



# City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center  
300 S. Church Street  
Jonesboro, AR 72401

## Meeting Minutes Public Services Council Committee

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Tuesday, September 17, 2019

4:30 PM

Municipal Center

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### 1. Call To Order

### 2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

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

**Absent** 1 - Charles Frierson

### 3. Approval of minutes

[MIN-19:038](#)

Minutes for the Public Services Committee meeting on April 16, 2019

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

**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:** 3 - Joe Hafner; Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

**Absent:** 1 - Charles Frierson

### 4. New Business

### 5. Pending Items

### 6. Other Business

*Chairman Bobby Long said, the reason that I asked for Parks and Rec, JETS, and the Airport Commission to provide updates in their departments is because we meet so infrequently. I think it's important for the public to know what you have on your plate. What are we looking to accomplish in the next 3 to 6 months and just give you guys an opportunity to tell us what's going on in your departments and get the people excited about what's going on there and what might be coming up.*

[COM-19:058](#)

Report Update by Parks and Recreation

**Attachments:** [Bobby Long Request 07262019.pdf](#)

*Chairman Long said, Danny if you don't mind coming up so we can go ahead and hear the report for Parks and Rec. Parks and Recreation Director Danny Kapales said, so,*

*basically parks and recreation, quality of life, you look at Jonesboro and we make up the trail systems, the aquatics, the sports facilities, every park in Jonesboro, sidewalks, downtown, that's quality of life and that's parks in Jonesboro. I'm going to give you a briefing on what we've done this year and of a few things we've got coming up. So, starting off with projects Joe Mack Campbell Park, we've renovated the outfield of the Fowler Field. After we put the turf in, the water that was displaced, obviously had to go somewhere. For the method of getting the water off of the outfield, we put in French Drains, re-did the irrigation and made that field usable. It's doing its job.*

*We have completed the parking lot out at Southside. It looks phenomenal. Up to this point we've completed new concession stands and the fields out there are in great shape. If you've not had the chance to go out there and just walk the fields and see what we have, that facility in the last five to ten years has just made a complete turn-around. Last year, we had to use that facility for a baseball tournament because we had so many teams show up that we had to use both facilities. The baseball teams that didn't get to play on the turf, they complained a little but in the midst of their complaining, they said these are some of the best infields we've ever played on and their on the softball fields. So, that's something to say about the group we have working out there at that facility. Mind you, that's one supervisor and he gets a handful of part-timers and he manages that whole complex that way. You go to Fayetteville or Jackson, Tennessee and they've got thirty to forty folks managing a complex like that. I commend my guys for the work and effort they put in and the lack of help that they get.*

*On Craighead Forest Park, we are in the midst of working on phase three. I want to clarify something that has come out and I keep hearing people say, well they've been working on that trail for two years. Well, that trail did not start until October of last year during the wet season. It's still not complete, but it's still not October of this year. So, it's not even been a year yet. It's been less than a year and we are still working of the project. Wet season, wet property plus we had to change the entire design half way through because a group wanted it changed and that slowed us down by about three months, and that three months was during the dry season. That is what put us behind on that trail but it's getting done at this point.*

*On the ASU Link, that is in current design mode right now. We should have those designs ready by early spring. That is two grants that we have received to do that trail. That is going to run right along City Hall here down Creath and that will take us almost all the way down to the railroad tracks. We are hoping to do a fly over to be able to get over the railroad tracks so that the students have a good connection to downtown. A high percentage of students do not have a vehicle here in town and so to give them an opportunity to get to restaurants downtown is having a trail and along that trail having a way for them to ride their bikes.*

*On the Shooting Sports Complex, if you go out there right now you will see some massive berms where they have dug out the pond. They've got the berms built up for the pistol and the long rifle they also built the berms for archery. They have the sidewalks and the parking lot almost complete. So, that phase of the project is getting close to being done. What some of the hope is where they've dug out from the pond for the berm's is going to double the size of that pond. That will make for a really nice fishing pond for anybody that wants to go out and maybe shoot trap, then go fishing for a little while.*

