

**April 2, 2024
Jackson, Minnesota**

The Jackson City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers of City Hall and also by Teleconference and Zoom at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 with the meeting called to order by Mayor Marcus Polz. On the roll call, the following persons were present in-person, Mayor Marcus Polz, Alderwoman Sara Mix and Aldermen Mark Titus, Chris Naumann, Brandon Finck, Nathan Peterson and Joe Pell. Also attending in-person were City Administrator Matt Skaret, City Attorney Brad Anderson, Public Works Director Tony Oxborough, Jackson Ambulance Department Director Grant Landbo, Jackson Economic Development Director Wendy Anderson, Luke Ewald of Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services, John Weland of the Jackson County Animal Protection Society, Bill Brandt of the Farmers and Makers Market, Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk, Carl Clark of Contegrity Group, Jackson County Facility Director Chad Preuss, Bob Grunewald, City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff, Stephen Foster, Justin Lessman of the Jackson County Pilot and Mathew Grisham of KKOJ/KUXX Radio. Joining the meeting via Zoom and Teleconference were Shelley Oltmans, David Fell, David Schreder and Carol Levitski of Rum River Consultants. (A quorum of the City Council was present.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Polz announced the Pledge of Allegiance would be recited before the City Council meeting was called to order. All those attending in-person and by Zoom and Teleconference recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Polz called the regular meeting of the Jackson City Council to order. He said the roll call showed all Councilmembers were present except for Alderman Joe Pell.

There were no Public Hearings, Bid Lettings or Open Forum.

Unscheduled Guests:

Mayor Polz asked if there were any unscheduled guests in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Polz again asked if there were any unscheduled guests in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Polz asked for a third time if there were any unscheduled guests in the audience.

Seeing and hearing no unscheduled guests, Mayor Polz said the Council would move onto the Consent Agenda.

City Administrator Matt Skaret said he wanted to welcome Grant Landbo, the City's new Ambulance Director who started his duties on April 1st.

Mayor Polz welcomed Landbo.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Skaret pointed out on the Consent Agenda that the City was not successful on their LRIP (Local Road Improvement Project) Grant Application for Keul Avenue. He said that was disappointing. Skaret said Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk reported the State of Minnesota received about \$400 million worth of applications for \$100 million worth of funding that was available. He said the applications for the LRIP Grants were very, very competitive.

Council Discussion Items

Alderman Nathan Peterson said he would like to make a motion to strike Council Discussion Agenda Item (I) to Vacate Petersburg Drive off the Council Discussion Agenda.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to strike Council Discussion Agenda Item (I) to Vacate Petersburg Drive off the Council Discussion Agenda.

EDA COORDINATOR MONTHLY REPORT – WENDY ANDERSON

Mayor Polz welcomed EDA Coordinator Wendy Anderson to the Council meeting.

Anderson said there's been a lot of things happening. She reported she joined the Housing Subcommittee of the Jackson Active Living Committee representing the City of Jackson regarding market-rate housing.

Anderson said she's been working on several proposals pertaining to inquiries regarding leasing space and sale options. She said she also worked on several loan approvals and inquiries for loans and funding. Anderson said the EDA Office is also assisting with business marketing training and assistance for local businesses.

Anderson said work continues on marketing and business visit strategy planning.

Anderson said EDA Administrative Assistant Shelley Pohlman is one of the lead coordinators on the Jackson Historic Walking Tour Project. She said she's very excited about that project moving forward.

Anderson reported she attended a Builder's Conference as a presenter regarding tax credits. At the Builder's Conference, Anderson said she talked about the lots available to build on in the Sunset View Addition. She noted there's some meetings coming up regarding the lots in Sunset View as well.

Mayor Polz thanked Anderson for her report.

COMMERCIAL BUILDING PROJECT PLUMBING PLAN REVIEW CONTRACT WITH RUM RIVER CONSULTANTS

EDA Director Wendy Anderson said joining the City Council meeting via Zoom were Dave Schreder and Carol Levitski of Rum River Consultants.

Anderson noted in June of 2023, the City Council approved Ordinance No. 132 and Ordinance No. 133 for the City to have consultants do the plumbing plan reviews for commercial projects. She pointed out there were three pieces of paperwork that needed to be filed and finished. Anderson said Resolution No. 14-0424, the Agreement for Building Official Services and the Plumbing Plan Review Agreement all need to be approved by the City Council.

Skaret explained, as Anderson mentioned, the City Council approved Ordinance No. 132 and Ordinance No. 133 last year. He said for commercial projects, the State allows cities to hire specific contractors who are authorized to work with cities to do the plumbing plan review to speed up the process on building and development projects. Skaret noted the City Council had approved the Ordinances and now the Council is just approving the contract with Rum River Consultants.

