



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, August 15, 2023

5:30 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

PUBLIC SERVICES COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 4:00 P.M. NOTE TIME CHANGE

PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 5:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR HAROLD COPENHAVER AT 5:30 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

3. ROLL CALL (ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE) INITIATED AND CONFIRMED BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

Present 9 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch
Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street and LJ Bryant

Absent 3 - Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman and Ann Williams

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

[COM-23:037](#)

DONATION PRESENTATION FROM THE JONESBORO PUBLIC FACILITIES BOARD

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, Matt Modelevsky would you come to the podium. Well, Council, before you is a Jonesboro resident that many of you know and he serves our community in many attributes, but I would say more importantly, he is really helping us and serves right now on the committee, the Public Facilities Board that helps our community and we look forward to many future projects that they can help facilitate for the City of Jonesboro and I am going to leave it up to Matt right now. He has a presentation to make to the city. Mr. Modelevsky said, alright, I appreciate the opportunity to be here. Thank you Mayor for that and I want to thank the Council, specifically you all sought to expand the powers of the Public Facilities Board to match the state ordinance and expand the powers of the Public Facilities Board to participate in projects that would benefit the citizens of Jonesboro with a specific interest in our parks and recreation, those lifestyle projects that are so important to so many of our residents. In that regard, we had a presentation brought to us to help the city with the acquisition of ten acres there just beside the Northside Park. I know many of you, like me, you remember playing baseball games there when we were younger and that was a thriving park. As a youth, I remember spending a lot of evenings out there. I understand that this ten acres is adjacent to that and provides the city a number of potential opportunities to use it as a green space to kind of revitalize that area for our overall community and specifically the local community there in and around Northside Park. So, it was a pleasure for us at the Public Facilities Board to not only consider that, but to vote unanimously to participate in donating \$180,000 from our Facilities

Board to help the city acquire that property. So, it is an honor to do that and I look forward to being able to participate in many more projects. So, thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you.

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[COM-23:040](#)

DISTINGUISHED LEGISLATOR AWARD PRESENTED TO DWIGHT TOSH BY JOHN WILKERSON OF THE ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, next, we will move onto a distinguished legislator award and this is to be presented to Dwight Tosh, but I also must say Dwight couldn't do what he does unless he had Mrs. Tosh by his side. So, you are also a recipient of every award he receives and please know that we represent that and we understand who you are behind him. As we work through the legislative session and I am well aware obviously of being there, it is important that we communicate with our legislators. Not too terribly weekly, but we do it on a monthly basis to keep going what's going on in the City of Jonesboro, the county, and more importantly, the state as well and how we can collaborate our efforts. And so, John Wilkerson is here to present Legislator Tosh with an award and a recognition from the Arkansas Municipal League that represents us all on the service and how he represented our communities in the Arkansas State Chamber.

So, I am John Wilkerson, like the Mayor mentioned, I am the general counsel of the Arkansas Municipal League. I have lead the legislative affairs efforts for the league for the past four or five sessions now. And, I can tell you that while sometimes being at the legislature is a lot like summer camp, a lot of times it is not. And, there are a lot of good folks out there. There are a lot of good Arkansans doing what they believe is right for their citizenry for the State of Arkansas and a lot of nice folks, but none of them are as nice as Representative Dwight Tosh. There is nobody nicer in the legislature than Dwight Tosh. I remember every time I walk down the capitol steps or walk through the hallways and I see his smiling face, I know there is someone that you can count on, you can talk to, you can reason with, you can break bread with, you can find a common ground for the very difficult issues that we face here in the State of Arkansas. And, as a friend of cities and towns, he understands what it means to represent citizens at this level. He understands how vital local government is. He understands what we know about local government, which we are the government closest to the people and he embraces that, appreciates that, and works with us every chance that he can. He is someone you can talk with an issue and he will stand up for you and the reason behind that decision. And, I will go you one even better actually, next week, this is not just during the session that he does this for the citizens of Jonesboro and his other constituents, but next week, we are having a meeting with Colonel Hagar on the challenges that we are facing like Mr. Bryant mentioned about the police and first responders. We are having difficulty retaining police officers for a number of different reasons. Representative Tosh has agreed to sit down with Colonel Hagar and us and the Mayor and others to try to find a way that we can help this issue because he understands that public safety is one of the very most important things that we do. So, Representative Tosh, it is a great honor of mine to present you with this, for not just the first time either, this is well earned, but he does it all of the time. The Distinguished Legislator Award in honor of you who demonstrated exemplary service that benefited the cities and towns of Arkansas during the 94th General Assembly. So, on behalf of the City of Jonesboro and the Arkansas Municipal League, I would like to present you with this award. Thank you sir. Representative Tosh said, thank you all. Thank you.

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[COM-23:043](#)

ECONOMIC AND ACTIVITY UPDATE FROM THE JONESBORO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Attachments: [NAIDC - City Council 8-15-23](#)

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, next on the agenda, I think many of you are well aware of Mark Young. I think it is very important that the city be updated from time to time and Mark is more than willing to bring forth to you developments that continue to occur throughout the city, the growth, the avenues of areas that we can improve upon, and other areas we are looking forward to in the future. I will say that it has been a wonderful partnership and we continue to grow that through the city and the Chamber of Commerce because obviously economic development is a key initiative for our entire community to keep us growing as we are seeing other cities unfortunately, not be able to do.

