



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Public Services Council Committee

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

4:30 PM

Municipal Center

ELECTION OF A CHAIR

Councilmember Joe Hafner motioned to nominate Chairmember Chris Gibson as chair of the Public Services Committee. Chairmember Gibson stated that he would like to step down and nominate Councilmember Bobby Long as chair of the Public Services Committee. Councilmember Hafner said I withdraw my motion. Chairmember Gibson said Councilmember Long has expressed some interest in getting more involved in not only this committee, but a few others, and I have chaired this committee for 10 years and it may be time for some new blood. Councilmember Hafner motioned to nominate Councilmember Long as chair of the Public Services Committee for 2019, seconded by Councilmember Ann Williams. All voted aye.

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

Mayor Harold Perrin was in attendance.

Councilmember Charles Frierson arrived to the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Present 4 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

Absent 1 - Charles Frierson

3. Approval of minutes

[MIN-18:105](#)

Minutes for the Public Services Council Committee meeting on October 16, 2018

Attachments: [Minutes 101618](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Ann Williams, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 4 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Frierson

[MIN-18:112](#)

MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL CALLED PUBLIC SERVICES MEETING ON NOVEMBER 20, 2018

Attachments: [Public Services Special Called Meeting Minutes 11202018.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by

Councilperson Ann Williams, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 4 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

Absent: 1 - Charles Frierson

4. New Business

5. Pending Items

6. Other Business

[COM-19:018](#)

PARKS DIRECTOR DANNY KAPALES UPDATE ON THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Sponsors: Parks & Recreation

Attachments: [Parks Overview - 4-16-19](#)

Parks and Recreation Director Danny Kapales said first, I want to go through our programs. This season we had the NEA Volleyball Academy and 205 players participated in this event. This is basically our six through 10 year olds, who are just really getting involved in volleyball. They are not quite ready to go play on a travel team or play for the school team, so it's just a beginning stage for these kids to get involved with volleyball. I think we had six boys involved in that, too, which is one of our pushes as we move forward. We had a couple of volleyball tournaments. One was held in January and one in February. The first one was the Icebreaker Junior Olympic (JO) tournament, which brought in 80 teams, and then the We Care Junior Olympics tournament brought in 71 teams. In both of those tournaments, I had a couple of brackets that actually had zero Jonesboro teams, but they had 16 teams from out of town to make up that bracket. One of them even brought a team from Alabama. So, we're drawing people to Jonesboro to participate in these events and I foresee us having more tournaments and more JO tournaments because they are such a big draw for people here in Jonesboro. If you look at our high schools, we have such competitive high school teams and we have such a competitive JO organization that other cities see that and they want to come to Jonesboro and compete against that talent. So, I see those tournaments growing and I see more events coming to Jonesboro.

Chairmember Bobby Long asked if Jonesboro did any sort of survey that was handed out to coaches for them to fill out and return. Mr. Kapales said we have not, but that is something that we've been discussing, not just with the coaches, but also having the parents fill out surveys. A couple of things that we are wanting to do at some of these travel events is have the surveys filled out, but we are also looking at having a drop box so when the teams come in, and if they have receipts from where they shopped here in Jonesboro, they can fill out their name and information on the back and maybe do a drawing. We are looking to find out where these people from out of town actually shopped while they were in Jonesboro. By having them drop those receipts in the box that would give us a way to collect some information and data. As far as a survey, we want to find out why people want to come to Jonesboro, and what they want to see change when they get to Jonesboro, such as what type of things would help draw them here and make it better for them.

Mr. Kapales said in basketball, we have the Jonesboro Elementary League. That is something that I volunteered for a couple of years ago and I have been running it myself, but we do incorporate that into our City Stars program. When I took that program over, there were just barely over 100 kids in that and this year, we had 536 kids. That league is made up of just the five Jonesboro elementary teams. We divide those kids into five teams, develop coaches and develop the teams, which consist of third through sixth grades. They go and play other schools in northeast Arkansas. By doing this, I have created relationships with all of these other schools outside of Jonesboro and now they are sending their elementary teams to Jonesboro for the NEA Elementary Tournament, which had 58 teams, and the Jonesboro Classic Tournament that had 60 teams. So, we're trying to develop these relationships not just with the travel teams, but also with these schools, and I think that's going to help people to see what Jonesboro has to offer. Finally, we have City Stars, and as much as City Stars is a Jonesboro program, there are kids from all over northeast Arkansas who play in that program. We have people, even in our soccer program, coming from Mountain Home to play. So, we have people driving in to participate in these programs that are local recreational programs.