Dave Schreder explained by contracting and working with Rum River Consultants, there's some revenue sharing involved. He said the City will be able to retain some revenue for a plumbing plan review that would normally go to the State. Schreder said historically, the State has been taking up to two, three or four months to do their plumbing plan reviews. He said Rum River Consultants averages processing a plumbing plan review in a few weeks because they have a Master Plumber in-house. Schreder said the advantage working with Rum River is really two-fold. He said it's not only the time-frame, but it's also a little bit more of that local control and being able to retain some of that plumbing plan review money for the City of Jackson.

FINCK/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the Plumbing Plan Review Contract with Rum River Consultants of St. Francis, Minnesota.

HOTEL MARKET FEASIBILITY STUDY

EDA Director Wendy Anderson said the EDA (Economic Development Authority) held a special meeting on April 1st to consider a proposal to do a hotel market study to help determine the need for another hotel in Jackson. She said the recommendation from the EDA is to approve a proposal from HVS Consulting and Valuation Services of Pequot Lakes, Minnesota to conduct a hotel market study.

Anderson said once the City Council approves, HVS Consulting and Valuation Services has said they can get the study going in about a week's time. She said it takes about 30 to 45 days to finish the study. Anderson explained HVS Consulting and Valuation Services will visit the City of Jackson and conduct interviews. She said it's a pretty thorough study.

Skaret noted the last hotel feasibility study went through the EDA back in 2019. He explained the study through HVS Consulting and Valuation Services will be paid for through EDA Funds just as the last study was paid for in 2019.

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve the EDA recommendation for the City to enter into a contract with HVS Consulting and Valuation Services of Pequot Lakes, Minnesota to do a hotel market study in Jackson.

FINCK/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the EDA's recommendation for the City to hire HVS Consulting and Valuation Services of Pequot Lakes, Minnesota to do a hotel market study to help determine the need for another hotel in Jackson.

Mayor Polz thanked EDA Director Anderson.

BILL BRANDT, CAY GJERTSON AND FERMAN WOODBERRY – 2024 FARMERS AND MAKERS MARKET IN ASHLEY PARK, REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO USE ASHLEY PARK SHELTER HOUSE AND REQUEST TO ERECT THE FARMERS AND MAKERS SIGN AGAIN AT THE WATER PLANT SIGN

Bill Brandt of the Farmers and Makers Market said this year they are going to continue the different food programs for the Jackson community. He said they are going to continue the Power of Food Club which is the local food program sponsored by local businesses. Brandt said a \$5,000 grant was received from the Jackson Health Care Foundation so the Farmers and Makers Market can be more effective for citizens.

Brandt said the Farmers and Makers Market will continue to offer the Senior Farm and Market Nutrition Program which is operated by the Department of Agriculture and Second Harvest. He said they will also continue the W.I.C.K. Farmers Market and Nutrition Program which is a Minnesota Department of Agriculture program and through a contract with Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services in Jackson County. Brandt said the Farmers and Makers Market is also working on becoming a SNAP/EBT authorized market which is a Federal Food Stamp Program and a partner with Hunger Solutions of Minnesota. He said they're in the process of getting those programs for the Farmers and Makers Market as well.

Brandt said they're hoping to get food trucks to set-up at the Farmers and Makers Market as well this year. He said they're targeting to have two food trucks participate this year.

Brandt said opening day for the Farmers and Makers Market is tentatively scheduled for May 23rd. He said they're working in conjunction with the Cruise-In on Main which will also have their first event for the summer on May 23rd.

Brandt said the Farmers and Makers Market vendor meeting will be held on Monday, April 8th at 4 p.m. at the Jackson Center for the Arts. He said if someone wants to be a vendor and sell products at the Farmers and Makers Market, they are invited to attend the April 8th vendor meeting.

Brandt said the Farmers and Makers Market is changing their music portion of the program for the market. He explained they're going to have a fall music series. Brandt said he's an at-large member of the Jackson Center for the Arts. He said starting in July, they're going to be partnering with the Historic State Theatre and bringing in musical groups once a month to perform at the theatre. Brandt said the music shows will be starting in July and be held each month through November.

Brandt said the Jackson Center for the Arts will be having their annual fundraising event on Sunday, April 7th starting at 4:30 p.m. at the Jackson American Legion. He said there will be a meal and auction. Brandt said they have 110 items. He said there are 25 items for the live auction and 50 to 60 items for the silent auction. Brandt said it should be a fun day.

Mayor Polz thanked Brandt for the information. He asked if there's resources to inform nutrition program organizations about the Farmers and Makers Market.

