



# City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center  
300 S. Church Street  
Jonesboro, AR 72401

## Meeting Minutes City Council

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Tuesday, September 1, 2020

5:30 PM

Municipal Center

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### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 5:00 P.M.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR PERRIN AT 5:30 P.M.

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

#### 3. ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK DONNA JACKSON

*Mayor Harold Perrin was not in attendance. President Pro-Tempore Chris Moore presided over the meeting.*

**Present** 11 - Ann Williams; Charles Frierson; Chris Moore; John Street; Mitch Johnson; Gene Vance; Chris Gibson; Charles Coleman; Bobby Long; Joe Hafner and David McClain

**Absent** 1 - LJ Bryant

#### 4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

[COM-20:046](#) PROCLAMATION PRESENTATION TO JUNE MORSE FOR SEASON OF HOPE

**Read**

[COM-20:048](#) PROCLAMATION PRESENTATION FOR PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS TO JERRY JETT

**Read**

[COM-20:049](#) PROCLAMATION PRESENTATION FOR OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH SEPTEMBER 2020

**Read**

#### 5. CONSENT AGENDA

*Approval of the Consent Agenda*

**A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Bobby Long, to Approve the Consent Agenda. The motioned PASSED**

**Aye:** 11 - Ann Williams; Charles Frierson; Chris Moore; John Street; Mitch Johnson; Gene Vance; Chris Gibson; Charles Coleman; Bobby Long; Joe Hafner and David McClain

**Absent:** 1 - LJ Bryant

[MIN-20:079](#) MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AUGUST 18, 2020

**Attachments:** [CC Minutes 08182020](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

[MIN-20:083](#) MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AUGUST 25, 2020

**Attachments:** [CC Minutes 08252020](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

[RES-20:102](#) RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT MORTON, PARCEL 01-144233-03000, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY JULIA FORMON

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

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-103-2020

[RES-20:103](#) RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 200 S. ALLIS, PARCEL 01-144181-40800, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY MICHAEL DUANE DARLING

**Attachments:** [200 S. Allis](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-104-2020

[RES-20:104](#) RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON VACANT PROPERTY LOCATED AT 129 N. BRIDGE, PARCEL 01-144181-55600, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY PATRICIA WILLIAMS

**Attachments:** [129 N. Bridge](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-105-2020

[RES-20:105](#) RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 816 HOOVER, PARCEL 01-144181-14800, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY ROBERT WHITAKER

**Attachments:**     [816 Hoover](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-106-2020

[RES-20:106](#)     RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1328 WEST HUNTINGTON, PARCEL 01-144133-18100, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY DKI LLC C/O RICHARD KNIGHT

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-107-2020

[RES-20:107](#)     RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1506 PRATT CIRCLE, PARCEL 01-144082-9900, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY CHARLES H BOWMAN

**Attachments:**     [1506 Pratt](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-108-2020

[RES-20:108](#)     RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5104 DARR HILL, PARCEL 01-133023-08700, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72404, OWNED BY CHARLES ALLEN

**Attachments:**     [5104 Darr Hill](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-109-2020

[RES-20:109](#)     RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT BROWNS LANE ACCESS, PARCELS 01-144294-01211, 01-144294-01212, AND 01-144294-01213, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY NORTHEAST ARKANSAS HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER LLC

**Attachments:**     [Browns Lane Access](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-110-2020

[RES-20:110](#)     RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 501 N. MAIN, PARCEL 01-144182-12100, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS 72401, OWNED BY CAROLYN HATCHER

**Attachments:**     [501 N. Main](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-111-2020

[RES-20:121](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO APPLY FOR A HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE (HMA) GRANT

**Attachments:**     [COJ Authorized Agent 2020](#)  
                          [COJ Funds Commitment Form 2020](#)  
                          [COJ 2020 State Local Agreement](#)

**This item was passed on the consent agenda.**

Enactment No: R-EN-112-2020

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### *ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING*

[ORD-20:033](#)

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING BY REFERENCE THE GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN JONESBORO AREA AND PROVIDE MORE WALKABLE, VIBRANT, AND MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOODS

**Attachments:**     [DJDC final version 8.17.20](#)

*Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Gibson, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-20:033 by title only. All voted aye.*