We have 93 teams in the recreational soccer program. So, you're talking about 93 teams playing every Saturday right out here at our park. We also have the Revolution Travel soccer program and for this season, we had 10 teams. That number goes down in the spring compared to the fall because we have 20 junior high teams. The junior high and high school players who normally participate in the Revolution Travel teams play for their school in the springtime, so we do lose numbers in the travel program during the spring, but the numbers jump back up into the mid-20s during the fall. We also have the Spring Classic tournament, which will be held next weekend. We will have 65 teams coming to Jonesboro to play in that tournament. During that weekend, we'll have 65 soccer teams playing in a travel tournament with, currently, 90 teams in the baseball tournament for that weekend. So, Joe Mack Campbell Park will be extremely packed for that weekend. Councilmember Gibson asked if that was generally two nights in a hotel for most of those teams. Mr. Kapales said yes it is, because the soccer tournament is a Saturday, and you will play the maximum of two games on Saturday and two games on Sunday. There are requirements in soccer that you don't play over two games just because of the exertion related to that sport.

One of our smaller programs is Rookie Rugby, which has 50 players. These are smaller programs because Jonesboro is new to a lot of this and we're getting coaches in place and we're training and getting better. We try to cap it at that just so we're training coaches and getting them started. Our goal with the Rookie Rugby is that we eventually develop some travel teams out of that who are able to go to Memphis and Little Rock, and, hopefully, in turn, those teams will start coming here to Jonesboro and competing. Another program is Target Golf. We were very fortunate this year to get a \$30,000 grant for that, which actually purchased equipment. We've never had new equipment for that program. United Pawn has been wonderful for us. Every time they have received a surplus of golf clubs, they call and ask us to come get them. This time, we were actually able to use this grant and purchase new equipment, such as clubs, that we don't have to cut down to fit the kids so we're actually buying equipment made for the kids. The other part of that is that it's going to allow us to actually hire professionals to help us with the training because there's not a single one of us in the Parks Department who is a professional golfer. So, that gives us an opportunity to hire some people who can come in and teach these kids the proper way to play. The other program, which is maxed out at 40 members, is the Climbing Club. That is a program that we use the Earl Bell for and the rock wall. Those kids come in and they're getting

exercise in a sport that most kids would never have an opportunity to participate in. We're fortunate enough to have that climbing wall. Now, we're seeing those kids go out and compete outside in real climbing events. They are going to Batesville and these other locations representing Jonesboro in these climbing events. We have kids now coming back with medals and trophies representing Jonesboro. It's pretty neat seeing these kids go out and compete in something that most people around here don't even realize is a sport.

Mr. Kapales said as you all know, we have a new softball coordinator. She has worked really well with our travel teams and trying to get travel teams to Jonesboro. The first tournament we had was the Bearcat Classic, which is a high school event. We had 40 high school teams in Jonesboro for that tournament on that weekend. We had teams from all over Arkansas, Tennessee, and Mississippi coming to Jonesboro to compete against each other. When you have that number of teams just from high school coming to compete in Jonesboro, that's an unreal number when you start dealing with it, and the fact that we have the complex to be able to show off. Everyone there was complimentary. Especially, with all the changes we've had on the adult end where we've added the new netting and the new concrete. It was a big hit for everybody being on that end. The next tournament was the ASU Invitational. We partnered with the head coach from the ASU Club team and we had 42 teams in that tournament. So, those were early season tournaments that we were still in the wet season and still in the cool season where people don't really play as many tournaments, and we're still getting a good number of people out in that park. The next event was the Preseason Recreation Tournament, but we only had the upper teams. Basically, our six year olds didn't participate and that's usually one of our largest tournaments. We had 21 teams compete that weekend and that was basically on our youth quad and Field No. 9 right next to that. That same weekend, we had 17 adult teams at the park participating in the Clint Dickson Super Draft. That was an event that had actually moved from Jonesboro in the past few years. We were fortunate enough to get them back to Jonesboro and they're going to stay in Jonesboro from this point forward. So, that's a really good start for our events.