Executive Director Mark Young said, Mayor, thank you so much. Council, thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here and share some information with you. We couldn't do our work without the work that you do. The policies and procedures that you put in place matter very much to our community. All of the work that you do matters very much, the business community and our current growth and in our future growth. So, thank you for what you do. Thank you for your continued support and thank you for the collaboration that was mentioned. So, there is a lot to report and my intention tonight is to just to give you an overview of some of the activities that have gone on over the last couple of months, the last quarter, and at the end, answering questions that you have. We will also take a look forward at some projects that we are working looking on right now. Now, many of you, in fact, most of you, attended an event on May 4, 2023 where the Chamber held a forum to discuss transportation improvements and what was going on in the community. Alec Farmer, Chair of the Highway Commission and Brad Smithee, District Engineer, did a great job of providing us an overview of the numerous projects that are impacting our community and the region. Obviously, the city has participated in many of those projects as well. I am going to mention three of them. Again, there were a significant number of those that were discussed. But, among those, the Eastern Bypass that connects I-555 with US Hwy. 49. The improvements including widening and safety projects in the hilltop area and the overpass at the airport. All of those are tremendously important to the community. If you look at just any one of them, it is significant. If you combine all of the activities that are going on in and around the community in terms of our transportation improvements, it is extremely significant.

On July 21, 2023, we were able to play host to the Arkansas Good Roads Foundation and I know some of you attended that meeting as well. The foundation held their policy event at the Red Wolf Convention Center. Throughout that particular day, we had the opportunity to interact with a variety of transportation officials and experts. In so doing, we had the opportunity to talk to them about the important projects that are ongoing and those that we hope to achieve in the future. Again, important to have those people in our community. It is one thing to talk about those projects, it is another thing to see those projects first hand and it was great to have them in Jonesboro to be able to do that.

I mentioned the airport earlier and there was a story in the newspaper and also in Arkansas Business recently that sort of chronicled the improvements at the airport. So, additional infrastructure improvements currently being made at the airport are critical to our continued growth. Our airport is an economic driver and the improvements not only to the complex itself, the strengthening of the runway, the lengthening of the runway, and all of the different opportunities that we have there to

enhance that is extremely important. In addition to that, enhancing that access, the overpass that was mentioned previously, is incredibly important. For those of you who have had the fortune or misfortune of being stuck there right when there is a train going and you need access to the airport, the improvement to safety, the improvement to access to the airport, the improvement to access to Arkansas State University, all great improvements and things that we are super excited about in our community.

Before I hit play on this, this is actually a short video, adding enhancing quality of place, amenities is vital to our future growth. One example of that is the recent addition enhancement of the trails at Craighead Forest Park. Jonesboro Unlimited and the City of Jonesboro partnered to commission a study of soft trails and one of the outcomes of that particular study was to identify this project which is to make improvements and to add a trail to Craighead Forest. I want to commend the City Council for your oversight and continued push to make this a reality. I also want to say a special thank you to Danny Kapales for his continued work on this. Since it has been open for riders, I continue to get unsolicited texts and emails about what a great asset it is. I am not a mountain biker, but it is wonderful to have these amenities in our community for those who are. And that is important for all people and all ages. We have received so many different reports back from youth as well as adults who are making use of this. And, so, we are super excited about it. If you have not seen this video, it is kind of cool. I do not appear in it. So, here is a quick look if you have not had a chance to be out there to see what the trail looks like, this is sort of an experience of what those individuals experienced. So, you get a sense of the quality of the project and all that went into it. And, improvements continue to be made. Again, we are excited about that and excited to see what that looks like in the future.

This slide illustrates the continued growth that we have had in Craighead County. And, I want to point out a couple of things to you and we will kind of talk about this for just a second because it is important for our continued work. As you look at this chart, in 2014, we had 47,492 people employed in Craighead County. As of June of this year, we have over 57,805. So, almost a 22% increase over a nine year period of time and thrown into the middle of that was a pandemic. And, so, one of the things that I will point out to you is that we have surpassed pre-pandemic numbers which is great to see. Some other communities have not achieved that yet. And, that is a testament to the community and our business community here in the continued work that they do to grow our economy and to grow our community. In addition to that, at the bottom, you will see unemployment figures that are out there. In 2014, there were 2,743 people unemployed in Craighead County. Today, that number has shrunk to a little over 1,500. The current unemployment rate is 2.5%. Back in 2014, that number, as I recall, was between 5.5-6%. So, part of what we do and part of what we pay attention to is the ability to attract and retain great workers. Each of you, we need to continue to bring people to the community. We need to continue to identify people who can be part of our workforce and that's important. You can see that has been accomplished in the past and we are doing things to hopefully ensure that that continues in the future. And, I want to talk about a couple of those as we move forward.