*On Northside Baseball Complex, we are in the process of, when we have time, I'm sending a whole crew out there at one time and we are clearing that property. We are*

*leaving backstops so people can still go out and practice baseball. But, we are getting rid of the old fencing that was out there and the dugouts. That complex was in bad shape. My thought process is to keep it where it can be usable. If you want to have baseball practice you can. If you want to have an event on the north side of town, it's a great complex. It has open grass space for people to actually have some type of festival or event and be able to use the parking lot for folks to come in and park. Chairman Long asked, how big is that? Mr. Kapales said, it's around twenty acres and then right next to that, we have the thirteen acres that was donated by the Crews family. Somewhere a little of thirty acres of property.*

*In the Cemetery Department, if I haven't told you all, earlier this year, I was able to hire a gentleman from Batesville that was their Assistant Parks Director, Brandon Shrader. He is now our Cemetery and Urban Parks Supervisor. Brandon has really turned that department around. He is falling right in line with the program that we had in place. If you go to our parks, now you will see that our parks are clean. They are being trimmed and taken care of. If you have ever seen the records that we have to work with, it's a couple of big plastic tubs, huge tubs full of books that date back to the early 1900's. So, with those books, they have to flip through and find every spot. With Brandon's help and Rusty McAlister, GIS Coordinator's help they are putting all of that into an actual digital database. Then, that is being put into ARC-GIS. What he's actually going to be able to do is walk out with an iPad to a cemetery and look at a certain spot and know if that is a sellable spot. If someone comes in with a deed and say's, I need to find a plot from my family, he'll be able to locate that pretty quickly. In the past we used to have to spend a lot of time digging through those books just to find that information. Brandon is really doing a wonderful job in trying to turn that department around.*

*On maintenance, if you look at parks as a whole, we have over 1500 acres, that's a lot of property to deal with. I basically have 22 full-time employees. We depend heavily on part-time workers we will get up to 150 employees total with part-timers. At \$9.25 an hour, it's really tough to find part-timers, but that's where we are. I ask a lot out of our guys who work for \$9.25. They weed-eat all day long, mow all day long, pick up trash all day long. It's a lot of work, especially when the temperature is 98% outside, but that's what we depend on. I am very thankful for those guys that do come along and work for us. If you look at other areas, take Conway for an example, they have six receptionists dealing with their Parks and Rec. and we have one. Councilmember Chris Gibson said, with that statement Danny, how does their parks department compare to what we have to offer? Mr. Kapales asked as far as a whole? Councilmember Gibson said, yes. Mr. Kapales said, we've got more programs and we have more facilities as far as acreage wise. We don't have some of the indoor facilities as a whole. They have some six court facilities. But as a whole, we have some of the biggest programs. We have the biggest soccer program in all of Arkansas. We have the only youth basketball program, that's actually free to the community. So, we offer a program that no one else offers. We have upwards of 1,000 kids that routinely play in our basketball program. We offer so much more to the folks in Arkansas. I'm going to say just about anybody else, even the bigger cities, like Little Rock, going down and talking with them about their programs and ours, we still out-number them with total usage and with fewer folks. Take for instance our soccer program, I have one guy managing that program. If you go to Conway, they have just one guy that is the Director of Coaching. He, just handles the Coaches. Then you have someone that is handling the schedules. Then, you have folks managing the facilities. We have one guy. Then, you take football. The one guy that handles football, also runs the basketball and flag football. We are pretty short, but we do a great job and that's one of the reasons I'm so proud of my guys. Very few of my guys work 40 hours. The*

majority of them average about 60 hours a week and we are all salaried. There are a lot of people and a lot of work by people that really, really care about what Parks and Rec is going to look like for the City of Jonesboro.

