assistant Manager of Dillard's and all these companies here in town, and I told them they need to get involved in their city government and the reason is because like Chairmember McClain said the diversity of our community.

Councilmember Long asked which would be the best way? Mayor Perrin said what I would like to do, and no reflection on Chairmember McClain, I would like to stay with this one and get the thing started and when they come back with results then we could put them on there. Okay. That's what I was telling Chairmember McClain yesterday. That's all I'm saying.

Councilmember Bryant said to Mayor Perrin and Chairmember McClain's point, Mayor Perrin said he pulled an ordinance from elsewhere and I think that maybe Little Rock has a mayor's advisory council on youth, and there's probably a variety of things whether it's a women's advisory commission or minority advisory commission, or whatever. There's a variety of things maybe we could all look at together. Mayor Perrin said and I want to share that with you all. I have that resolution and I apologize that I didn't bring it to you today, but Community Development Director Tiffny Calloway pulled it for me while I was there because Little Rock Mayor Joe Smith and I will be working real close on the association this year. It was amazing what he did at the noon luncheon on Friday. He had everybody in that entire convention to stand. He said all elected officials stand up. Of course, that was two-thirds of the crowd. He said now all of you who are 60 years old and above, sit down. Half of the crowd sat down. Now, those of you 55 to 65, sit down. Councilmember Bryant you jumped out of the room there and missed it, but our friend at the Arkansas Municipal League said you would have won. When they got down to 40 and below, you didn't have but six people standing out of the whole room.

Councilmember Street said one 27-year-old was the last one standing. Mayor Perrin said what that tells me is that we need to look at this. That's what I told Mayor Smith that I needed his resolution bad. He brought it home to me. And diversity, no question

about it. Councilmember Street asked are you saying this needs to be walked on tonight? Mayor Perrin said yes, I would like to walk both of these on and I'll tell you why. Councilmember Street said if Councilmember Mitch Johnson will amend his second, I'd amend it to ask that it be walked on to tonight's City Council agenda. Councilmember Johnson said I'll second that. Mayor Perrin said on both of them, if you can. Chairmember McClain asked so, we'll have to go back? Councilmember Street said we've already done the other one. Mayor Perrins said that's okay. City Clerk Donna Jackson said you don't even have to do that. At the meeting, you just suspend the rules. Councilmember Street asked just walk it on? Mayor Perrin said yes, because this is a resolution. It becomes effective immediately. I am sorry. The reason I said that is because I'm meeting with the Auditorium Commission, along with Chief Financial Officer Bill Reznicek, and we're going to change their contract, it's 1985. We're changing that and we're going to have her and the group to start having more events at The Forum to bring in more revenue for the City of Jonesboro and the Foundation of Arts. Rather than just having The Nutcracker and maybe three events a year, they need more money for a concession stand and things, which I would be glad to provide. However, we need to get a return investment on our building, and they all concurred, but I want to bring their whole board in on the Auditorium Commission that you just appointed that one back on, but that's okay. This is automatic anyway and becomes effective immediately.

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

Aye: 4 - Bobby Long;LJ Bryant;Mitch Johnson and John Street

Absent: 1 - Joe Hafner

5. Pending Items

6. Other Business

7. Public Comments

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilperson Mitch Johnson, seconded by Councilperson LJ Bryant, that this meeting be Adjourned. The motion PASSED with the following vote

Aye: 4 - Bobby Long;LJ Bryant;Mitch Johnson and John Street

Absent: 1 - Joe Hafner