Workforce development and talent attraction continue to be at the heart of what we do. I'm going to talk about a couple of projects. We added this up. Within the Chamber and Jonesboro Unlimited, we are actually involved with about 35 different workforce development initiatives. I'm not going to talk about every one of them today. I am just going to talk about three or four of them and a couple that we are working on in the future. TekStarz this year celebrates its tenth year. It's a manufacturing camp for students who are in seventh and eighth grades. The purpose of TekStarz is really to help students explore all careers in manufacturing and STEM. It has been a

tremendous success. And as an anecdote, I will tell you that in this very room, I was here for a presentation on rezoning a piece of property, and we were getting ready to come up next and a young person was in front of me and he's a young engineer and he made a presentation and that particular project was approved to do the rezoning. And, I looked at him and he looked awfully familiar, but I couldn't place him. He was a TekStarz student seven or eight years previously and he is an engineer in our community today. So, planting those seeds at an early age does pay off and we will continue to do that and it is an important piece of that workforce development and talent attraction as well.

Jonesboro was proud to support Draft Day 2023 sponsored by Hytrol. It is a skilled technical career event. You guys probably heard quite a bit about this, but we were the first community to support that project in 2022. So, the pilot project that they unveiled in 2022 was held here in our community. And, I will just say that it was improved upon. So, it was great in 2022. It was even better in 2023. More students participated. More companies participated. The career fair that was part of that process was important and people participated in that as well and we were extremely proud of that. This year, the event in 2023, was held at Nettleton High School. The purpose of it is to connect seniors that are entering the workplace directly with employers and we succeeded in that. Interviews were held on site. Seniors and underclassmen also had the opportunity to participate in a career fair. Plans are currently underway for Draft Day 2024. So, looking forward to that and want that to see that continue to build as we move into the future.

Next, Get to Know Jonesboro for summer interns. A lot of companies in our community hosts interns, college students, who are here in our community. Some of those students attend Arkansas State University. Some of them are attending other universities, but they are in our community doing internships during the summer. We were approached three years ago about sponsoring this program called "Get to Know Jonesboro" for the interns and we gladly participated in that. This year, in the third year, there were four companies that participated with 25 college students. And, as I mentioned before, many of them were from outside of our region. The goal of the program is simple. It is to ensure and provide an experience that inspires the students to choose Jonesboro as their home. When you show up for an internship and you are not from the community and you may only know what happens at that particular business you are doing your internship for, we want them to experience the community. So, we gave them a day's opportunity to do that and provided resources for them to better experience and know the community in a big way. And, we are pleased with the results of that and we will continue to support our existing industries to recruit that talent.

Next, this is upcoming. We have done this in the past but I will mention that in late fall this year, we will host our fifth year of teacher externship programs. This provides an immersive experience for educators. There is usually between 40 and 50 educators. It goes all the way from elementary school all the way up through high school that participate in this event. And, our manufacturing community allows them to have an immersive experience of what it is like to work in those facilities and what kind of careers are available right here in our community. The importance of that is then those educators have the opportunity to go and in the classroom be able to reflect and provide insight into the kinds of jobs we have available in our community that involve STEM, that involve manufacturing and other areas. We have gotten tremendous response from the educators over the years about this. And, when we ask about what were you surprised about, the variety of jobs, right? If you think about it, whether you are interested in accounting or nursing or you want to be a welder and all parts in

between, there are so many different kinds of careers that you can have within Jonesboro and within our manufacturing companies. So, oftentimes, they are surprised at the variety of jobs that are out there. Secondly, they are always surprised at how clean all of our companies are. And, again, if you have ever been in there, most of you have been on tours. You realize we have some phenomenal companies doing business in our community and that is great as well.

Lastly, before we get to questions, we will talk about myjonesborojobs.com and a new component that we have coming up. Last September, so ten and half months ago, we, Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce and Jonesboro Unlimited, partnered together to create a new jobs website or an enhanced jobs website, I should say and really made improvements to it. And, then created a marketing program around it so that people would know if you are looking for a local job in our community, this is a great place to start that search. To date, in ten months, we have had over 79,000 page views that represents 7,600 unique visitors. So, people are showing up to the website. People are looking for those jobs. Linger times are excellent so you can tell that people are actually not just passing through those clicks, but they are spending time researching the companies, etc. You can see the number of participating employers we have all across the board from healthcare, industry, non-profits, etc. We are pleased that we are going to have an internship component in the near future. We are collaborating with Arkansas State University to work with them and our employers to be able to help match students who are looking for internship opportunities to companies who are looking for those interns. We are currently working out all of those details, but we are super excited about that. And, think, as part of that, again, there is a tremendous amount of talent that is coming out of Arkansas State University. We want to keep all of those folks here, right? And, so, this is a way to do it. I don't know if any of you did internships throughout your education career, but I did and it was a wonderful experience for me. And, we are hoping that more students have that experience moving forward. So, we are really excited about that and what it can do as well.

