



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Public Services Council Committee

Tuesday, June 21, 2016

4:00 PM

Municipal Center

1. Call To Order

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2. Roll Call by City Clerk Donna Jackson

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Mayor Harold Perrin was in attendance.

Present 4 - Ann Williams;Chris Gibson;Rennell Woods and Bobby Long

Absent 1 - Charles Frierson

3. Approval of minutes

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MIN-16:052

Minutes for Public Services Committee Meeting on May 3, 2016

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Attachments: [Minutes](#)

A motion was made by Councilwoman Ann Williams, seconded by Councilman Rennell Woods, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Ann Williams;Rennell Woods and Bobby Long

Absent: 1 - Charles Frierson

4. New Business

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5. Pending Items

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6. Other Business

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There was a motion by Councilman Woods and a second by Councilwoman Williams to appoint Chris Gibson as chair. All committee members presented voted aye.

COM-16:048

Parks and Recreation Update June 2016

Attachments: [Parks and Rec](#)

Parks and Recreation Director Wixson Huffstetler stated he handed out an update for Parks and Recreation for the Spring and up to date for the Summer. He said they are finishing up softball league play. Mr. Huffstetler said they have 270 youth and 570 in the adult leagues. He said there have been 12 tournaments so far with the Mountain Dew being rained out again this year for the fourth year in a row. He said that is our big tournament which runs 80 to 100 teams. Chairman Gibson asked if the numbers were up or down for this year. Mr. Huffstetler said the youth numbers are down a little bit, but that our biggest youth season is in the fall because most teams are playing travel ball right now. He said our youth recreation league is down about 100 150 kids. He said it goes in spurts and we have more 5 6 year olds than older kids because of travel. He said this holds true for the adult league also.

Mr. Huffstetler said that there are four more teams this year with the Miracle League with the Spring season having had 12 teams. He said it grew and we are very pleased with that. Mr. Huffstetler said they are in the process of installing a 30x50 shade top pavilion this month on the site with tables. He said it will be a great asset out there and can be used for parties. He said he has had several corporations rent it out to have waffle ball for their company's employee appreciation days.

Mr. Huffstetler said they are in season right now with the City Stars Basketball. He said they just had their second week and they have 870 youth participating. He said that is up from last year, but all the numbers go in waves depending on the age groups and times of year.

Mr. Huffstetler said for the City Stars Soccer, they had 2,100 youth participate in the Spring which is average. He said the fall is the big season and will hit about 3,000 youth. He said this was the first year for the spring tournament and they had 44 teams. Mr. Huffstedler said the Summer 3 on 3 tournament had 28 teams.

Mr. Huffstetler said that the baseball recreation league had 744 youth participating which was down this year due to traveling teams. He said they hosted 11 tournaments. He said their big tournament was the same weekend as the Mountain Dew tournament and it got rained out too. He said it usually runs about 80 100 teams and is big for Jonesboro.

Mr. Huffstetler said that Phase I of the trail at Craighead Forest Park is about 85% complete. He said the last 450 feet of the trail has to be asphalted and the company is working on stabilizing the dirt for hydro seeding grass. He said hopefully, in a week or two, his staff will then start installing workout equipment. Mr. Huffstetler said Phase II goes out to bid this Sunday and hopefully construction will start in August. He said the drainage project is complete except for the punch list. This has taken place at access 5 & 6. It has really changed the look of the areas and enhanced the drainage and erosion problems in these areas.

Mr. Huffstetler said that they installed a new 20 x 40 shade top pavilion at Parker Park. He said this was placed between the splash pad and playground.

Mr. Huffstetler said that the swim season is under way and they are currently building a roof over the chemical room to protect the pumps, pipes, and chemicals from weather and the sun. He said this will help with maintenance every year.

Councilwoman Williams asked about a safe walk way into Joe Mack Campbell Park. Mr. Huffstetler said there is not a safe walking access into the park without going through someone's property. He said there is a walk in gate at the entrance on Dan Avenue, but there are no sidewalks on Dan Avenue. Councilwoman Williams said she spoke to City Engineer Craig Light and they were preparing an estimate to put in a sidewalk on Dan Avenue. Mayor Perrin said that was correct and he has spoken to Walter McMillan, who is the district engineer in Paragould. Mr. McMillan said to get some cost estimates together so they could see what could be done. Mayor Perrin said if they will give the city the right of way, then they can put a sidewalk all the way down. Councilwoman Williams said she has had members of the public request this and she thinks this is something the city really needs to do. Mayor Perrin said this will cost the city, but it is something that needs to be addressed. He said the CDBG helps on the costs or we couldn't do all of the sidewalks we do every year. He said we may have to move some projects around to do this. Councilwoman Williams said this is a safety issue for children that needs to be addressed.