*President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, I would expect that we are going to read this three times. Councilmember Joe Hafner said, I do have some questions for Derrel. Obviously, this is like a 77 page document. It is pretty big, but it looks really good. I just have some general questions for you. Can you explain who was on the committee that helped come up with this and the process that was involved in putting it together? Planning Director, Derrel Smith said, certainly. We had our first meeting in March of 2019. People at that meeting were us, the Mayor's office, Arkansas State University, St. Bernards, the West End Neighborhood was represented, and several of the local developers that were building in the area that we looked at. We started on March 27, 2019. We met about every month or every two months until February of 2020 when we presented the draft ordinance to them and they, everybody reviewed it and recommended that it go forward. In May, we met with City Water and Light about the document. It was presented to MAPC on May 26, 2020 for their review. We continued to talk about it and meet with City Water and Light and some others. We had our Public Hearing on August 11, 2020. And, then, MAPC voted on August 25, 2020 to recommend it to the City Council. Councilmember Hafner said, thank you. I have two more questions. When something like this is being worked on that impacts the developers and commercial builders. Does the Planning Department have an email database where you all email out and say hey, we are having a meeting to discuss this or is that something that could be done? Sometimes, we hear, hey, we didn't even know this was going on or something like that so I am just wondering if there is a way to keep the developers and the commercial builders in the loop using the email addresses that you all have on file. Mr. Smith said, we don't have all of them, but we will be glad to send it out. We placed it on the website back in May. We placed the*

draft ordinance on the website so people could see it back on May 26, 2020. It has been out there. We will be glad to send it out to individual developers. Councilmember Hafner said, I think notification would be nice. Mr. Smith said, we can't send the entire document because of the size, but we can at least give them the web address where they can find it. Councilmember Hafner said, right or when there are meetings being held to talk about things like this to say, hey, we are having a meeting if you want to attend, we would like your input or something like that. The final question I had is if this ordinance goes through the three readings and then it is approved, it would probably go into effect in early November. So, how would, if I am a developer and I have property downtown that I have been working on planning building something, how would I be impacted by this? Mr. Smith said, it would be like any new ordinance change. If it is in before the new ordinance changed, then it is going to follow what was previously approved. If it comes in after the ordinance goes into effect, they will have to follow the new ordinance. If it is submitted before the ordinance goes into effect, they will follow the old ordinance. Councilmember Hafner said, okay, that is all I have, thank you. Councilmember Bobby Long asked, could you explain the impact that this ordinance will have on current residential homes, businesses, and those who own current apartment buildings or rental homes in these four different zones? Mr. Smith said, well, you are asking me to explain about the entire ordinance. President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, what about if we asked Derrel to do a presentation at the next council meeting and kind of highlight the points on it. We are going to read it over three consecutive meetings, what about Derrel present us kind of a synopsis on the whole thing at the next meeting? Councilmember Long said, I think that is a great idea. When you do that can you also give us an idea of what some sort of additional zoning might look like if it was a cottage zoning, something to where smaller homes can be built on narrower lots so they don't have to have such wider lots to build maybe smaller, more affordable homes? Has that been looked at? Mr. Smith said, I am looking at an ordinance for that right now. Councilmember Long said, are you? Okay, good. President Pro-Temp Moore asked, Derrel, would you be able to make a presentation? Can I put you down for a special presentation at the next council meeting? Mr. Smith said, I would be happy to. I was pretty much waiting for you to ask. I have got something put together. President Pro Temp Moore said, I think that would be beneficial because we are going to hold it for three meetings, so if you would do that.

#### **Held at one reading**

#### [ORD-20:034](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, FROM C-3, GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO RS-7 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1330 WEST MONROE AS REQUESTED BY ALBERTO MORALES.

**Attachments:**    [Staff Summary - Council](#)  
[APPLICATION](#)  
[Residential Application](#)  
[Plat](#)  
[Rezoning Plat](#)  
[House Plans](#)  
[Pictures of Rezoning Sign](#)  
[Aerial](#)  
[Property Owner Notifications Returned](#)  
[USPS Receipts](#)

Councilmember Mitch Johnson motioned, seconded by Councilmember Charles Frierson, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-20:034 by title only. All voted aye.

Carlos Wood, 148 CR 375 Bono, said, I am an engineer and I am representing the owner. We are just asking for a rezoning so he can build a single-family home.

**Held at one reading**

## **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

#### [ORD-20:030](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE JONESBORO CODE OF ORDINANCES, SECTION 117.330(c), KNOWN AS THE SIDEWALK ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, PROVIDING FOR AN EXEMPTION FOR PROPERTY IN PLANNED INDUSTRIAL PARKS