With Programs, I have some numbers for you. If you go into softball we had quite a few tournaments this spring but one of the biggest ones was the Mountain Dew tournament. We had 89 teams and with that tournament we were actually able to open up the new entrance into the youth complex. We were able to piece that together with some different projects. If you go out there it looks like a different park now. You pull into the parking lot and you know you have entered a park. Before, it was two little five foot open gates and you walk through chain link gates and you are walking down a pathway. This way you actually come in. it has landscaping and brick columns. It has a nice entrance and is a beautiful complex. Hopefully, next year, we can do the adult end and make it match. This spring we had eight tournaments. Spring league had 37 youth teams, 9 church adult teams, 15 men's adult teams, and 14 co-ed teams. Numbers were up on most of it. The youth team is down a little bit. I'll put that over to the travel program because there are a lot teams and a lot more kids traveling. Just to add to that, one of the things that we are trying to do to help make teams better in Jonesboro is, if you have good competition, you're going to come play. Karla Maraquin, which is our Softball Coordinator, Paul Pittman which is one of our local Firefighters and Dean Hunt which is our UIC, every Monday night for a couple of hours, they invite the U8's and the U12's players that wants to come out for free training. They are volunteering their time to train these kids. They get training normally they wouldn't get from just a volunteer coach. What they are doing is developing our younger kids so that they can compete. When they go to Little Rock or somewhere else to play and they win a tournament, then those other teams go hey, let's go to Jonesboro. They must have some talent there. We need to go play them. So, what we are trying to do is put a product out there to go other places that make people excited about coming back to Jonesboro. Once they get to our facility and see it, they are happy to come to Jonesboro and play. We have 13 tournaments scheduled on the fall schedule. It is probably one of the biggest ones to talk about. It is the one we are having this weekend. We have 74 teams coming to Jonesboro. One of the other things we have, which will be the first ever is a 12 team collegiate tournament happening in the middle of October. That means, we will have 12 college teams playing on our fields. We will put those teams on the adult end and we are going to have a youth tournament on the youth end. Friday and Saturday will be the college teams and Saturday and Sunday will be the youth. So now, Saturday and Sunday those coaches that are there with the college teams have a chance to slide down to the youth end and watch our local youth talent. Not only that, it will bring teams from other places because they want to be seen by those local coaches. That is a new program that we are going to have this year and an opportunity for our kids to be seen and hopefully given a chance to go play college ball. Councilmember Gibson asked, do you have a speculation on how many people will actually come to the community and how many hotel rooms that will fill? Mr. Kapales said, you know, you take a 74 team tournament, you can probably estimate that 50% of those will be your local teams and the other 50% will be the out of town teams. So hopefully, 30 to 35 teams. That equates to 15 team players per team, which is usually a mom and a dad. I'm going to say the thing about female sports is that they draw, mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, aunts, uncles and siblings. When those girls get to town, they've already got a plan. Where they are going to go shop when their game is over with. Boys, sometimes, unfortunately, they go back to the hotel and jump in a pool. But, those girls they've got a list of boutiques they want to go to. They know there is a mall for them to go to. So, building on our girls sports is huge. To give to a real number, it's hard. There are so many ways to put that number out there. To honest with you, I'd rather say, I just can't give you a true number on that. Councilmember

*Gibson said, so just speculating on that, about 40 to 50 %, Mr. Kapales said yes. Councilmember Gibson said, for at least one to two nights? Mr. Kapales said, simply, this will be a two night tournament with this number of teams. For the fall season, we have 24 youth teams. The reason that number goes down in the fall is because a lot of kids go to volleyball. Primarily the teams that play in the fall are the ones that are trying to get prepared for next season. They play up in age group so they can kind of learn what that next age group is like.*

*In soccer, this season, we had over 1,500 kids in the spring program. We hosted the "Play It Again" Classic spring tournament which was 63 teams. Two-thirds of those teams were from out of town. We hosted a 3V3 soccer program in the summer. That is basically, any kids that want to play extra soccer. 3V3 is becoming one of the more popular programs. In the fall season, we had 1,500 kids or a little over and we just had the 20th annual Riceland Foods Harvest Cup. We had 55 teams in it. Mr. Kapales said, about two-thirds of those teams were from out of town. I will say, we have 11 divisions. Three of those divisions are local teams and won first place and second place. Out of seven divisions we won 1st or 2nd place, so pretty good competition out of our local groups. Mr. Kapales said, then with our summer basketball program, we had roughly 634 kids. With tackle football, we have 13 teams, which make up about 336 children, followed by flag football which has 18 teams and somewhere around 330 players.*