Lastly, I will just say, again, thank you for what you do. Thank you for your support. Thank you for your willingness to collaborate. Again, as businesses come to our community, as they continue to expand, everything that you do as a city body is important to them. So, how you support quality of life amenities, the policies that you put in place related to growth and business all matter. And, so, I very much thank you for all of the work that you do and the consideration you give and making sure that Jonesboro continues to move forward economically. So, with that, Mr. Mayor, I would be happy to take a few questions. I don't want to dominate all of your time. Mayor Copenhagen said, actually, Mark, if you don't mind, I would like you to kind of give us an update on the Industrial Park, the realignment, the new purchase of property out there obviously, and any developments in that.

Mr. Young said, absolutely. Thank you Mayor. So, those of you who are familiar with the Craighead County Technology Park, it started actually in 1986. If you go back and look at the beginning of that park, the first purchase of property was in 1986. I was a college student and I am originally from Blytheville and I would go by the park when it was just starting. So, okay, it was a long time ago. And, I always thought, gosh, it's way out here. The community has continued to grow significantly. The Industrial Park has provided the footprint for us to continue to be able to invest in companies and secure those investments in our communities. So, the original part of the park grew to 1,500 acres which is a large piece of property. Of that, we have about 700 of that part of the property available. The largest parcel of that is 150 acres and then it goes down to 93 acres and it gets much smaller after that. One of the things that we are responsible for and taking a look at over time is to make sure that again, these

projects, are not short-term projects, but to look into the future and make sure that as a community, we can be competitive as we move forward. So, a little over a year ago, a little over a year and half ago, we secured 412 acres of additional property and then a development partner of ours secured an additional 200 that is adjacent to us to develop as well. About nine months ago, we were able to participate in a master planning program that the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, actually, it was a competitive project and we were selected to participate in that. And, it really helped us by providing us some insight and probably think about that property in ways that we might not have originally thought about it. So, we are in the process of developing that property to make sure that all of the infrastructure is in place. So, again, water, wastewater, sewer, electricity, fiber, etc. Roadways that we need to consider for the future. And, again, this is not a short-term project. This is to make sure that Jonesboro, 15 years from now, 20 years from now, and on into the future will be able to compete for those projects. It is very important for us. Thank you for asking. We are pleased with the progress so far. We have a lot of work to do still. When you are developing a piece of property that large, there is a lot of work to do. I'm looking at also how to get rail to that particular site. That Master Plan that I mentioned gave us two or three different options to do that. So, that is something that we are reflecting on and thinking about right now as well. So, thank you for asking that.

Councilmember David McClain said, Mayor, I have a couple of questions. Mark, I appreciate the presentation. Just two quick questions, nothing long. I would love to hear the thoughts because you just mentioned you know looking at purchasing 400 acres and somebody else purchasing 200 acres. What are we doing? What is our plan in terms of attracting AI (Artificial Intelligence), FinTech (Financial Technology), AeroSpace (Aviation and Space Flight Engineering), what are we doing there? And, what is our plan long-term for that? And, do we have a plan for that space? Any of them? I mean, I guess I gave you three of them. Mr. Young said, so, the short answer would be yes. The longer answer would be obviously Arkansas State University is an integral part of everything that we do in our community and from an economic development growth standpoint as well. As an example, there are several AI, there are several professors that specialize in artificial intelligence that are on campus. There is a research foundation that continues to look at opportunities that might come from some of those, not all, but some of those sectors that you mentioned. In addition to that, Jonesboro Unlimited is currently pursuing an entrepreneurship piece that we think will complete what is already being done in the community. As a community, we are very fortunate to have a lot of pieces of the puzzle already here, right. And, so to your point, you are probably familiar with the Arkansas Biosciences Institute, the lab as it is called, that is there that supports commercialization of those research projects and will support some of the activity that you have mentioned. It is important that we have that. There are two other projects called the Garage and the Shop that are part of that again to support entrepreneurship. One of the things that we did was we took a look at communities that were similar in size that were having a lot of success in entrepreneurial support and this next year we will be rolling out some of those things that we have identified that we think we can do to better support that entrepreneurial spirit that is reflected in some of those areas that you mentioned. Obviously, working closely with Arkansas State University is also an important piece of that. So, great question. Thank you. Councilmember McClain said, would you say the same? So, you mentioned AI, would you say the same for aerospace? I mean, we just saw the article today extending our runway. What are we doing in that aerospace? Mr. Young said, so, previously aerospace wasn't necessarily one of our target industries. You have heard me refer to our strategic plan I know lots of different times. And, we have a plan and we looked at the kinds of companies that we were most likely to be able to support, right? And, we continue to follow that. We do think that there will be opportunities for

