



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

5:30 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

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

PUBLIC HEARING AT 5:25 P.M.

Mayor Harold Copenhaver asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak for or against the public hearing regarding abandoning and vacating a portion of a drainage easement across part of Lot 1R of P & H Investments, LLC replat located at 2303 E. Parker Road as requested by P & H Investments, LLC. No one spoke for or in opposition.

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

3. ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

Present 10 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Absent 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Harold Copenhaver announced the creation of a citywide Youth Council. Mayor Copenhaver explained that he and his administrative staff has looked at other youth councils that have been created across the state of Arkansas. We have seen what has been successful and what has not. More importantly in that process we went out to schools in our community, we looked, visited and watched and saw what the youth in this community have to offer. I was overwhelmed. Their ability to look into what the future is going to be like, let me tell you it is going to be about technology. It is about their vision, we as a city need to empower the youth of this community, and enable them to have an insight of what the futures of this community is about. We announced yesterday the Youth Commission, this will be delegated in all of the public schools in Jonesboro, which are Jonesboro, Westside, Valley View, Nettleton, private schools, and home school children. All children in grades 10-12 will have the ability to apply for this commission. In the process this is going to be a commission where they will come up with the ideas, we will assist them in implementing those ideas, whether it is communications or technology, it's how to improve our community by empowering our youth, we are building the future for this community, it is important that we keep those minds here.

Mayor Harold Copenhaver went on to explain in this process we will work with the students at Arkansas State University, intertwining them in the process so that these students will then be able to see what types of futures will be available to them in this community. We have been visiting with our industries, personally going out and seeing what type of development process for educational needs they require. This is educating our youth in the community, and letting them know what is available for them in our community as well. The application process began today, and will go through May 1, 2021, and then we will choose the delegation after the application process closes. We have already received applications, which is very exciting, and I am looking forward to City Councilmembers being involved in this as well. We will showcase some of the innovative ideas from some of these students during the State of City the Address, March 18, 2021. I want them there to show the community what the bright minds of the future hold.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of the Consent Agenda

Councilmember Brian Emison motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Moore, to remove RES-21:034 and RES-21:035 from the Consent Agenda. All voted aye.

Councilmember Mitch Johnson motioned, seconded by Councilmember Brian Emison, to adopt the Consent Agenda less RES-21:034 and RES-21:035. All voted aye.

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

Aye: 10 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Absent: 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

[MIN-21:015](#) MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 16, 2021

Attachments: [CC Minutes 02162021](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-21:023](#) RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1907 IRBY, JONESBORO, AR 72401, PARCEL 01-144223-08200, OWNED BY ROBERT, AGNES, & GREGORY COWLES

Sponsors: Code Enforcement and Finance

Attachments: [1907 Irby-Cowles](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-21:036](#) RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE 2021 AMERICORPS VISTA PROGRAM GRANT

Sponsors: Community Development, Grants and Finance

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-21:037](#)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE AWARD FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATION (FEMA) THROUGH THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (ADEM) FOR THE JONESBORO ACQUISITION AND DEMOLITION PROJECT AND AMEND THE 2021 BUDGET

Sponsors: Grants, Finance and Engineering

Attachments: [02.23.2021 FEMA Jonesboro Award Letter DR-4441-0017](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-21:038](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENT WITH THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND ACCEPT THE COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID ABUSE PROGRAM AWARD IN THE AMOUNT OF \$50,000

Sponsors: Police Department and Grants

Attachments: [No Attachments Provided](#)

This item was passed on the Consent Agenda.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

[RES-21:034](#)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH OLYMPUS CONSTRUCTION, INC. TO CONSTRUCT THE VETERANS' VILLAGE COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECT (2021:01)

Sponsors: Grants, Community Development and Engineering

Attachments: [Bid Tabulation - Certified](#)
[Contract - Veterans' Village Community Center](#)

Councilmember Brian Emison motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Moore, to remove RES-21:034 from the Consent Agenda. All voted aye.

Patti Lack, 4108 Forrest Hill Road. I know that we have gotten some grants to help pay for the Veterans' Village Community Center, but there is still some question regarding how the final cost is going to be paid. On the attachments that accompanied this resolution it only showed two bidders. It did not show the cost breakdowns for the facility. Some of the concerns that I received were how shocked people were at the price for a 1,700 sq. ft. building. I am not sure how much construction material is but, by breaking the square footage down, this 1,700 sq. ft. facility is costing about \$241 a sq. ft. People were kind of amazed and shocked about that price. I don't know if that can be explained a bit more, it seems high for a 1,700 sq. ft. building. Concerned citizens also wanted to know if the facility would be able to be used for any other type of programs. I think it is a real asset to the Veteran's Village, but I would think that it could be used for other things too.