When looking at our recreational leagues, we had 33 teams and we had 21 junior high teams. That's a program that we started a few years ago, and the junior high program is basically the age group of girls that had fallen off playing softball. When you get to about age 12, those travel teams start falling apart and those kids stop playing. Then they get to 9th grade and they try to play high school softball again. We had that gap right in the middle, so we started this junior high program. During that time-period, when we started it, we would normally have four to six teams in that age group that was normally junior high. Now you look at it and we have 21 teams. So, just by changing the philosophy of how we're doing those teams, we increased the numbers, and that's what we did. We made it school-based and now we have teams from Batesville and Walnut Ridge that are traveling to Jonesboro to play. Maumelle is traveling up to play junior high softball. We have seven teams playing in Miracle League. If you haven't had a chance to get out there, please get out there on a Saturday and watch those kids. All the other stuff we do is awesome, but it doesn't compare to going out and watching those kids get to play. Not even just the kids, the adults are getting to play out there. Just the fact that they have an opportunity that they never would have had if we hadn't built that facility is great. So, please go out there and visit that.

We have 15 teams in the baseball junior high league. This is the first year for the baseball program to be held at Joe Mack Campbell Park. We followed the same suit that we did with the softball program and decided to pull it all into Joe Mack. In the past, the junior high teams had to play on a high school field. So, if there was a rainout

and the high school team was bumped to the next night and there was a junior high game, the junior high game wasn't going to happen. At this point, that doesn't happen. We get all those teams coming out from all over northeast Arkansas to play at our park. The other part of that is the recreational league, and this year we have over 700 kids signed up. That actually starts tonight, so you can go out there tonight and the park will be full with baseball players. The first tournament we had was Baseball in the Boro, and we had 52 teams in that event, which was a great weekend. Our next tournament has 90 teams already signed up. So, baseball is starting to take a real good turn, especially with the turf. People are noticing it and noticing that even if we have the rain that we are able to continue. During Baseball in the Boro, we had one stoppage the whole weekend with all the rain, and that was due to lightning. We had a 30-minute break because if there is lightning, you have to get off the field. Once it was clear, we were back on the field playing. They were out there swinging bats with the rain coming down.

Mr. Kapales said I want to discuss things that are going on at Southside Softball Complex. I don't have a lot of pictures for you all. Hopefully, you can see that, but it's a backed-off picture to try to show the adult end. I really wish I had gotten in there and showed more of the concrete, but if you look to the right or left in those pictures, you can see the gray. That is actually the concrete. The entire complex from dugout to dugout is now hard surface. So, a child, coach or parent in a wheelchair can go all the way to the dugout and be there with the team. If you're a parent in wheelchair and you needed to go check on your child, before you had to get through dirt and grass to get there. Now, you can actually go all the way through the dugout and be able to check on your child. So, that's a big benefit. Previously, there were no safety nets. At times, we had balls flying over, but one of the most dangerous sides of adult softball was that they lose the bat, periodically, through a swing. We have had the bat go over the fence into the bleachers and hit the fans watching the game. By putting the safety net up, there is no way for the bat to get into that area, at this point. So, this has made that park safer for everyone.

This is the parking lot as it is today. If you notice, the curb is really rolling in. I am impressed with Gillis Construction. They really started on this last week and they have almost all the curb work done, and they are burying the pipe right now. So, there is going to be underground drainage throughout that parking lot and curbs throughout. I think we're going to have about 42 places to put trees. We're going to put crepe myrtles throughout that park. Last year, we did the lights, so the lights will be at each one of those islands. As we move forward, we're actually working on designing the front entrance to the youth quad. So, when you come walking off that new parking lot, you walk into the new youth complex with a funneled entrance. So, when you come in, you feel like you've truly arrived at a ballpark. Because that's what you want. You want the kids to have that magic when they walk in and that's what we're trying to create when they get there. If they get it, they'll come back.