Mayor Perrin said that Mr. Huffstetler has been in dialogue to see about acquiring some land next to Joe Mack Campbell Park which could possibly be used in the future for a water park. He said there is about 78 acres in that area and we are looking at how we can purchase it. He said we may be coming back to the committee and full council to see about that. Mayor Perrin said the owner may work with the city so she can do that for her taxes. He said she has to get it appraised and we could get it for half that. He said they are in dialogue with the family. He said the man who designed, built and owned the Big Kahoona in Destin, Florida has been here. Someone has him on staff here to design and draw out a water theme park. He said we will see what they come up with. Chairman Gibson asked if they were going to be putting a proposal for us. Mayor Perrin said they would probably want the city to do a proposal. He said that you are talking about a lot of money and we will take a look at it and see and kind of go from there.

Councilwoman Williams asked about the city needing another pool. Mr. Huffstetler said that land is for future growth. He said that the way baseball is growing that we could use five more fields. He said that the land could be used for a community center with basketball courts, baseball fields, or a water park. Mayor said the land is right next to our land and is something the city definitely should look at. Councilwoman Williams asked about the city needing an indoor pool. Mr. Huffstetler said they city does need one for the public use and for the local high schools. He said the city pool is completely booked for the rest of the season. Councilman Woods asked if the land in question would provide for the indoor pool or should the city look into another area. Mr. Huffstetler said that it definitely would be enough land to accommodate a pool area. Councilman Woods asked if this was what Councilwoman Williams was asking about. Mayor Perrin said yes that they would like to get a Master Plan for this area. He said that it could be done in phases. Mr. Huffstetler said that building a sports complex would only draw businesses to that area.

Councilman Woods asked if there was some way to get the Highway Department to do a study on traffic in that area and to see if they could accommodate the city with a better entrance into Joe Mack Campbell Park. Mayor Perrin said that part of the interstate is not I 555 standards. He said that I 555 starts at Southwest Drive. He said he spoke with the highway department and they said they didn't think there was enough room for a ramp to accommodate the speed to come off the highway onto

there. Mayor Perrin said the Highway Commissioner liked the idea and that he was going to see if he could help push the idea through. He said that he would use safety as part of the presentation. He said that now that we have a Highway Commissioner we have a better chance of them seeing it our way.

Councilman Burton asked Mr. Huffstetler if tournaments were held at Allen Park. Mr. Huffstetler stated that most of the Northeast Arkansas area high schools rent out the facility for their tournaments. He said that ASU has even rented it. He stated that the general public heavily uses Joe Mack and Earl Bell. Mayor Perrin stated that Northside Park is not being used and there is too much land for it not to be in use. He said we need to think about utilizing that land and we have some plans that were done free of charge by Fisher and Arnold. This project would cost about \$4 million with about half of that cost dedicated for a road from Hwy. 141 to Patrick. Councilman Woods asked if the fields would be done away with. Mr. Huffstetler said it was designed for all open green space fields that can be used for a variety of sporting activities. Mayor Perrin said he could get the layout so the committee could see what Mr. Huffsteadler is talking about.

This item was Filed.

COM-16:049

JETS Transportation Update June 2016

Attachments: [JETS](#)

JETS Director Steve Ewart said to look at the handout that has JETS ridership since day one back to 2006. He said that we just had our 10 year anniversary. Mr. Ewart stated the first row is fixed route ridership and the second row is the para transit ridership. He said the total column will show the progression of the ridership over the years. He stated that in 2010, we had a pretty significant drop in ridership. Mr. Ewart said this was the year we had to face reality and we cut our routes and staff by 55%. He said we had to live with the reality of what our budget was. He stated that since 2010, we have gradually built our ridership back up. Mr. Ewart stated that in 2010, we went to three routes and we now have five routes and we have gradually increased our ridership. He said to date in 2016, we have had 39,910 riders and that compares very favorably to last year. He said that it is actually about 18% over last year. Mr. Ewart said the opening of the Transfer Center has made a significant difference and our ridership has significantly increased. He said we are on target for fixed route ridership, and we should be up to 115,000 compared to last year's 97,240.

Mr. Ewart said if you to look on the chart, you will notice in 2008 and 2009 there are some different colors. He said we were doing some things that our charter did not allow for us to do. Mr. Ewart said we were providing service to Craighead Forest and 4th of July that were not legal, He said we cut that off and our ridership dropped almost 3,500 riders from July 2008 to July 2009. Mr. Ewart stated that in September 2009, due to flooding, we did an express service from the Malco Theatre to the Fairgrounds where the Fair Board made up the difference in ticket price so the rider was not out more money. He said we have to have a service that transfers from a terminal to a terminal, and we have to establish it and control it.