Engineering Director Craig Light addressed the question of cost for the facility. With architectural projects, they are usually priced as a lump sum project. You don't get an itemized cost schedule from the contractor until after the contract award. We will get a schedule of values from them to base how we pay them throughout the project. But, before that particular project, it is more than just a 1,700 sq. ft. building. There is a parking lot. There are outdoor sidewalks, exterior lighting, signage for the building. So, there are other costs associated with the facility than just the vertical structure. Also, being that this is a public project, we do have performance and payment bonds that add a percentage to the project. Since federal funds are being used, there are Federal Wage Rate Requirements. We will have to do some certified payroll which adds cost for administration by both the contractor and the city. These things drive the cost up.

Director of Community Development Regina Burkett explained the usage of the facility. The facility will be used for supportive services such as counseling, case management for our community, as well as, for the people residing in the Veteran's Village. We want those people to be able to return to the community and live a normal life. The Beck PRIDE Center will also be housed in that facility. The Beck PRIDE Center will offer different types of activities as well as educational avenues for Veteran's who seek services. Also, the community room will be available to the Veterans to rent for family type events such as family reunions. Councilmember Chris Moore asked if the facility would be available for such uses as ward meetings, or community meetings. Ms. Burkett said, yes.

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

Aye: 10 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Absent: 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

[RES-21:035](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO ALLOCATE FUNDING THROUGH THE CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT

Sponsors: Grants and Finance

Attachments: [No Attachments Provided](#)

Councilmember Brian Emison motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Moore, to remove RES-21:035 from the Consent Agenda. All voted aye.

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

Aye: 10 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Absent: 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

6. NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING**[ORD-21:007](#)**

AN ORDINANCE TO VACATE AND ABANDON A PORTION OF A DRAINAGE EASEMENT ACROSS PART OF LOT 1R OF P & H INVESTMENTS, LLC REPLAT, LOCATED AT 2303 E. PARKER ROAD AS REQUESTED BY P & H INVESTMENTS, LLC

Attachments: [2303 E Parker Petition Signed](#)
[2303 E ParkerRd-Abandonment Plat](#)
[Engineering and Planning Concurrence - Parker](#)
[ATT - Utility Release Form](#)
[CenterPoint Letter and Plat](#)
[CWL Letter](#)
[Ritter - Utility Release](#)
[Suddenlink - Utility Release Form](#)

Councilmember Mitch Johnson motioned, seconded by Councilmember Bobby Long, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-21:007 by title only. All voted aye.

Councilmember Chris Moore asked that ORD-21:007 be held to three readings.

Held at one reading

[ORD-21:009](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-1 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL TO RS-8 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 305 AIRPORT ROAD AS REQUESTED BY TAYLOR MCBRIDE OF MCALISTER ENGINEERING ON BEHALF OF IGNACIO ISLAS

Attachments: [City Council Staff Summary](#)
[Rezoning Application](#)
[Rezoning Replat](#)
[Aerial View of Location](#)
[Pictures of Signs](#)
[Pictures of Signs 2](#)
[School Email](#)
[USPS Receipts](#)

Councilmember Joe Hafner motioned, seconded by Councilmember Brian Emison, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-21:009 by title only. All voted aye.

Councilmember Chris Moore requested that ORD-21:009 be held to three readings.

Held at one reading

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING**

[ORD-20:027](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO PERMIT THE SELECTION OF THE POSITION 1 COUNCIL MEMBER FROM EACH WARD TO BE VOTED ON BY ONLY THE CITIZENS OF THE WARD IN WHICH THEY SERVE

Sponsors: LJ Bryant

Attachments: [Casteel Email 07262020](#)
[Casteel 07262020](#)
[Dougan 07272020](#)
[craill 07282020](#)
[Ivener email 08042020](#)
[Pradeep email 08042020](#)
[Taylor email 08042020](#)
[Radin email 08042020](#)
[Pradeep 2 email 08042020](#)
[Bryant Amendment 01192021](#)
[Citizen Comments on Ward Voting](#)
[Citizen Comments on Ward Voting](#)

Councilmember Bobby Long requested that ORD-20:027 be held to three readings.