us in the future whether it is aerospace, whether it is component manufacturing parts. The State of Arkansas has a pretty robust aerospace manufacturing base across the state. And, so, while that is probably not going to be our number one sector that is something that I think we may have opportunities in the future. Thank you.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, Mark, lately, I would say over the course of the last three or four months, there have been several groups that I have read about in the media that are interested in the possibility of a regional airport. Does the Chamber participate in those kinds of conversations or can you give us an update? Mr. Young said, yes sir. I can elaborate a little bit. You all are aware that there is a study that is currently underway. We have been told that the report should come out probably in October. And, part of that process was to seek public input. So, the Chamber hosted a group to come do that. I think we had 65-70 people in that particular meeting. And, they were from around the region, not just Jonesboro, but it was very regional in its approach. And, the study is really supposed to identify and we stress the word expand whether or not there is a need for a new or an expanded regional airport in Northeast Arkansas. With the improvements being made at the Jonesboro Airport, the commercial service we have, the commercial service that we anticipate we can grow to in the future, we think that activity should be held here, right? But, the report comes out October. There were, I have been told there were around a little over 9,000 participants in the survey. I haven't seen the full results of that. I just know that the survey that was done, there were 9,000, roughly, a little over that responses. So, I am looking forward to seeing those responses. The population growth that has been centered around Jonesboro, the increased traffic that we are going to see in our airport because of those improvements that are being made. It makes perfect sense to me for that activity to continue to be here. So, yes, we have expressed our thoughts and desires on that particular topic. I think you will be hearing more about that as that study is released. We have been told October and on what steps might be happening in the near future, but we will continue to monitor that. We will continue to voice our opinion and I would encourage you to do the same thing. Several of you were at that particular meeting that I mentioned. And, I think when given the opportunity to provide our voice, we need to do that. So, yes sir, we continue to do that. Great question, thank you.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, Mark, this may be a little premature, but in your opinion, how much will having the sports complex help you recruit industry and professionals to Jonesboro? Mr. Young said, no pun intended, but thank you for that softball question. Tremendously and it kind of goes back to comments that were made about the trail. As amenities are added to the community, the quality of place matters. And, so, the sports complex that you referenced is important for our citizens, for the people in our community, and it is also going to be a great driver to be able to recruit tournaments to be held here that will drive economic activity in our community, which is extremely important. Having those amenities in place for any community is important. So, as we continue to be able to tell our story to companies that are interested in moving here and companies that are interested in expanding here, as a community, as we continue to invest in ourselves, that sends a strong message out to everybody about what is important and this matters and we really care about our citizens and that they will have the opportunities to do what they want to do when they are here. So, it is going to be incredibly important. I appreciate all of the work that the A&P and you guys have done on that. Thank you.

Councilmember John Street said, I was just going to ask you Mark if you have heard or if you have any kind of idea what impact the Shooting Sports Complex is having with economic, as you talked about drivers because I mean, from what the Chief and us

talking about it, it is not finished yet. But, even now at this stage, but I wonder if that is something. Mr. Young said, I will echo what I already said, which is absolutely. Again, it is adding to that quality of life, the amenities in our community. I think it is incredibly important and all of the feedback that we have received on it has been extremely positive. You know, the people who again are from other places and come to our community and have the opportunity to see it firsthand. It is incredibly important and have gotten rave reviews over it. We will continue to do that. And, that's again, you know I mentioned a couple of meetings that we hosted here in Jonesboro where lots of folks from the state came here and you all have heard this too, right? So, if someone hasn't been to Jonesboro in three years, five years, ten years, twenty years, the response we often get is, oh, my gosh, look at Jonesboro. Yeah, you know, come back more often, we would love to have you. There are cool things to do here. There are great things to see and do. And, so, as we continue to host people in our community, the response we get is extremely positive about the growth, about what is to come in the future and what we are working toward. So, John, thank you for that question.

Councilmember David McClain said, I do have one follow-up Mark. I know the Chamber's role is to primarily go out and attract industry jobs. What are we doing to attract families? What is the Chamber's role in that? Maybe the Chamber or Jonesboro Unlimited in attracting young families? I was reading some articles recently about other parts of the state doing things to actively pursue and attract families from other parts of the country. Do we have something like that lined up or are we even looking at something like that? Mr. Young said, again, without spending the next 45 minutes on it. The talent attraction piece that we have started. What you are looking at on the screen right now is part of that. Young families, jobs are important. So, being able to communicate what is available in the community, what is available to those young families are extremely important. So, this is what I refer to as a foundational piece for our strategy moving forward. We have a marketing strategy that goes with this as we are reaching out to students who are graduating, as we are reaching out to young families. There is a process in place currently to do just that. Part of what we are doing is driving them to find more information out about the community, what it is like to live here, what it is like to be here. And, part of it is to drive them to look at the opportunities are here so that individual can identify and see here's where I can in my career path, here is where I can fit in. Here is where my family can grow in this particular community. So, yes, it is part of that strategy. I'll be happy to share some additional thoughts and ideas as we work on that moving forward. It really takes a much more focus here in the near future. We have identified a student who is doing an internship with us and that is a big part of what she's working on. So, incredibly important. So, thank you for that question.