Mr. Ewart stated that on the para transit route ridership, our numbers have begun to decline from last year to this year. He said we accepted a contract service with Total Life Healthcare at St. Bernards, and we were helping transport their clients in our para transit vans. He said they paid a fare. Mr. Ewart said that Total Life Healthcare received 5310 federal funding which is a chapter of FTA funding for this service, and this means they are now a part of the network of FTA transportation system. He said our responsibility is to try to coordinate transportation so all of the federal assets will

be utilized in the most effective way. He said that we worked with Total Life Healthcare for a very narrow period of time so they could provide their own transportation for their clients using their vehicles. He said we helped them get a grant to buy into our transportation software so they could schedule their own transportation.

Mr. Ewart said that we are trying to help coordinate the whole concept of publicly funded transportation in the City of Jonesboro. He said our para transit numbers went down when Total Life Healthcare starting taking care of their transportation. Mr. Ewart stated that para transit ridership is very expensive. He said the decline in ridership helped our budget because we couldn't charge more than double what our rate is for this service. He said we can only charge \$2.50 for a para transit ride. Mr. Ewart said we underwent some expense providing this service which affected our budget, and we have lost that revenue, but we have also lost that expense. He said we no longer have this big piece of expense that we were experiencing back in 2013 until the middle of last year.

Mr. Ewart stated that we are beginning to work with non emergency medical transportation. He said we are coordinating with all local agencies to get this off the ground. He said that according to the FTA, non emergency medical transportation is a tsunami on the horizon. He said healthcare delivery is now more outpatient than it is inpatient. Mr. Ewart stated there is a tremendous demand for transit for people to get to medical appointments. He said that as of right now, 85% of our para transit trips are for healthcare and a good percentage of that is for people who are on dialysis. Mr. Ewart stated that over the next few years, the para transit ridership is going to maximize. He said the FTA has challenged us to become the leader in our city and bring all of these stakeholders into collaboration where we can talk about how we are going to tackle this. He said we are the only transit system in Arkansas that is this far ahead in this process. He said we took the challenge and we are going to meet the challenge.

Mr. Ewart stated that the next handout shows JETS June Ridership for June to date. He said this is what we have experienced in June so far this year as compared to the last two years. He said it shows fixed route, para transit, and total ridership. Mr. Ewart said we are up 26% compared to last year and that last year was 22% ahead of June 2014 on the fixed route ridership. He said if you look at total ridership, we are up 20% over last year even with the decline in para transit and last year was 30% ahead of 2014. Mr. Ewart stated we have demand that we are not meeting and that most cities our size have 8 10 routes whereas we have five. He said most cities with our size population do not have our square mileage, and we need to find ways to extend our routes as far as we possibly can.

Mr. Ewart stated that the next handout shows our 2016 on time ratios. He said we shoot for the mid to high 80th percentage for a minimum, but they are not running up to that standard. He said we are doing everything we can to achieve that goal, but we are stopped so frequently for passengers which has caused our OTP to drop. Mr. Ewart said we are also getting a lot of ADA riders. He said it takes three minutes to stop and pick up an ADA rider in a wheelchair and three minutes to drop them off which is six minutes out of a thirty minute loop and we can't keep our routes on time. He said Oxford, Mississippi serves approximately 45,000 compared to our 85,000 and they have 12 routes and board a million people where we board 100,000 a year. He also said that Clemson, South Carolina serves a population of 42,000 with 8 routes boarding two million people per year. He said we are under serving our population. Mr. Ewart stated that we have some real challenges trying to serve people who need service after 6 and on weekends. He said we need to decide what we want JETS to be. Mr. Ewart said it's not going to be easy, but other communities

can seemingly provide this service and so can we. He said there is tremendous growth in ridership, but we have some challenges to meet.

Councilwoman Williams stated we also have a DO school coming and they will expect this basic service. Mr. Ewart stated that there are new developments in Jonesboro that are Transit Oriented Developments and the people who live in Transit Oriented Developments expect public transit. He said there is going to be some real opportunity for us to grow exponentially. Mr. Ewart stated that we have a big challenge in analyzing and deciding what we want to do to be a part of this transportation infrastructure.

Chairman Gibson wanted to thank Mr. Ewart for his service.

This item was Filed.

7. Public Comments

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8. Adjournment

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A motion was made by Councilwoman Ann Williams, seconded by Councilman Rennell Woods, that this meeting be Adjourned . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Ann Williams; Rennell Woods and Bobby Long

Absent: 1 - Charles Frierson