*We had two swim meets this summer. With both of them combined, we had a little over 300 participants which is the max that our facility can hold. Fortunately Building Maintenance Director Ronnie Shaver and his crew came in and helped redo a couple of bathrooms inside the facility. In the past, we've had to have a lot of portable toilets put in place for these meets and that never looks good at a facility. Parks had a 140 children in swim lessons this summer. We do have some other small programs which include rugby, rock climbing club, and target golf. NEA tennis has over 200 children and adults participating every evening right now. If you want to go out to Earl Bell or Allen Park, you will see all of those tennis courts full. Also, high school tennis is from 4 to 6 P.M. every day Monday through Friday. The Allen Park tennis courts are filled up and we are hosting four district tournaments this year and one state tournament. So, we are reaching out and are truly doing our best with what we have to make sure we are bring everybody to Jonesboro that we can. Jonesboro Baseball Boosters roughly had over 900 kids participating in their spring league. I don't have an exact number on their tournaments. I will say that at one of the events there was quite a bit of rain, but you could still sit out there and continue to watch the kids play. That was one of the things that the turf was meant to do for that program. Are there any questions? Chairman Long said, thank you Danny that was a good report. Councilmember Gibson said, thank you.*

**Read**

[COM-19:059](#)

Report Update by Jonesboro Economical Transportation System (JET)

**Attachments:**     [Bobby Long Request 07262019.pdf](#)

*Chairman Long asked Director of JETS Transit System Michael Black to come up and give a report. Mr. Black said, good afternoon. JETS continues to grow. As of the end of August we provided overall 95,655 trips. Of those, 88,733 were on fixed routes which is 4.5% above where we were at the same time in 2017 and 14.9% above where we were in 2018. We are on track right now for the year-to-end at approximately 134,000 trips, fixed route only. That would surpass our best year back in 2017 of 128,691. The para-transit ridership as it stands right now is at 6,922. That is 22% above 2017 and 6.9% above 2018. We are on track there to provide 10,300 trips, strictly para-transit.*

Our para-transit is about 91% non-emergency medical transports. Our Saturday routes are continuing to grow. We are averaging about 145 riders each Saturday. Right now, we are only running three routes, but we are still covering about 98% of our stops. They are on one hour head ways. Councilmember Gibson said, that number is on route trips rather than transports to the ballgames, I would assume? Mr. Black said, yes, this is just strictly fixed routes, not Redwolf Express. I do have enough in my fixed route budget and fuel budget. If things work out in next year's budget, I would like to make our Saturday routes mirror our Monday through Friday routes except, for our 9 to 4 schedule, I think that would make it a lot more user friendly and we could probably double our ridership within 3 months. With the Redwolf Express, the most trips we have ever had was for the MISSU game several years ago which was 406 trips. The very first game of this year, we logged 422 trips on Redwolf Express and do look for that number to grow as word gets out and the fact that the parking is very limited out there. We do continue to work with the Convention Center. We have two different routes that go by the Convention Center. I have one stop on the west side of Olympic and we will have two stops on the right side of Olympic once the O'Reilly construction team gets them built. We are working with them. They are working with our engineering department because, ultimately, we have to certify that stop to be ADA compliant before we can let it move forward. That being said, with our lighting project to make all of our stops ADA compliant, we are one stop away from being complete. It is a very small little pad that was put close to the corner of Church and Matthews. It has settled in a little bit and is an extension off the sidewalk. Now that the weather is hot and dry, hopefully the contractor will be able to get in there and get it re-done so that we can get that stop certified. Then, we can wrap this lighting project up. From this point forward, they will all be ADA compliant right from the start. Councilmember Gibson asked, what kind of cost is something like that at each stop? Mr. Black said, this is a ballpark figure, depending on the terrain, anywhere from \$600 to \$1,200 per stop. Our route match software that we use, not only for our fixed route but for our para-transit, manifest, our on premise server has met its useful life. We are in the process of working with route match. On Thursday, I have a kick-off conference phone call to discuss our route match software being migrated into the AWS Cloud that will allow for a lot more efficiency and any updates or upgrades virtually instantaneous, which will allow our web portal to function properly and allow us to launch our real time bus app. I do have two new buses on order. They are in Little Rock waiting on final inspection. They failed the first inspection. One of the buses is back and ready to go. The second bus is still at the dealership waiting on final repairs and hopefully we will pick those up next week. With our advertising, most have contracts through March. There was a six month ad campaign. It was a statewide and the ad was "Now You Know." It was on many buses throughout the state. That provided advertising revenue of \$40,500 for that one campaign. The ASU ad contract was due in March but, due to the age of the bus the advertising they wanted was put off and we are going to use one of the new buses for ASU's ad. That will give them three full years. Are there any questions. Chairman Long said, just one. On the ASU Redwolf ride, how often do you all go by? When do you start picking up? Michael Black said, our pick-up point is down on Church and Cate. We start picking up at 3:30 P.M. and we will transport out to the stadium at least every twenty minutes until 5:30 P.M. We do begin return service at the beginning of 3rd quarter of the game. If we waited until the end of the game, we figured we were losing a lot of ridership due to the fact that some people just want to go to the game to see their child or grandchild in the Marching Band, and when that's over they want to go home. That runs every twenty to thirty minutes until twenty minutes after the game has ended. Chairman Long said ,thank you.