Held at second reading

[ORD-21:004](#)

AN ORDINANCE VACATING AND ABANDONING A UTILITY EASEMENT IN LOT 1, RED WOLF CORNER REPLAT AS REQUESTED BY ERVING RIDGE CONSULTING & DEVELOPMENT, LLC

Attachments: [Petitions](#)
[Plat](#)
[Engineering and Planning Letter](#)
[Utility Letters](#)

Councilmember Bobby Long requested that ORD-21:004 be held to three readings.

Held at second reading

[ORD-21:008](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, ARTICLE III, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-1 SINGLE FAMILY MEDIUM DENSITY DISTRICT TO C-3 LUO, GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT LIMITED USE OVERLAY FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 3506 SOUTHWEST DRIVE, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS REQUESTED BY JEREMY BEVILL OF FISHER & ARNOLD ON BEHALF OF JOHN HARDIN.

Attachments: [City Council Staff Summary](#)
[Application](#)
[Rezoning Plat](#)
[Aerial View of Location](#)
[Cover Letter](#)
[Overall Vicinity Map](#)
[Rezoning Concept](#)
[Rezoning Signs Pictures](#)
[School Notification Signature](#)
[Traffic Volume Letter](#)

Councilmember Bobby Long requested that ORD-21:008 be held to three readings.

Held at second reading

ORDINANCES ON THIRD READING

[ORD-21:002](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO PLACE VARIOUS TRAFFIC SIGNS AT DESIGNATED LOCATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE TRAFFIC CONTROL COMMITTEE

Sponsors: Engineering and Mayor's Office

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

Aye: 10 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Absent: 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

[ORD-21:005](#)

AN ORDINANCE FOR THE TRANSFER OF LOCATION OF A PRIVATE CLUB PERMIT FOR NORTH HILLS SOCIAL CLUB

Attachments: [Application](#)
[Option to SubLease to Social Club - signed](#)
[Citizen Comments North Hills Transfer](#)

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

Aye: 10 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Absent: 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

[ORD-21:006](#)

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING BY REFERENCE THE COTTAGE HOUSING STANDARDS TO ENCOURAGE AN ALTERNATIVE TYPE OF DETACHED HOUSING BY PROVIDING RESIDENCES FOR HOUSEHOLDS OF TYPICALLY ONE TO TWO INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT UNDERGOING THE SUBDIVISION PROCESS AND TO PROMOTE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE FOR THE CITIZENS OF

JONESBORO

Sponsors: Planning

Attachments: [Cottage Housing Ordinance - COJ - Final](#)
[Citizen Comments Regarding Cottage Housing](#)
[Shirley Moore_Handwritten Message_03022021](#)
[Cottage Housing Ordinance - COJ - Final Revised 3.2](#)
[Billy Brown Drop Off 03102021_Cottage Housing](#)
[Northside Coalition Petition 03112021](#)
[Billy Brown email with petitions 03102021](#)
[Cottage Housing Ordinance - COJ - Final Revised 3.17.21](#)

Planning Director Derrel Smith explained some history surrounding the Cottage Housing ordinance. We began drafting this back in May of 2020 after we spoke with several groups of realtors and developers that were looking for alternative housing types to develop in Jonesboro. We gave the first draft to the MAPC on December 8, 2020, and it appeared on the MAPC agenda on January 12, 2021. It was published on the city's webpage, published in the local newspaper, and there were no comments from the public. The only change from MAPC, at that time, was to remove R-1 as an allowed right for the Cottage Housing ordinance. So, we made that change and brought it before the Jonesboro City Council for first reading on February 2, 2021, and the second reading was on February 16, 2021.

On February 28, 2021, we met with the West End Neighborhood Association. They had several questions that we tried to answer. In listening to the Association, we did feel like we needed to make some changes and so we have done that today. There were a lot of concerns about design guidelines. State legislature enacted Act 446 of 2019, which set a state statute for municipalities and counties where they cannot enact design guidelines on single-family homes, So, that kind of took away what we could do about design guidelines. Another concern that the association had was that they worried that they could build the same house, meaning that all twelve houses could look the same. We did feel like that was a valid concern and we changed the ordinance to reflect that only two houses could be of the same design.