**Attachments:**     [Letter to Council 9.8.20](#)  
                                  [Casteel email 09142020](#)

Councilmember John Street said, Mike Downing had talked to Carol and before we had discussed one of the issues was that some people in the Industrial Park had already received building permits and they were required to build sidewalks. According to him, all of those affected by that received a certificate of occupancy without having built their sidewalks yet. I don't know if he developed it, but he talked like he had. It was an amendment to this ordinance if in fact it was passed to retroactively include those five industries that had permits to build or expand, but had not actually built their sidewalks yet. You might see if he could address that. President Pro Temp Chris Moore asked, would you restate your question since Mike is at the podium. Councilmember Street said, Mike, this was in regards to your conversation with Carol about the five industries who had obtained building permits, but had a temporary certificate of occupancy issued and none of them have built their sidewalks and your question about amending this ordinance to reflect those in case it passed it would be retroactively effective on those five industries. Chief of Staff Mike Downing said, that is correct. In the email that I sent, I sent you the spreadsheet with the five industries that are affected and I also sent you a draft amendment if you want to add the exemption on those five existing companies. Councilmember Street said, I didn't get that Mike. If you sent it, I didn't get it. Mr. Downing said, okay. President Pro Temp Moore asked, are there any other questions on the council? Councilmember David McClain said, I have got one. So, Mike, are you suggesting that we make the amendment since five of these companies have not put in sidewalks to allow them, to pretty much give them a waiver. Is that what you are suggesting since they haven't put these in? Mr. Downing said, I am going to let Mark Young, CEO of the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce, comment on that. Mr. Young said, I appreciate the opportunity to be with you tonight. Yes, we would make that request on behalf of those companies. Part of the reason why I brought this to the Mayor's attention a few months ago was that feedback that we were receiving from these companies as they considered making investments in our community and also continue to expand in our community, and in particular, one of those I have got a letter from, I will be happy to read part of it. They were basically making the same case that we discussed two weeks ago which was concern over safety and the liability of such. In his letter, Tommy Jumper, who is CEO of Delta Peanut, made a comment. This is an excerpt and not the whole letter. But, it talked about sidewalks posing a concern. They are unnecessary since our site is so far from any connecting foot paths.

*They are unsafe due to anticipated traffic. Please understand that if built according to ordinance, sidewalks will cross the city's railroad lines in two places. They will also parallel to the city's track in close proximity for a ¼ of a mile. Additionally, they will cross three motor vehicle access points to our property. We anticipate within two to three years, 10,000 trucks annually will come and go from Delta Peanut. The letter goes on. So, in reference to your question, yes, we would respectfully request that you would consider exempting these companies if passed. I will be happy to answer any questions. Certainly, this is a topic that I have great interest in.*

*Councilmember Joe Hafner said, we talked some at the last meeting about maybe coming up with another alternative rather than just offering a total exemption. I think on sidewalks, there will be a time when they are necessary out in the Industrial Park. I think there is at least a need for them if we put Public Transit stops out there for them to be able to safely get to. Before we totally exempt them retroactively for over two years, I would like for us to at least consider another additional option rather than just a total waiver. Because when they got their building permits, there was not an exemption so I don't think we need to let them be totally exempt and not improve the pedestrian infrastructure out there because not everybody drives. Councilmember McClain said, the thing that I have a problem with us giving exemptions is at some point somebody is walking to the Industrial Park. As Joe just said, everybody doesn't have a car and drive. So, for me, I think we need to make sure that we have every piece of infrastructure in place to make our city more walkable, whether it be bus stops or sidewalks. For me, I would like to know how close is our Industrial Park to neighborhoods that could potentially have someone walking to work? I have known individuals that walk all the way over from the north side to the Industrial Park. I think we should do all we can to make sure that they can walk safely and not walk on the shoulder or in the grass and not have somewhere safe to walk. President Pro Temp Moore said, I think, if you are referring to Mr. Hafner's comments, were not necessarily referring to the distance to the nearest neighborhoods, but the potential to have a public transportation stop in the Industrial Park, that you would be able to ride a bus to the public transportation stop and then walk on the sidewalk onto your job. Councilmember McClain said, right. I was just saying that we need to keep that in mind. President Pro Temp Moore said, sure. Councilmember McClain said, I was asking Mark Young if he could give me a distance to a neighborhood. Mr. Young said, yes sir, I sure can. We did take a look at that and the nearest neighborhood is approximately three miles from the Craighead Technology Park. So, it would be west of the Craighead Technology Park. If you go east of the Craighead Technology Park, you are actually as far east Jonesboro as you can get and still be within the city limits. Barnhill Road is kind of the point for the city limits there. So, coming back to the west, it is approximately three miles to the closest neighborhood. From Nestle, the closest is three miles. To get to Barnhill Road, it is even further. I believe that Mike also sent an aerial photo of that area. 1,500 acres is a very large piece of property. So, the other challenge that we are talking about, we have taken an ordinance again that we endorsed, that we want to continue to look for ways to make the city more walkable. But, I had expressed two years ago, the concern about how it would be adopted in the Industrial Park. A couple of other quick side notes, one would be that we talked about safety the last time. You heard in the excerpt from the letter that I read earlier, the amount of traffic that can be out there and the fact that we intentionally sited the Industrial Park out there that there are chances where pedestrians and 18 wheelers and railcars would come into contact. The other thing I did today just out of curiosity, I called the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and asked them if they were aware of other cities in Arkansas making this a requirement in their industrial parks. Their Director of Business Development is aware of no other community in the state that requires this type of ordinance in their industrial park. As far as the JETS System*

goes, it is something that certainly we would be happy to look at with you. Again, you would have to put a lot of stops out there in the Industrial Park to serve all of the Industrial clients. It is a very large area and to get from Spirit Fitness on the southwest corner to FMH on the northeast corner, that is a long way, especially if you are on foot.