Mr. Kapales said I have some small brochures that I want to give you all before you leave to show you what we are handing out to people that way we keep the bike/pedestrian plan on everybody's mind. Currently, we are working on Phase III of the bike/ped plan at Craighead Forest, which is the trail coming out of the back of Craighead Forest. It will go down Lincoln Drive and Craighead Forest Road. We are working on some adjustments. There are some design changes that we're probably going to end up doing. We're working on that currently and trying to make that right for the community. The other piece is the Arkansas State University (ASU) Link. As you all know, we have talked about the Harrisburg Road section we were working on and we're moving that money over to the ASU Link. This will give us roughly \$1 million to

build that trail. The big reason we chose the ASU Link when we had to move that money was because in the bike/ped plan you all wanted Phase I to be what we started with, and that's what we're doing. We're making sure that plan is being followed the way that you wanted us to follow it. So, by moving that money to Phase I and then asking for next year's grant to be part of Phase I, we're trying to follow that plan.

I have included a couple of pictures from the Mid-Town Dog Park during the fall. We built these pedestals in-house and put them in the ground for the dogs to climb on. If you haven't been out there, it's a neat little dog. It's really busy right now because people are getting out and running their dogs around, but not only in the park. Since there is a dog park for them to go to, these people are walking the neighborhoods with their dogs trying to get to the park. So, it's not just the activity in that park that is happening. It's the community actually getting out and getting involved.

Mr. Kapales said I always want to make sure that you all see what our thought process is with Parks and Recreation. This is what we see as needs for Parks and Recreation, such as walking and biking trails, parks, playgrounds, indoor and outdoor swimming centers, community recreational centers, dog parks, tennis facilities, and sports fields. When looking at our goals, we start with connection of the community through trail system, which is the bike/ped plan. We want to make sure that our entire community is connected. The next is to protect and enhance the urban forestry and beautification of the city. We have Craighead Forest, which is 707 acres, and we keep adding to it. We want to make sure that as we add to it, that we're doing it in a way that we're protecting that facility and still keeping it natural and beautiful. We want to make sure we are always looking at areas, looking at the map and making sure that we are building in sites that need to be built in.

Next, I want to establish customer service and communication standards in all parks and recreation operations. What I mean by this is within or social media, within the way we answer the phones at the Parks Department, and with the way that any of my employees interact with the public, we have to have a standard and we have to make sure that we're all on the same page.

Finally, the last thing is creating a 20-Year Master Plan for Parks and Recreation. I want a plan in place that you all have approved that we open that book up every year at budget time and we look at what we're doing for the following year. I want to be able to follow that plan and say here's what we're looking at for Parks, here's what we're going to enhance, and here's how we're making a change over here. That way, we're always kind of on the same page and not blindsided on what direction we're going when budget time comes around. Obviously, every plan should be a live plan and we should be able to make adjustments, but we just really need to have that blueprint on where Jonesboro is going to be over the next 20 years with our Parks and Recreation Department.

I just wanted to give you an overlook of our first quarter for last year compared to our first quarter for this year and our revenue. In 2018, we were at \$135,292 and in 2019, we are at \$196,332. We have increased in the first quarter, which is one of the slower quarters of the year, by \$61,000 this year. So, to me, that's a big plus for the city.

Mayor Harold Perrin said Chairmember Long mentioned the survey with the umpires. I know Mr. Kapales does this, and I go out almost every game they have on Saturday and we sit down with the umpires between games and ask them questions. It's not a written survey, but we ask them what they see in Jonesboro that needs to be improved. A lot of the changes we have made have come from them because we know

they recruit the teams. We have not reached out to the families, but I think that is what Mr. Kapales was talking about. Last year, we started sending postcards out to those who stayed at the campgrounds at Craighead Forest Park thanking them for their patronage and asking them to provide us with some feedback. I think it's next month that we will have an enhancement with the online pay for anything that you do with the City of Jonesboro. I hope that will be implemented and completed by the end of May. So, people can rent a campground and pay for it online.