The next concern was the character of the Cottage Home neighborhoods. So, what we decided to do is when the site plan is submitted it will go to the MAPC for review, and during that time they will be able to consider whether it blends with the character of the neighborhood that it is going in. So, that will be a decision of the MAPC. Their decision can be appealed to the City Council, if they approve it, it doesn't automatically come to City Council it would just be if there was an appeal to the process. We did put in there that this development has to follow all codes, all zoning codes, all drainage ordinances, building and fire codes, everything has to be complied with. All of this has been added and I have provided a new copy of the ordinance and it was sent out to everyone today. Under section L, we have added numbers 5-7, and we hope that is going to address a lot of the concerns that we have had.

Mayor Harold Copenhaver asked that Derrel Smith remain at the podium so that Councilmembers could have questions. I think it is important that the public know we are hearing what you say, and that this has been a three month process, and hopefully we can address issues like this in the future early on throughout the process, again thank you for your work. Councilmember Mitch Johnson stated that he thought it would be important that if we decide to amend this that the changes here be noted so that the public could hear these changes instead of just saying that we have made those

changes.

A motion was made by Councilperson Charles Coleman, seconded by Councilperson Chris Moore, that this matter be Postponed Temporarily . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 7 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Nay: 3 - Mitch Johnson;Joe Hafner and David McClain

Absent: 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

8. MAYOR'S REPORTS

Mayor Harold Copenhaver reported on the following:

The past two weeks has been pretty sad for the City due to the sudden loss of Sanitation Director Donnie Gibson on February 17, 2021. Donnie was adored by the employees of the city, as well as many people in the community. We continue to keep him and his family in our prayers, and are offering assistance to them in any way we can. They are a wonderful family, and it gives me comfort knowing they have a great support system in place. We will miss Donnie, and I want to commend our Sanitation Department, they rallied together in catching up trash routes that were behind because of a two-week winter storm event that hit our city, and they did this without the face of their leader. They picked up over 1,000 tons of trash and 23 tons of recycling.

I would be remiss if I left out the Street Department for their tireless work in keeping our streets clean and safe during the extended cold spell. They worked approximately 4,800 hours, which is almost 1,100 hours of overtime. They do get paid, but they were out there in the dangerous cold weather keeping the roadways safe for us. Additionally, our Street Department had been cleaning up I-555. Before COVID, we partnered with the Craighead County Sheriff's Office to use juvenile offenders on weekends to help get this job done, but since COVID they have not been available. So, our Street Department has taken it upon themselves and in four days, Street Department employees filled up two 36 ton roll off dumpsters full of trash from Dan Avenue up to U.S. Hwy. 49. Next will be Hwy. 49 South. Only six-to-eight employees are doing this. Our E911 operators handled over 2,000 calls. We had over 145 stranded motorist, 99 vehicle accidents, 6 major water leaks, and 128 Fire Dispatched calls. Our Fire and Police Departments acted admirably in a time of dangerous weather that effected our city for two weeks.

It is important that we not forget the unsung heroes of the Salvation Army, the HUB, our Churches, and non-profits that provide for those that are most vulnerable during these dangerous conditions as well. I also want to commend the Hispanic Center in their donation of gift cards to grocery stores and families who live paycheck-to-paycheck and could not work during this storm. With that being said, blessings to and a big thanks to all of those who care for Jonesboro.

This upcoming Saturday, March 6, 2021, there will be a mass COVID vaccine drive in our community. I want to thank all of our Healthcare Partners like our hospitals, NYIT, Craighead County Health Department, Arkansas State University and others. Again, we are sponsoring this event this Saturday, March 6, 2021, from 8:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. at the First National Bank Arena. If you are 65 and older, you work in the fields of healthcare, education, or are a first responder, you are eligible for the vaccine and I strongly urge you to get this vaccine. It is saving lives. We have got to open this

community back up and protect those that are most vulnerable.

The Jonesboro Police Department has started an initiative to "Buy Local." I am very proud of Chief Elliott and his staff for what they are doing, this is vital for our community. They are committing to buy supplies from local vendors when they can. I want to thank the Police Department for investing back into our community. We all need to buy local whenever possible.

9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember LJ Bryant also sent out his condolences to the Gibson Family, and the Sanitation Staff as well. On an unrelated note, I would like to say that I really appreciate the work that Planning Director Derrel Smith and his staff have done on the Cottage Housing ordinance. There was an interesting article in the Arkansas Gazette today. Fayetteville is a little bit bigger population wise and they are about 55-square miles in land mass verses Jonesboro at 83-square miles. Fayetteville was running out of land, and we don't quite have that problem yet but, I think that long-term measures along with other steps being taken that we can continue to accommodate the growth of Jonesboro.