Brandt said the Farmers and Makers Market is working with The Pines in Jackson and with Luke Ewald of the Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services who is part of the Farmers and Makers Market Committee. He said Farmers and Makers Market is reaching out to people.

Brandt said people can go online for most of the applications for SNAP and EBT. He said those applications can be found and people can apply on the Hunger Solutions of Minnesota website. Brandt said Senior Citizens can apply and find out additional information on the Second Harvest website. He said the rules and information is available on those websites. Brandt noted applying for W.I.C.K. is different. He said the Farmers and Makers Market is in the process of getting the information out to the public.

Mayor Polz thanked Brandt.

PETERSON/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the 2024 Farmers and Makers Market’s request to use the Ashley Park Shelter House, to erect a Farmers and Makers Market sign at the City Water Plant sign and for Bill Brandt to have the use of a key for the Ashley Park Shelter House for the 2024 season of the Farmers and Makers Market in Jackson.

AIRPORT TAXIWAY PAY APPLICATION NO. 5

Skaret explained the electrical sub-contractor is requesting payment for materials they have stored on site for the parallel taxiway and apron paving project. He said the payment requested is for \$110,345.28. Skaret said the payment will go through Svoboda Excavating because they are the general contractor for the parallel taxiway project.

Skaret said a motion is needed to make payment to Svoboda Excavating for \$110,345.28.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Airport Taxiway Pay Application No. 5 in the amount of \$110,345.28 payable to Svoboda Excavating of Jackson, Minnesota.

JACKSON COUNTY REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF A PORTION OF 4TH STREET FROM WHITE STREET TO ASHLEY STREET DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER

Carl Clark of Contegrity Group explained his company is a construction management firm that’s been engaged by Jackson County to manage the construction project of the new jail and the Law Enforcement Center building. Clark noted the old school building has been removed in preparation for the new construction.

Clark explained they are in need of additional on-site staging space for building materials and construction equipment during the construction period. He said they need a place to put steel, precast panels and different things like that as well as the cranes that it will take to assemble that.

Clark said Jackson County is requesting to close Fourth Street between Ashley Street and White Street on the east side of the construction site for a staging area. He pointed out they plan to keep the west entrance of the Library's parking lot open by keeping that half of Fourth Street open to traffic.

Chad Preuss, Jackson County Facility Director, noted both accesses to the Library's parking lot will remain open and the sidewalk will also remain open on the east side of Fourth Street.

Clark said any damage to that section of Fourth Street caused during construction would be repaired by the County at their expense.

Mix asked if the closure of that portion of Fourth Street will affect any citizens for access to their home.

Clark said it should not affect access to anyone's home.

Mix asked how people living in that area of Fourth Street will be notified ahead of time about the road closure of Fourth Street between White and Ashley Streets.

Preuss said the only resident that may be affected would be Mary Gilmore who has access off of Ashley Street. He said they could send a letter or personally talk with Gilmore before the street is closed. Preuss noted there are no other accesses on that portion of Fourth Street between White and Ashley Streets.

Mix said even people who have property that's adjacent to that area should be notified of the closure. She said the City just wants to be proactive as possible because nobody likes a surprise. Mix said if residents can be notified upfront before the street is closed it will be better than if it's closed and residents weren't aware of the closure.

Preuss said they will be very proactive in notifying residents.

Finck asked how long Fourth Street between White Street and Ashley Street would be closed.

Preuss said they are currently waiting for a building permit to be issued from the State of Minnesota so they can move forward. He said that could be in a week or a month from now. Preuss said once the building permit is received, they'll move forward and Fourth Street will be closed. He said the closure could easily be for a year. Preuss said that portion of the street will be barricaded and signage posted. He said they will work with City Public Works Director Tony Oxborough.

PELL/PETERSON moved to approve the County's request for Temporary Closure of a Portion of Fourth Street from White Street to Ashley Street during the construction of a new Law Enforcement Center.

Finck asked if it could be added to the motion that the County is going to take care of the communication to residents and it's the County's responsibility and not the City's.

PELL/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to amend the motion to add that the County is going to take care of the communication to residents regarding the closure of Fourth Street from White Street to Ashley Street and it's the County's responsibility and not the City's.

Naumann suggested also putting information about the Fourth Street closure on the City's Facebook page and City's app as extra outlets for dispersing information.

PELL/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Jackson County's request for Temporary Closure of a portion of Fourth Street from White Street to Ashley Street during construction of a new Law Enforcement Center and that it's Jackson County's responsibility, and not the City's, for the County to take care of the communications to residents living close to Fourth Street regarding the closure of the street.