Councilmember Hafner said, I think we also need to be careful about going back retroactively for almost 2 ½ years and just saying that you are exempt. I think that is a bad precedent to set for the future. Thank you. President Pro Temp Moore said, duly noted. Councilmember John Street said, I would like to ask Mr. Young if he feels or has any evidence to show that this does have a negative effect on industrial recruitment for the City of Jonesboro. Mr. Young said, yes. Certainly it comes with a cost, again, depending upon the size of the property that we are looking at the cost can be over \$100,000 just to put in a sidewalk. That is not my main concern, but it certainly can have an impact. In a very competitive situation where we are competing with communities across the US, that could be an issue. At this point in time, it hasn't been, but it certainly could be an issue. As we drive costs up and as risk becomes a factor, your private owner is building a sidewalk or are required to build a sidewalk and you obtain the risk of those individuals of who might be on the sidewalk who are interacting with your trucks or trains, etc. that certainly can be a deterrent as well. Councilmember Street said, thank you Mr. Young. Mr. Young said, thank you sir.

Beverly Parker, 3803 Sawgrass, said, I certainly appreciate Mark Young's comments and what he is working towards with the Chamber and Jonesboro Unlimited. However, as all of you know, I think all of you were on the council when the sidewalk ordinance was decided. I feel that this is something that the people wanted, asked for, requested, and backed. This needs to be judged very passionately in terms of this variance. I also, in terms of as Mr. Hafner was saying, 2 ½ years seems like a rather long time when initially they were told or it was clear that they were going to have to have a sidewalk. I have a few comments that I would like to make. As I have already mentioned, this was a very passionately debated issue. I feel like any changes in this ordinance may lend itself to other requests for amendments as well. You will recall that this was a two or three year process when we went through MAPC. Then, there was a committee that the Mayor appointed and suggestions were made. At that time, actually, I looked at the minutes today and the sidewalks in the Industrial Park were debated and that measure did not pass in that committee, so it was forwarded to MAPC and the City Council with the Industrial Park in tact. Also, at the time, there were some studies available through the Jonesboro Economic Development and Downtown Jonesboro that indicated a desire for outdoor pedestrian and bicycling options, transportation, and recreation. I want to underscore the transportation. Also, on the JED study, it showed that out of seven indicators, pedestrian and bicycling ranked lowest in meeting citizens expectations for infrastructure development. Therefore, let's not delabor this argument. The people want sidewalks. The city needs sidewalks and industrial areas should not be exempt. I fear that making this exemption will lead to others asking for the same. I want to finish by mentioning that this is really a discussion about transportation. I will say that again. It is a discussion about transportation. We know that those who want to work cannot always afford transportation that you and I take for granted. Also, when they have transportation, it is not always reliable and we need to support these individuals to have jobs and be able to get to their place of work. Moreover, we now have a bus system that has seen increasing ridership and there are bus stops in the Industrial Park. So, what we need is bus stops that are linked through a walkable environment so that those who chose to walk to work or must walk to work are able to do so safely. I hope that you as the council will continue to support this by constructing sidewalks even in industrial areas, not just the new ones. I think this is something that needs to be discussed and looked



at. We shouldn't be going backwards. So, I appeal to you to remember that the citizens need safe places to walk. We know that those roads there are rather narrow and there aren't really safe places to walk in that area. So, to me, the liability concerns have more to do with providing no place for people to walk instead of just the ditches or the grassy areas. So, this is really concerning to me. We have an ordinance that was debated and that was passed. So, I am going to invoke now the words of Margaret Thatcher who said, "This is not the time to go wobbly." I would ask that the council stick to your guns and retain the infrastructure needed within the Industrial Park as was voted on in the original ordinance. Thank you. President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, thank you Ms. Parker.

Councilmember David McClain said, I would like to hear from Derrel, his thoughts, if he is willing to share what he is thinking in terms of being in the Industrial Park or not. Planning Director Derrel Smith said, Mr. McClain, when we did this originally, we tried to exempt the Industrial Park and of course, the committee chose not to. They have known for the last 2 ½ years that this has been a requirement. When Delta Peanut came in, they knew it was a requirement. Now, they have come up when it is time to get open, they don't want to put in the sidewalks. They say it is a safety issue. They have three crossings within about a mile. Commercial areas have a whole lot more crossings than that within a much shorter distance. The railroad track they are concerned about is a storage track. It is not an active track. So, I don't have a personal comment on this. But, you voted for it so I will just leave it at that. President Pro Temp Moore said, thank you Derrel. Councilmember Bobby Long said, if we give variance now to the same arguments can be viewed just as valid in the future for any other one that comes down the pipe. So, I think consistency is of utmost importance in this. Also, if the variances are upheld based on safety then that would put us in a real precarious position of denying one industry in the future a variance for the same arguments that we are allowing these. So, I think we need to be really, really careful on that.