Councilmember David McClain also reflected on comments made by the Mayor in regards to his continued prayers for the Gibson family. I also would like to commend the Sanitation and Street Departments for their efforts in hours worked during the inclement weather.

Councilmember Brian Emison echoed all other comments made in regards to the Gibson Family. Also, thank you to all of the city departments for their endeavor's in getting the city back up and going after the winter weather that the city experienced in February. I also would like to applaud the Mayor's Office for establishing the Youth Council. I think that is a great thing and I look forward to hopefully being involved and helping in that in any way I can. I also think it is a great step forward for our younger citizens in the community. For anyone that has not had the opportunity to check out the annual Jonesboro Police Report, I just want to say that they did a very good job in putting that together. There is a lot of good information about the City of Jonesboro in this report.

Councilmember Chris Moore commented that he too would like to thank the Mayor for establishing the Youth Council. As a father of a 12-year old daughter, it is going to be important that we figure out how to keep our youth in Jonesboro, and part of that discussion is going to have to involve them. So, I applaud you on that. It is a good idea.

Councilmember Chris Gibson stated that I know that myself and Councilmember Ann Williams both received emails from a gentleman on Britton Drive in regards to the street damage caused by the winter snow storm. I would ask that Street Superintendent Steve Tippitt to please go out and take a look at this. I also want to thank the Mayor and his administrative staff, as well as the rest of the city employees for their outpouring support for me and my family. I want to send a special thanks to Street Superintendent Steve Tippitt. You have been a God Send and I thank you.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kimberly Chase, 204 East Nettleton. I wanted to take this opportunity tonight and thank the community of Jonesboro for really pulling together and providing our

homeless population safe and warm places to stay during the winter storm. Sadly we have faced many challenges in the last year. We have had a major tornado, a global pandemic, and a back to back winter storm. I have seen how giving and caring Jonesboro is for our unsheltered. When we first learned of the incoming storm, the first step in helping our homeless population was to ensure they got into a shelter. Multiple volunteers worked multiple days to locate and encourage our homeless to shelter. The Allen Park Community Center and Parker Park Community Center were opened. The Salvation Army turned no one away. I know that on some level we were not completely successful as one man suffered from frostbite so severely that the back of his hand turned black. The next challenge was how to provide basic necessities, such as hygiene and food. One only had to look at social media to see that everyone came together to make sure there was food and water available at the Salvation Army.

Many meals were donated as well as bottled water and hygiene supplies. The HUB donated, city employees volunteered, businesses provided, and people within Jonesboro offered assistance. These weather events are made worse for our homeless population as they are facing them outside. Their winter began about six months ago. At that time the HUB began distributing winter items, such as hats, gloves, hand warmers, sleeping bags, rescue blankets, and vitamins, as well as additional food. Now, we are cycling around to spring and summer that will bring heat related issues. It may seem early but we are now getting ready to pass out sunscreen, bug repellent, and extra water.

One of the greatest things that I have learned is the need of the homeless does not stop because of weather. If anything, the needs are greater. I have seen someone walk holes in their shoes. I have seen someone wear their coat so long that it has become tattered and torn. I have seen someone go without simple necessities, such as socks in the winter. I have seen someone cry when given a sonic gift card because they had not eaten in days. The HUB has been able to provide for these only because of the generosity of our Community. There have been times that we have provided the only source of food for someone through the HUB's only feed local program for nutrition. This program has continued on because of donations and grants.

The HUB remains committed to trying to ease the burden of extreme weather and daily challenges faced by our homeless population. Additionally, we are now working to provide COVID vaccines for the unsheltered population. We are confident that we can accomplish this in the very near future. It goes without saying that the HUB would not be nearly as responsive were it not for the compassion of our Community. And for that we are grateful, thank you Jonesboro.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

Aye: 10 - Ann Williams;Chris Moore;Mitch Johnson;Chris Gibson;Charles Coleman;Bobby Long;Joe Hafner;David McClain;LJ Bryant and Brian Emison

Absent: 2 - Charles Frierson and John Street

_____ Date: _____

Harold Copenhaver, Mayor

Attest:

_____ Date: _____

April Leggett, City Clerk