Councilmember LJ Bryant said, I have a couple of points kind of all in the same genre and all of this is outside of any of our control other than we are impacted by it. Arkansas Business, wherever I saw it, talking about population growth in the last year issued a positive for us, right, good news for Craighead County. Not such good news for some of the friends around us and we are not responsible for that. Any crystal ball for what is our regional population look like in the next 10 or 20 years as we grow and they shrink. And, then, kind of a little subpoint of that, do we have any idea out of the 1.x% population growth in Craighead County, do we have any idea where those people are coming from? Are they coming from those counties, elsewhere, or etc. or is it all in that same bucket? Mr. Young said, wow. Councilmember Bryant said, I'm sorry, that is too much in one. Mr. Young said, no, it is all good, but if I don't answer, feel free to answer again. So, I will try to answer it this way. We are fortunate that our growth pattern has continued. You can go back to 1950 and probably even prior to that. I

have gone back to 1950 and Craighead County and Jonesboro typically grow between 10% and 20% every decade. We have done that for the last seven decades. We believe that is going to continue. And, the media that you referenced a second ago illustrates that. Growth over one percent in one year, okay, in ten years if we keep that up, we will see that same kind of 10% to 20% growth over a period of time. That's good. Where are they coming from? They are coming from lots of different places. It is incredible. One of the things that we do is I mentioned our "Get to Know Jonesboro Internship" edition. We do a "Get to Know Jonesboro" as well for all of our companies who have new employees that are in our community and let's say that they started working here in Jonesboro over the last six months that have moved here from somewhere else. And, it has been astounding to hear where they have moved from. Some of them have moved internationally. Some of them have moved from California. Some of them have moved from Pennsylvania. Some have moved from Florida. So, going back to your original question, yes, we have gained some population from the surrounding region, absolutely. People seek opportunities. However, we have continued to grow that footprint and as we reach out to additional people and all with our talent attraction strategy, we are seeing additional people moving from outside the state of Arkansas here as well. And, our companies, I can't say enough good things about our companies that we have in our community. We are blessed to have the business community we have and they are doing a phenomenal job in a pretty challenging time across the nation attracting great talent. And, they are working hard. What we are trying to do is to support that effort and make sure that we are doing everything that we can do to help them be successful and we will continue to do that. So, I don't know that I have a crystal ball. We have always said this and we are part of a regional organization, a regional economic development organization. It is important for all of our neighbors to be successful. That matters to us and it is important for our community for them to be successful. And, so, when there are opportunities to partner together, we certainly will do that with our neighbors to do what we can to support and help. And, they are doing some really good things as well. And, so the growth that we have seen, as an example, within the steel industry next door to us, that is a good thing for our community. And again, Greene County has continued to have some growth as well. That is a good thing for our county. And, we need that for all of our neighbors to continue to grow and expand. That would be our hope and our desire. If there is a role that we can play in that, certainly, we will. So, did I get most of it? Councilmember Bryant said, yes sir, you did. Thank you. Mr. Young said, thank you.

Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you very much Mark. Mr. Young said, Mayor, thank you and your team. I can't say enough good things about the Council, Mayor (you), your entire team. Anytime we reach out and want to collaborate and need to collaborate and work together, there is always someone there to provide assistance and support. So, thank you and all of the staff members as well. Thank you for giving me the time to be here. Hope you guys have a great evening. Mayor Copenhaver said, and vice versa. Thank you.

Read

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, to Approve the Consent Agenda. The motioned PASSED

Aye: 9 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street and LJ Bryant

Absent: 3 - Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman and Ann Williams

[MIN-23:073](#) MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AUGUST 1, 2023

Attachments: [CC Minutes 08012023](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-23:117](#) A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AUTHORIZING THE OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY AT 4302 S CARAWAY ROAD FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSTRUCTING AND MAINTAINING DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Attachments: [Offer and Acceptance - 4302 S Caraway Road](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-155-2023

[RES-23:118](#) A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AUTHORIZING THE OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY AT 4221 S CARAWAY ROAD FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSTRUCTING AND MAINTAINING DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Attachments: [Offer and Acceptance - 4221 S Caraway Road](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-156-2023

[RES-23:119](#) A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AUTHORIZING THE OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY AT 2301 ENGLEWOOD COVE FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSTRUCTING AND MAINTAINING DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Attachments: [Offer and Acceptance - 2301 Englewood Cove](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-157-2023

[RES-23:131](#) A RESOLUTION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AUTHORIZING THE OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY AT 3401 S CARAWAY ROAD FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSTRUCTING AND MAINTAINING DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Attachments: [Offer and Acceptance - 3401 S Caraway Road](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-158-2023

[RES-23:135](#) A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE ADDITION OF U.S. HIGHWAY 78 DESIGNATION

TO PORTIONS OF INTERSTATE 55, INTERSTATE 555, U.S. HIGHWAY 49, STATE HIGHWAY 18, STATE HIGHWAY 18 SPUR, AND STATE HIGHWAY 226 FROM MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE THROUGH WEST MEMPHIS, BLYTHEVILLE AND JONESBORO TO FUTURE INTERSTATE 57

Attachments: [US Highways Map V10](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-159-2023

[RES-23:136](#)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH SUGG CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR JONESBORO DOWNTOWN TO ASU CONNECTION (ARDOT JOB NO. 100971) (2023:01)

Attachments: [Completed Bid Tabulation 100971](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-160-2023

[RES-23:142](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO REIMBURSE THE NON-PROFIT CDBG-CVIII PUBLIC SERVICE SUB-RECIPIENT, THE SURE FOUNDATION, FOR FUNDS USED TO PROVIDE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR HOMELESSNESS