The other thing we discussed is that we are not using Deral Burrow Memorial Park. This is something that we have been talking about for the last two or three weeks. We have had 13 acres donated to us for that park and it's not being utilized. I understand that we are waiting on a grant, but we're going to have to do a little bit more master planning on that assuming we're not going to get that grant. That's a great place to have games and all the overflow. So, with a little bit of work out there, we could get that thing in good shape. We already have the parking lot. We already have a lot of that stuff at Deral Burrow Memorial Park.

The other thing Mr. Kapales mentioned was the entrance going in at Southside. We have talked to and we have people who have verbally committed to do the labor of a beautiful brick entrance into that park. We think that ACME Brick or someone is making a donation of those bricks. I'm trying to get that up, as soon as possible, because I would like to come back to you all to honor the person who started that softball field and had to turn it over to us because they didn't have any money, and that is Pop Gibson. I want to do something for him because I remember the day I had to go talk to him, and he told me that he did not have the money for infield mix and he just didn't want that program to continue with those kids getting hurt, and asked if the city would please take it over. That man has put his whole heart & soul into that and he's getting to the age that I would certainly like to recognize him. I have a family member who has agreed to pay for the bronze plaque that would go on the front of the entrance. I would hope that we could get that done in the next four to six weeks. We've already got the labor donated, we've got the bricks donated, and we're going to move on that pretty quick.

Mr. Kapales said we were out there today and we drew up on the ground how it's going to layout. What we're trying to do first of all is honor Pop. We're going to call it the "Pop Gibson Entrance," and that way when you guide people, it's always going to be known that that's the entrance you're going to go in. We're also going to utilize it as a funnel. We're going to create this entrance so that it will funnel you into that park. So, when you pull up on the parking lot, you don't have to walk out and think where are we going. It visually takes you to that entrance and it funnels everybody right in. Mayor Perrin said you'll have signage and everything out there. All the bleachers out there are all metal. There are no wood bleachers and not wood dugouts. They also did an incredible job on the design of the new concession stand.

Councilmember Joe Hafner asked if there would be a tournament out there this weekend. Mr. Kapales said there was no scheduled tournament this weekend because it is Easter weekend, but we have communicated with some local teams that are not playing elsewhere, so, we're possibly going to have an 8 and under and 10 and under event out there. Being that it's Easter weekend, it's real hard to drag them in. So, we're looking at possibly a small 16-team event, but we plan to have something. Mayor Perrin said we might need to have an Easter egg hunt out there. Mr. Kapales said we were talking about maybe having one of the fields set up with Easter eggs. Mayor Perrin said we did that before and it was just incredible. Mr. Kapales said the Fraternal Order of Police actually did one a few weeks ago out at Miracle League and it was

awesome to see those kids chasing Easter eggs. That field was covered up and there were eggs everywhere, and they had a blast chasing them. It was a great opportunity.

Read

[COM-19:019](#)

UPDATE BY MICHAEL BLACK, TRANSIT DIRECTOR FOR THE JET SYSTEM

Sponsors: JETS

Transit Director Michael Black said I'd like to go ahead and get the obvious out of the way, which is the damage to our transfer station Saturday afternoon about 1:30 p.m. A 2001 Nissan Xterra attempted to make a garage out of it. Fortunately, it was not near as bad as it could have been. It was on a Saturday and there was one man in the transfer station who did receive minor injuries. The vehicle did only take out the glass and all the framing on the south wall and just a little bit of interior damage on the east wall. We do have it cleaned up now. New framing is up and plywood is in place, and we're finishing the final touches on the floor. We will be back up in operation at the transfer station at 5:30 a.m. tomorrow. I did reach out yesterday to the insurance company and spoke with the adjuster. A claim had already been opened and they are taking responsibility for it. As it looks right now, all the repairs probably will not equal \$10,000. We were very fortunate that it did not happen on a Monday through Friday with 20 people inside the station. We are going to take measures to keep this from happening again. We're going to install four bollards on that south side. The building has a little awning over each side and it has four definite lines in it. We're putting the bollards right under the lines and going to keep them gray or silver in color to match the scheme of the building. That was Mr. Danny Kapales' idea and I thought that was very good. That will keep other vehicles from coming in there. It was amazing how it happened. I really don't see how it did, but the young driver was cited for unsafe and prohibited driving.