**Held at second reading**

### ORDINANCES ON THIRD READING

[ORD-20:031](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, FROM C-3, GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO RS-7 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT LIMITED USE OVERLAY FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 3515 LONGCREST DRIVE AS REQUESTED BY CARLOS WOOD ON BEHALF OF B & T LAND COMPANY, LLC.

**Attachments:**     [Application](#)  
                              [Rezoning Plat](#)  
                              [Staff Summary - City Council](#)  
                              [Pictures of Rezoning Signs](#)  
                              [TURMAN LONGCREST REZONING-REV071020](#)  
                              [USPS Receipts](#)  
                              [Warranty Deed](#)

**A motion was made by Councilperson Mitch Johnson, seconded by Councilperson Charles Frierson, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

**Aye:** 11 - Ann Williams; Charles Frierson; Chris Moore; John Street; Mitch Johnson; Gene Vance; Chris Gibson; Charles Coleman; Bobby Long; Joe Hafner and David McClain

**Absent:** 1 - LJ Bryant

Enactment No: O-EN-033-2020

## **8. MAYOR'S REPORTS**

*Chief of Staff Mike Downing reported on the following:*

*The August sales tax came in about a week ago. For the combined city and county sales tax, we were \$316,800 more than August of last year, an 11.2% increase. So, the year-to-date for eight months is \$1,089,000 more than 2019. That is really good news. I still can't explain it all. Part of it is the online sales are \$644,736 more than last year. Considering that we had a tornado and a pandemic, even with the online sales increase, that is pretty incredible. So, we are very happy about those numbers.*

*On the next council meeting for September 15th, you have indicated to Derrel to make a presentation. There are a couple of others that were coming up and we may have to balance these so we don't have an excess of time. But, we have Jason Carter, the attorney that you all listened to several months ago on 5G. There have been several people that have asked for 5G information. So, Jason was prepared to do that on September 15th. We have him scheduled. The other thing that we were talking about scheduling on the 15th, unless we hear otherwise, was tornado after action report from the police and fire departments. Also, I have George Jackson from the airport lined up to discuss recovery efforts and future plans for the airport. I may defer because of the time on additional cleanup information about tornado recovery. I may do that the next council meeting after that because of the time limits. I have talked to a few and discussed the possibility of looking at ways that would help facilitate cleanup and of debris and homeowners who haven't started the cleanup process. We may talk about that in the Public Safety meeting coming up in two weeks. The other thing on the 15th that may get a little long, but we were going to have Michael Black discuss the JETS Cares Funding plan. As you all know, we received quite a bit of money, over \$2 million in federal money for JETS and we have that presentation ready to go. So, that could either be at the Public Services Committee meeting or to the full council or whatever you all think is best. We have a resolution that we are working on to identify the budget also.*

*A couple of notices: first of all, on Saturdays starting September 12, 2020, the incinerator on the West End of town will only be open 7 a.m. to noon. We are not having much business out there now so we decided to shut down or close down the hours only from 7 a.m. to noon on Saturdays starting on September 12, 2020.*

*There was a release that we had on social media and elsewhere but the Arkansas Municipal League a few days ago, Mayor Perrin was awarded the prestigious John Woodruff City Above Self award which is for persons that have provided lasting benefits to cities by being an outstanding example of dedication to their improvement. The Mayor, also at the AML Conference, received the Marvin Vinson Commitment to Excellence award presented to municipal officials who have served their city on League boards, countless committees, with distinction and dedication which the Mayor has for 12 years. So, congratulations to the Mayor for both of those awards then.*

*Another thing that is being very active is census takers who are following up with*

people who have not filed their census yet and there are quite a few apparently. The deadline to file census is September 30, 2020. So, if people see someone coming up to their doorstep, don't run them away because it may be a census taker. Be responsive please because we need all of the people doing that as much as we can. They have some other promotional activities going on throughout the community for the next month.

I just want to remind you all that on the city website if you go to Human Resources on the website, we have several positions available. We have four full-time that are available right now which include: Traffic Operations Engineer, E-911 Call Taker, Firefighter, and Planner I. That is the four full-time that we have. We have a few part-time as well. So, again, we encourage as many applicants as we possibly can to get the best pool of people and a diverse set of people as well. So, we would like to encourage that.

Finally, we received a letter from Sr. Corporal Arthur Reff of the Arkansas State Police to indicate an outstanding job by the Fire Marshall's section of city government and the Fire Department and specifically Jason Wills, Mike Whitby, Brian Carter, and Kevin Prince. They basically solved the mystery of a fire that was intentionally set. They gained enough information sufficient to obtain an arrest. So, congratulations on a job well done to those four fire marshall folks in the Fire Department.