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-161-2023

[RES-23:145](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, HERITAGE AND TOURISM MATCHING GRANT FOR FY2024

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-162-2023

[RES-23:146](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH RENT.FUN, LLC FOR RECREATION EQUIPMENT RENTAL AT CRAIGHEAD FOREST PARK

Attachments: [Rent](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: R-EN-163-2023

RESOLUTIONS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

[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

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](#)

Code Enforcement Director Scott Roper said, we would request Council table this indefinitely because that property was sold today. Councilmember Chris Moore asked, it was sold? Mr. Roper said, it was sold today. Councilmember Moore said, we need a motion to discuss. I'll make a motion to adopt. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman seconded the motion. Mayor Copenhagen asked if there was any discussion. Councilmember Moore asked, so was the problem that caused condemnation, has that been alleviated? Mr. Roper stated, we anticipate that it will be alleviated with the new owner. City Attorney Carol Duncan stated, but we would have to start the process over with the new owners. Mr. Roper said, correct. Councilmember Moore said, I gotcha, with the new owners. Mr. Roper said, it will be a completely new process.

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Joe Hafner, that this matter be Postponed Indefinitely. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 9 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street and LJ Bryant

Absent: 3 - Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman and Ann Williams

[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

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](#)
[WIN 20230227 15 30 56 Pro](#)
[WIN 20230227 15 30 58 Pro](#)
[WIN 20230227 15 32 59 Pro](#)
[WIN 20230227 15 34 04 Pro](#)
[WIN 20230227 15 34 43 Pro](#)

Rodney Cranford, 1712 National, I am here to see if I can get an extension to give myself a little bit more time to make repairs and bring them up to code. Mayor Copenhagen asked, have you been in discussion with him Scott? No, I have not, David

Cooley has. I will tell you briefly where we are at. We opened this case in August 2022. On August 3, 2022, we were in contact with Mr. Cranford. He boarded it on August 26, 2022. He was given six months to get a roof on it. We contacted him six months later. Nothing had been done. He thought it had only been four months so we extended it out two more months, giving him additional time. Two months later, nothing had been done, no permits had been pulled, so we gave him one additional month. Nothing was done that next month so we decided to go ahead and send it to Public Safety and now, that's why we are here. Councilmember Moore asked, Mr. Roper, did you tell him, did you inform him of the process that after tonight, if it is condemned, he can still come in and buy a permit and the period of time? Mr. Roper said, we extended it six months. He has been told and we have requested that he pull a permit even as of last week. I checked again this evening and no permit had been pulled yet. Chris Moore said, I got you. Mr. Roper said, obviously, he is asking for additional time. Mr. Cranford said, yes sir.

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

Aye: 9 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street and LJ Bryant

Absent: 3 - Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman and Ann Williams

Enactment No: R-EN-164-2023

[RES-23:143](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS REQUESTING CITY WATER AND LIGHT (CWL) TO PROVIDE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THE PURCHASE OF A NEW FIRE TRUCK FOR THE JONESBORO FIRE DEPARTMENT

Councilmember John Street asked to be recused from voting and discussion on RES-23:143 because he serves on the CWL Board.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, I want to say thank you to CWL. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you once again and we do appreciate that support and our local partnership with City Water and Light in many things that we do throughout the community. But, this is one that obviously helps one of our departments for many years to come. So, thank you again City Water and Light and Council for approving that.

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

Aye: 8 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter and LJ Bryant

Absent: 3 - Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman and Ann Williams

Recused: 1 - John Street

Enactment No: R-EN-165-2023

6. NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

[ORD-23:030](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AND REPLACE SECTION 117-329 - FENCES OF THE

JONESBORO CODE OF ORDINANCES IN THE CITY OF JONESBORO

Attachments: [Original - Sec 117-329 Fences](#)
 [Exhibit A - Sec 117-329 Fences V3 080123](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Moore, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-23:030 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

[ORD-23:031](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORD-19:025, THE GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND AWARDING OF CONTRACTS FOR THE CITY OF JONESBORO

Attachments: [Other prof. services 7](#)
 [Professional Construction Services 7](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Moore, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-23:031 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**8. MAYOR'S REPORTS**

Mayor Harold Copenhaver reported on the following:

First of all, I would like to say thank you to the City Council members for voting for the improvements to police pay. This made Jonesboro a clear leader in police pay in our region. We need proactive and top trained policing in a city that has grown more and more with the nexus of activity in Northeast Arkansas. If we look up and down the side of the Mississippi, it is the largest city between St. Louis and the Baton Rouge area. We have to deal with not only our problems, but problems other cities face that are regional hubs as well. We are grateful to our police chief and his force for the excellent service they provide.

I met last week with the new class of 2023-24 Project Search students. This is a great project for St. Bernard's Medical Group that takes young adults with a variety of challenges to overcome for career employment. Mary Housewright and her team do a great job. We have actually hired several and they have been here for several years now. They are graduates that work for the city.

School is starting back and we started with the fabulous "Stuff the Buss" event benefitting nineteen school districts across seven counties. Partnering with various cities and businesses support.

