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Subject: A&P Commission Feasibility Study

Dear City Council Members,

On behalf of the Jonesboro A&P Commission, I feel it is important to respond to Mr. Hard L. Weinstock's recent emails that continue to contain inaccurate and misleading information. I would rather do this in an email prior to tonight's city council meeting to save time for much more relevant discussions from our citizens.

Mr. Weinstock continues to reference Ft. Smith and their ongoing feasibility study. Our A&P Commission first discussed doing a feasibility study after we saw that Ft. Smith has contracted with a company to do one for their city. The Ft. Smith feasibility study was discussed in our last A&P meeting and was the catalyst for us deciding to do a study for Jonesboro as well. Mr. Weinstock was at the meeting but left early after making his public comments and us questioning him on his math. At the meeting we agreed to issue RFP's for a feasibility study AND to apply for the state aid of up to \$15,000 to help offset the cost. We agreed that once we received the proposals we would meet and decide on the best company to provide those services. Carol Duncan, our City Attorney has been assisting us with the RFP and the wording to ensure we are properly following city guidelines. We have referenced that the cost could be as much as \$50,000 but we do expect it to come in under that amount. We feel it is best to estimate on the high end of the range and hope to come in lower. We also will work hard to receive the grant funds to offset the cost.

A draft copy of the last A&P meeting's minutes are attached for reference if needed for review.

It is also important to note that Ft. Smith also has a current sales tax rate of 9.75% (not including their A&P taxes) compared to our 8.50%. If our tax rate was 9.75% it would generate an estimated amount close to \$25,000,000 more than our city is bringing in currently. Ft. Smith also has a certain percentage of their sales tax revenues dedicated to parks and recreation. With these designated funds, they have made parks and recreation capital improvements of \$3.7MM in 2021 and proposed \$5.3MM in 2022. These projects include additions to their pedestrian trails and riverfront sports fields.

Collectively, the Jonesboro City Parks and Recreation department along with the A&P Commission have a strong understanding of the sports our proposed facility will enable us to house. But as discussed in various presentations, we feel that a due-diligence feasibility study will enable us to get an outside and unbiased opinion to ensure we are building a facility that accomplishes the goals of serving all of our citizens. It will also allow us to complete a competitive analyses of the region and our local landscape. It will help us to do complete projections on income, expenses, and maintenance costs in order to build those into the final estimates on the project. And once the study is complete and we have a good history on the tax collections, we will then again come before the city council for the final approval of the project and the financing request.

While this information has been presented to the council previously, many naysayers continue to try and muddy the waters and misconstrue the truth with misinformation and inaccuracies.

If you have any questions you are welcome to contact me at 870-275-2775.

Best Regards,
Jerry Morgan
A&P Chairman

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