President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, Mike, I think due to the time restraints of reading at three consecutive meetings, Derrel's report at the next meeting would be pertinent and if we needed to delay the airport rebuilding report or some of those others, I would ask that we do that so we have ample time to hear Derrel and to prepare for the third and final reading two weeks later. Councilmember Chris Gibson said, I agree.

President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, thank you Mike. The two additional items that were on my list here, the Mayor wanted me to mention the fact that the Jonesboro Airport Commission's financial statements are available on Legistar and the Northeast Arkansas Industrial Commission's 2020 second quarter update is available on Legistar.

[COM-20:044](#)

JONESBORO AIRPORT COMMISSION FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ENDING JULY 31, 2020

**Attachments:**     [JAC Jonesboro Airport Financials 07\\_20](#)

Filed

[COM-20:047](#)

NORTHEAST ARKANSAS INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION 2020 SECOND QUARTER UPDATE

**Attachments:**     [NAIDC Second Quarter Update](#)

Filed

## **9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilmember David McClain said, the only thing I have that I would like to add is that there are people working with the census and are looking for suggestions on how we can get everyone engaged. So, if you know of someone who hasn't done it, encourage them to complete it.

Councilmember Bobby Long said, thank you Mike for giving us an update on the 5G presentation. I received a call today asking when we were going to hear from the experts again. Also, do you know if there has been any progress or any additional 5G tower permits issued since the last time? We discussed this. There has not been. Okay, alright, good.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, I was just going to mention the sales tax, but Mike already did that. I am pleasantly surprised like everyone else with our numbers and I'm really happy about the online part. That also helped put our local retailers on an even playing field with online people.

Councilmember John Street said, I would like to echo Councilmember McClain's plea to do the census and to also let people know that they don't have to meet someone at their door. They can get online and do that. There is even a telephone number they can call and do their census. Every single person counts. It means money for Jonesboro and Arkansas in general. Also, on our last council meeting, we changed the first meeting in October from the 6th to the 8th because of National Night Out. I would ask that we change the Public Works meeting also from the 6th to the 8th at 5:00 p.m. to coincide with that. Councilmember Joe Hafner seconded Councilmember John Street's motion. All voted aye.

Councilmember Mitch Johnson said, Mike Downing just let me know that the census number is available on our website and all of the social media sites as well. President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, if you didn't hear what Mr. Johnson said, he said the census phone number is available on the city website and encourages everyone to call that number if you have not filled out the census report. Thank you.

Councilmember Dr. Charles Coleman said, on October 6th, we will be hosting a National Night Out at the University Park between 4:00–7:00 p.m. We appreciate everyone that comes out. The way that we are going to do it is a drive thru so we won't have a group of people standing around and if they do, I am going to ask the police to help them to another place. I just want to make sure that this is going to be an actual drive thru and not a stand up. We will be handing out bags of information of all the places in Jonesboro. We will have hot dogs also that will be put in a basket.

## **10. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

James Ransburg, 8 Willow Creek Lane, said, I have been a resident here in Jonesboro for a little over a year now. I am a retired United States Marine and Naval Officer. I spent 25 years of active duty here in the Marine Corp and the Navy. I am also a service related disabled veteran. I moved to Jonesboro a little over a year ago. I thought it was a wonderful city. I still think it is a wonderful city. But, in my time that I have lived here, I came across some information that I thought was pretty disturbing to me although I didn't know all of the facts and details, so I put the guide together. But, I was able to accumulate, it was pretty difficult to accumulate I have to say. I am just going to scroll through some of it since this is being videotaped, you will be able to take a look at it later and briefly go over it and then surmise my conclusion and also give you guys an opportunity to come back sometime later and see if you can't answer some of the questions that I have during this presentation. The very first one we have here of the presentation I have here is of the US Census here for the City of Jonesboro. It has to do with, as you can see, every ethnic group here in the city. About 33% of the city is composed of minorities. I find it interesting that 51.7% of the city is composed of females and 68.7% of the city is composed of minorities, that includes men and all women. Of course, women are considered minorities by the federal

government and EEOC. 31.3% of the city is composed of white males.