**Read**

[COM-19:060](#)

Report Update by Jonesboro Airport Commission

**Attachments:** [Bobby Long Request 07262019.pdf](#)

Chairman Long said, George you will be next, I promise you will first on the list next time. Jonesboro Municipal Airport manager George Stem said, I will keep it short and sweet. I will start off with our federal grant. We are trying to wrap up our Master Plan. It has been very thorough and in-depth. The total cost on this grant was \$487,000. It is 95% to 5% and our 5% is eligible to be reimbursed by the state. Our last Master Plan was back in the late 1990's, I believe 1997. So, it was well needed. With other federal grant, we had some draining issues that were taken care of just across the grounds in general. It was the same 95% - 5%. I think it came to about \$150,000 total. The Airport Capital Improvement Plan update is due in November. The Master Plan update, that's in hopes to help justify a runway strengthening project that we've been looking at and pushing for to help us land some bigger planes like corporate planes. We have to justify it, so that's part of the Master Plan. Chairman Long asked, what's the largest plane we can land out there? Mr. Stem said, we see a lot of G5's that are pushing the limits. What the issue is, if they come in light, without a lot of fuel, they are pushing our strength limits. So they don't take on fuel going out and we are kind of missing the boat on fuel sales. Those planes can double their weight in fuel and that's a lot of fuel sales we are missing out on. We've been keeping the strengthening project on the plan as a priority. Right now, we are short on hanger space. We are at full capacity and actually have a waiting list. We did get a well needed \$250,000 state grant to do construction, which is in the process right now. There will be another corporate hanger. Both of those should be completed by the end of the year. The airport is growing. That is a good indication. We've got more people showing up and wanting to hanger an aircraft and wanting to buy fuel. Again, the need for the strengthening project is a good indicator. I am getting calls from people that I can't really authorize them to exceed the weight limit and they are making other plans to go to surrounding towns that they can get into. We are missing opportunities on that. This project is fairly large. It is \$14,000,000, but we've got to start somewhere. We've tried to update all of our lighting to LED to keep moving along with the times. We did update our grounds carrier equipment, tractors and cutters last year which really helped us this year. Air Choice One is doing well. The St. Louis trips still seem to be a great destination point. I think, last year, they were just shy of 10,000 passengers. Are there any questions.

**Read**

## **7. Public Comments**

## **8. Adjournment**

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

**Aye:** 3 - Joe Hafner;Chris Gibson and Ann Williams

**Absent:** 1 - Charles Frierson