In 2018, our total ridership was 134,432 and of that, the fixed route was 124,182. We were down on the fixed route by about 6% over 2017. Of course, in 2017, we had a growth spurt of 18% over the year. So, I knew that was going to be a hard year to follow. Of the fixed route rides, 1,194 were trips on the Red Wolf Express. There were 1,741 trips on our Summer Youth Program. On the paratransit side of things, we provided 10,250 trips on paratransit. That was a growth increase on paratransit of 18%. We traveled 348,094 revenue miles. That is system-wide. We did complete a 10-year transit study. Some of the information that was brought to light in that was amazing. One of the first couple of steps in year one and two was to expand our hours and we have done that by one hour. We go out of service at 7:30 p.m. instead of 6:30 p.m. The next step would be to increase our Saturdays, which right now we are only running three buses on Saturdays on one-hour headways from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. That does cover about 96% of all of our stops that we hit Monday through Friday. What I would like to do once we get our employee situation worked out, because we're always struggling to find part-time employees, is take our Saturday system on our 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. schedule exactly as they are Monday through Friday. That would give us three 30-minute headways and two 1-hour headways on Saturdays.

We finished our American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance two years early. All construction is done, although we do have two redos that evidently weren't designed in compliance to begin with, but the contractor is going to be doing those probably within the next four to six weeks. All of our bus stops will be ADA compliant as we bring on new stops. I am working with Arkansas State University (ASU) on two different projects. One project is in cooperation with the convention center in putting a stop out on Olympic. We have already moved our Route 17 to turn on Alumni and turn on

Olympic, and we have a temporary stop between where the convention center is located and the First National Bank Arena. That is a north to south route, and I'm working on bringing Route 53 in there to add a south to north route. O'Reilly Hospitality will be the ones basically putting the stops in because it is going to benefit them tremendously by giving them six LED points, which, evidently, in the hotel business is pretty good. So, we're working to do that.

We're also working in partnership with ASU on our real time bus app. Last year, Mayor Perrin did see fit to put \$45,000 in my budget under computer software to possibly go with Routematch real time bus data or a bus app. That was just kind of tough for me to swallow. I reached out to Mr. Henry Torres from ASU, whom my predecessor had worked with before, and we talked and had a meeting. We have a real time bus app through the ASU SmartCampus app right now. It's just very difficult to maneuver and we're working with Mr. Torres to break that app out. It would be a standalone app and be very simple for the people to actually use that app.

Last year, our budgeted amount was \$1.6348 million. We finished the year out by spending \$1.3494 million. We had \$275,000 left over in the budget. There were a couple of projects that we didn't get done. We had some money in sidewalks. We had done a lot of sidewalks the year before and the city didn't have very many sidewalks going in or being rehabbed that were in one-half a mile of our stops, so we couldn't use our grant money on some of the sidewalks that the city did, but we still have that money in our budget for this year. National Bike Week begins on May 13th and we will also have our Rack and Ride bike program for a quarter on May 13th. National Bike to Work Day is May 17th. If anybody racks a bike on our bus, they ride for free that day only. Our Summer Youth Program starts on May 13th and will run all the way through August 31st. Youth 18 and under with proper identification ride for a quarter. We also offer media that can be picked up at the City Collector's office for \$10. If you break that down, if a youth uses that card and goes 10 places in a month's time, the card is paid for and the remainder of the two months of the program is basically like a free ride. So, it is very worthwhile.

We will begin our Red Wolf Express on August 31st. This is the first home game, and we will have six home games again this year. I am very excited, not only about the football season, but also about our ridership and the growing use of our program since the parking at the ASU games is getting very scarce. So, I look forward to a very good year.

Read

7. Public Comments

8. Adjournment

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

Aye: 5 - Joe Hafner; Bobby Long; Chris Gibson; Charles Frierson and Ann Williams