With the school year comes the annual reminder for drivers to be aware when they are near a campus, please slow down. Our update from Chief, things went according to plan. Several were a little slower than others, but I am sure that by the end of the week, they will get that worked out.

We had another successful cleanup last week at Parker Park. Tons of discarded items plus 44 tires were collected and removed from Jonesboro neighborhoods. Again, we are proud of these cleanups and they continue to improve our community and

making our neighborhoods cleaner.

Jonathan Sparrow is our non-uniformed Employee of the Month. He plays a critical role in ensuring all 88 of our traffic signals are properly working. He spends a lot of time in a bucket and often in precarious situations and in bad weather and always traffic. So, thank you to Jonathan for your dedication to the City of Jonesboro.

Those who have watched Channel 24, might have noticed that Optimum has provided the channel with high-def tv. So, now you can actually read what we see on the screens behind us. We have been waiting on that for several months.

One ribbon cutting this week should not go under the radar, that was the Judd Hill Farmer's Market building at Arkansas State University. The new building complements the outdoor stand that currently stands there and draws thousands on Saturdays and will add level of opportunities for farmers and shoppers including a brand new brand of ASTATE meat products.

We continue to make improvements at the Shooting Sports Complex that John mentioned earlier. In October, we will have a free introductory course in trap shooting among other events.

Wayfinding is almost complete on the soft trails at Craighead Forest Park. We now have 31 cedar marking posts in bike trails. So, that way, individuals who visit our community will have the opportunity when they hit the trail, they will know where they are in the trail and not get lost.

For those who didn't know, we were ranked among the top ten cities in the Ozarks according to WorldAtlas.com. While most of us don't consider ourselves in the Ozarks, we are thankful for the shout out. But, in all seriousness, we are a great city whether or not we are in the Ozarks or are in the Delta or Spanish Plains. But, thank you for the shout-out, none-the-less.

[COM-23:042](#)

CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OVERVIEW, JUNE 2023

Attachments: [June 2023 Financials](#)

Filed

9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember John Street said, believe it or not, I am not a mountain biker, but I have had more comments from people who do ride that who say it is wonderful. So, I think, as with most things, it is a great addition to Jonesboro's Parks and Recreation and an attraction for Jonesboro. Again, Danny does a remarkable job. We are very fortunate to have him. I will also commend our others. Sanitation, Street Departments, I can't say enough about them. Mayor, you mentioned this earlier, but I hope in your budget process, you will look at very deserved raises for some of those leveled positions that truly need it. We do have some wonderful employees and I hope we can retain those folks. Mayor Copenhaver said, I couldn't agree more. I will say, just looking back, two years ago, this council approved funding for the first step and then funding again last year for these soft service trails. And, with the partnership that we collaborated with the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce, to get a developer in here. Now, we have received additional funding because of that and it is a work in progress.

Because of those efforts, the trail that you are talking about now is here. Councilmember Street said, it is very impressive and everybody likes it. So, just keep adding to it and growing it. While I may not look like I drive a Harley Davidson, I do. So, Look twice and safe a life. I mean that seriously. It's dangerous out there. Mayor Copenhaver said, I thank you Councilmember.

Councilmember LJ Bryant said, someone recently said they didn't quite understand the trail thing, particularly because it related to Culberhouse and how it could impact them. This person I knew was probably not going to run on it and they are probably not going to bike on it. They are probably not going to walk on it. I said, but, you may have a better radiologist because of it. I think that is the thing that is so great that we can recognize. I don't play pickleball, but I can understand that we need more pickleball courts. I appreciate Mark as always. He always is great to get back to us on stuff. I think with everything we read, fertility rates are decreasing in the US like 2.1 to 1.7, and so a community can't grow through births. It is just not possible anymore. So, we have to attract new people and it is not necessarily always going to be from the communities around us. So, all of the efforts that we have to do to make this an attractive place to live and all the communities, even all of the small communities around us realize that too. Batesville just renewed their sales tax and it looks like they are going to have some really cool amenities. And, they are a long ways from us, but I think it is an anecdotal testament to all of the things that everybody is doing and that they recognize the competition for talent. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you for your comments.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, I wonder if you have made any progress on filling the vacancies on the One Jonesboro Steering Committee. I would still like to get that meeting setup. Mayor Copenhaver said, I do and I have got two other individuals yet to reach out to. But, after that, hopefully they will come on board and we will make that happen. Councilmember Hafner said, we need to get that body back together. Another thing that I would like to get an update on is the revenue bond process. You don't have to give it tonight, but maybe at the next Finance meeting if you are there or Brian or somebody can give it, just the update on the revenue bond process and where we stand with that and when we might see some projects that could potentially be funded by that.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, I just want to say hi to all of our friends on the other side of the Black River who refer to us as flatlanders now that we are in the Ozarks. I welcome them and hope they tune in on the City Council meetings. Thank you.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

Aye: 9 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Mitch Johnson;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street and LJ Bryant

Absent: 3 - Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman and Ann Williams

_____ Date: _____

Harold Copenhaver, Mayor

Attest:

_____ Date: _____

April Leggett, City Clerk