*This is the employment data that I received from Human Resources here and I think it is Director Douglas, who is also the EEOC Director. I'll save that comment for later. There is a total of 604 according to their data, a total of 604 full-time employees that work for the city. 493 of those are male and 111 of those are female, 82% male and 18% female. I find it interesting that 76.2% of those are white male and 15.9% are white females which make up 91% of all the full-time employees in the City of Jonesboro. The next page is a chart. It kind of gives a clear picture of the employment here in the City of Jonesboro. On the right there is the total number of females that are employed by the city. The other gold line is the total number of males employed by the city. As you can see there under Asian, there is none. Under Black, we can see those numbers. Under Hispanic, you can barely see that. Under Native American, there are no employees in the city. There is a total as you can see, white males are doing very well in the city in full-time employment and once again, the females are doing okay. Here is the City of Jonesboro Employment Data by Department and this is what I found very interesting. We will start with the Police Department. We have 177 full-time employees in the Police Department. 167 of those are white males and females. Eight of them are African American and two Hispanic. The Fire Department has 122 full-time employees. 120 of those are white males. Two of them are white females. Presently, there are no minorities working in the Fire Department in Jonesboro. The other thing that I found interesting was that the majority of the minorities that do work in the city work for the Street Department and Sanitation. It is a job. I am thankful for that. I find it interesting that the majority of them worked in those two departments. As you can see from the other departments, 100%, 100%, 100%, 75%, 75%, 100%, 100%, 75%, the majority of the departments in the city, full-time positions, are white males. Very, very few are white females and no minorities. Of course, this is the data that was forwarded to me from Human Resources. I was a little disappointed they represent the city in the data that they sent me was very, very incomplete. Part-time salaries. So, I went a step further. How are minorities contributing to the budget here in the city. We make up a little bit more than 1/3rd of the city and for the budget for this year, income this year, income is \$52 million. Minorities contribute almost \$20 million to the economy here in Jonesboro. The majority of that was mentioned earlier is in sales tax, county and city sales tax. And, then, I looked up the budget for the full-time employees here in the city, \$34.67 million, quite a bit of money. There are a lot of fringe benefits included in that. And, so we will go on so that I don't lose my time here. I have a couple of questions. These pages are some information that I got from the city that I wanted to share with you guys as far as our income is concerned. To summarize what I wanted to share with you, this presentation was distributed to six councilmembers by email on August 20, 2020. I have yet to receive a response from four of the six members. A very positive response from city Councilmember LJ Bryant. He has been talking with me a lot, promising to look into matters and directing me to those who can address my concerns. And, finally, there was a sixth member. He had an interesting response and I wanted you to read his email. I wanted to read his email. It was councilman Long and he told me that I would be better suited to get my information from the HR Director of the city. But, he was just curious, he said, I have a few questions. If you owned a business and was looking for employees that would determine the success or failure of your livelihood, what characteristics would you look for? How much of the employment burden lies with the job seeker to prepare themselves for the type of employment they seek? Do you feel someone who is less qualified for a job should get the position over a more qualified applicant just because of their ethnicity? I have been in HR for 18 years and a manager of some sort for over 25 years. I have always hired based on the content of character, willingness to work hard, truthfulness, experience, educational requirements, and ability to get along with*

*others and work as a team. I would hope the city does the same. I am interested to know if our views are different and if so, in what way?*

*So, my answer to councilman Long is Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 says that it is federal law. It says that employer practices: It shall be unlawful employment practice for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin or to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. And, so what I read in that entire Civil Rights Act of 1964 is Mr. Long that is the answer to your question. It is not my opinion, it is what the law says. Based on this information that I have shared with you, I attempted to get some historical data, but it is very difficult to get from the city. I have tried. I have even used the Freedom of Information Act to try to get the information and there have been some delays and some just flat out no. And, so, I haven't given up. There are other avenues that I have, but I wanted to present to you first because this is a progressive city from what I understand and from what I see. We have a lot of wonderful things going on in this city that I am proud of and want to be a part of. But, this one thing right here, this one thing right here could cause us some problems that we don't want to have to address here in the City of Jonesboro. And, so, that is why I am here presenting this presentation to you all. For ten years, these numbers have been like this, the Fire Department, the Police Department, even though the Federal Government has given us millions of dollars in the last few years to improve that problem that we have here based on this presentation. And, so, my reason for being here is pretty self-explanatory, I think we can do better. I think we can do better. There are over 20,000 minorities in this city. We can do better. And, so, that is my presentation. But, I have one last thing that I want to share with you. I am also a Christian also. And, I want to share one verse with you and it is found in James Chapter 4, Verse 17. "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and do it not, to him it is a sin." Thank you for your time. President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, thank you very much. Would you mind leaving that with the City Clerk's so it can be entered into the record? If you have a written copy, that would be better. We will make sure your presentation was entered into the city record. Thank you sir.*

[COM-20:050](#)

PRESENTATION GIVEN BY JAMES RANSBURG

**Attachments:** [Ransburg Presentation 09012020](#)

**Read**

*Police Chief Rick Elliott said, in regards to the gentleman's remarks about minorities in the department, part of the response that we gave to him was that our minority applicant pool this year alone is at 48% minorities in 2020. But, over half of that never showed up for the test. So, we have gone from 39% in 2017 in our applicant pool of minorities to over 48% of minorities this year. But, again, so far this year, over half didn't show up and out of that, what did show up got washed out and we will end up with one qualified applicant. So, the struggles that we have had over the past years that I have been Chief is recruiting minorities and we have reached out in other avenues. Our*

department is more diverse than it was six years ago when I took over. Our applicant pool is bigger as far as minority wise then it ever has been. But, again, getting someone that is qualified and getting someone to apply for this job is hard enough as it is as we all know during this day and time. So, this was information that was provided to him. We do keep stats and all this on what stage they drop out and whatever and I will be glad to send that information to you. So, just trying to give you the other side of the story. President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, thank you Chief.

Councilmember Bobby Long said, first of all, I wish he was still here because I would like to thank him for reading my email because I do feel even right now, I believe that it is true. When he posed that email to me, he was asking for my response on some things and I had to ask some qualifying questions to find out exactly what he wanted me to respond to. When I realized what he was asking, I asked Mr. Douglas, the HR Director for the city, to provide me some applicant data. Something that was really interesting that I got out of the data was that our applicant ratio of minorities that apply for certain positions is almost identical to our employee ratios. Which means if we had an x amount of a percent of applicants of a certain ethnicity, that ethnicity is almost identical to our employee ratio, our employee diversity there. And, there is more to it than just ethnicities applying. You have an applicant pool which I just mentioned, qualifications, education level required, ability to work well with a team, but also the work being done. I think he mentioned the Sanitation Department. I think you would have very little to nolle people that would apply for that job that can't physically do that job so it is not just about ethnicity, it is about a lot of other things that work into that. Also, he had mentioned the six questions or so that I answered and I did not get an answer on those. His answer was vague and did not address the questions that I asked. Also, the qualifications that I did mention that I do look at and have looked at for the past 18 years, no qualification that I mentioned was in violation of the EEOC, none. So, an insinuation that somehow my answers were in contrast or in conflict with the EEOC is just not true. So, anyway, that is some of the things that I wanted to respond to since he read my email out loud, I thought that I would respond to that and give a little bit more of clarification of where I was coming from. But, I do believe and I am not going to speak for Mr. Douglas, he is more than capable of speaking on the city's behalf, but since I am in HR, we do have conversations from time to time, you know, not necessarily on this, but I will call him and ask him for certain things. But, Mr. Douglas is more than competent to speak on that. But, anyway, since he did do that, I just wanted to respond. President Pro Temp Chris Moore said, duly noted.

Jimmy Wade, 2803 Dan Lee, said, me and my mother-in-law are here today and we may not have the right forum. This may be next week or week after whatever, flooding. This woman's house has been flooded twice in five days. It has been flooded three times since the tornado. I understand that a tornado dumps a lot of water. I have been through them. Three times since the tornado. Approximately nine or ten times since 2013. And, they send their city crew out. They work on Dacus Lane and this is bed dry rock that we are talking about. They work on Dacus Lane. They dig the ditches out a little bit and think they have got it fixed. You can ask your city engineers. You can ask your city works. They are to a point, they don't know what to do. They don't have a clue what to do. Your city engineers are trying to tell me that they are going to put two storm drains in the street that run parallel to it because that is where all of the water is coming from downhill. You are going to try to put in two new storm drains in. I said, well, where are the pipes going to come? He said, well, straight to that ditch. I said that doesn't help you any. I am no engineer, but I know that water runs downhill whether it is in a pipe or it is on a street. But, I think that is ridiculous that a person has been flooded basically nine times in six to seven years and three times in the last five months. It don't do no good to file insurance. She files insurance and before she can

*get a new floor down, she is flooded again. You can come out and you can look. I can't believe it hasn't exploded the septic system by now. Honestly, really, it is unbelievable. You can come out after one of these floods and you can see where it has been up on her front porch or back porch, just in the house, in the front door, in the carport. Well, that dries and the next thing you have got black mold in the walls and all of that type of stuff. We have talked to the city people. My father-in-law started talking to Mayor Perrin back around 2014 or 2015 about trying to do something and possibly making that a retaining pond and Mayor Perrin was interested in it at the time. Back then, it had flooded only four times. Mayor Perrin was interested. Well, my father-in-law passed away so that ball kind of got dropped. Now, she has had to go through like another five floods. When the city engineer's come and like I said, I am no engineer, but I do know that two storm drains halfway up the street is still going to dump the water in the same ditch. The problem came about when they worked on Dacus. My father-in-law, I don't believe he had ever been flooded up until they worked on that ditch on Dacus and installed some different culverts and stuff. I know it made it worse, that is when the flooding really started. Something needs to be done about it. I have an 87 year old woman here. President Pro Temp Chris Moore asked, what is her address? Mr. Wade said, it is 1315 Bennett Drive. President Pro Temp Moore said, it is 1315 Bennett Drive. Don't say it on the microphone, but before you leave, will you leave a phone number so that the city can call tomorrow? Mr. Wade said, gotcha. I sure will. President Pro Temp Moore said, thank you very much. Mr. Wade said, thank you.*

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Aye:** 11 - Ann Williams;Charles Frierson;Chris Moore;John Street;Mitch Johnson;Gene Vance;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner and David McClain

**Absent:** 1 - LJ Bryant



\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Harold Perrin, Mayor**

**Attest:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Donna Jackson, City Clerk**