Clark and Preuss thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

SEWER LAGOON AGITATOR QUOTE

Public Works Director Tony Oxborough was on hand to request authorization from the City Council to purchase a new tractor agitator for the City's sewer lagoon ponds. He explained the agitator will help to improve circulation which will help keep oxygen levels up in the lagoons and reduce the smell during certain times of the year when the lagoon levels get low.

Oxborough showed the Mayor and Council photographs on the Council Chamber's Smart Screens of the lagoon ponds and the equipment that has been rented to circulate the lagoon ponds in the past. He also showed how the Water Department built and installed a mobile lift station and has used that at times to circulate the ponds as well.

Oxborough showed a picture of the mobile agitator he would like to purchase that can be run off a tractor's power-take-off. He noted the primary lagoon ponds are 50 acres in size and are the ponds that go septic. Oxborough said the mobile agitator will allow them flexibility in using it at various locations on the ponds. He said for example, you can use it when the wind is in a particular direction and the bubbles from the agitator will go across the entire pond to circulate the water and increase oxygen levels. Oxborough said the agitator would be a good tool for the Water Department to use in proactively getting the ponds to snap back if they go septic. He said by having the right tools, along with changes in the tactics in how the ponds are operated, the Water Department can do a better job of promoting a healthier pond system in general.

Oxborough explained there was \$25,000 budgeted out of the sewer fund in the 2024 budget for the agitator. Oxborough said a quote had been received from Courtland Waste Handling of Courtland, Minnesota in the amount of \$16,000. He said another quote received was in the amount of \$17,000. Oxborough said he was requesting approval to move forward with the quote from Courtland Waste Handling for \$16,000.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the quote of \$16,000 from Courtland Waste Handling of Courtland, Minnesota for the purchase of an Agitator.

SECOND CONSIDERATION: ORDINANCE NO. 142 FIXING COMPENSATION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

As was discussed at the March 19th City Council meeting, Mayor Polz said the compensation salaries for the Mayor and Councilmembers stays the same. He said pay for the Local Board of Review will go from \$35 to \$50 a meeting. Mayor Polz said pay for a half-day meeting will change from \$50 to \$100 and compensation for a one-day meeting will go from \$100 to \$200. He said compensation for attendance at a Board, Commission, Committee and any other City meeting will increase from \$35 to \$50. He said the reduction for unexcused absences for Councilmembers missing a City Council meeting will be \$60 deducted from the Councilperson's compensation.

MIX/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Second Consideration of Ordinance No. 142 fixing the compensation of the Mayor and City Councilmembers effective January 1, 2025 per State Statute.

REMINDER: BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION MEETING ON TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2024 BEGINNING AT 5:30 P.M.

Mayor Polz reminded Councilmembers of the Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting that will be held on Tuesday, April 16th beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Other:

Alderwoman Sara Mix

Alderwoman Sara Mix asked City Attorney Brad Anderson if there were any updates regarding the legal proceedings pertaining to the former Prairie Winds Motel property.

Attorney Anderson reported May 15th is the date that the Court of Appeals will consider the briefs that have been filed and make a decision.

Alderman Nathan Peterson

Alderman Nathan Peterson asked what is taking place regarding replacing the grass in some yards along South Street.

Public Works Director Tony Oxborough said a newsletter is prepared to be sent. Oxborough said a local contractor is going to work with the City to sow new grass seed. He said the City is going to supply the seed and work with the contractor. Oxborough said for the small areas that need to be reseeded, the Public Works Department will rent a piece of equipment from Henning Rental to get those areas seeded. He said the newsletter states that sometime during April the reseeding will be done.

Peterson noted the Jackson Firemen's Dance will be held this Friday, April 5th from 8 p.m. to 12 midnight at the National Guard Armory with doors opening at 6:30 p.m.

On another note, Peterson said something has been bugging him for a while. He said when the City Council has discussion on items, Councilmembers need to educate themselves. He said there's been a lot of flip-flopping the last couple of Council meetings. Peterson said Councilmembers need to do their due diligence with new City staff members coming on board such as Oxborough, Landbo and Oltmans. He said when there's items on the agenda, Councilmembers just need to make sure they are educating themselves so they can do their due diligence because their votes affect a lot of people.

City Administrator Matt Skaret

City Administrator Matt Skaret said he had a really good trip to St. Paul following the last City Council meeting for the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Lobby Day. He said there are some really interesting legislative bills working through the Legislature that could very much affect the City of Jackson directly.

Skaret said one bill is particularly on zoning. He said the Legislature is taking an approach on housing and is trying to tackle housing through zoning. Skaret explained what the Legislature is trying to do is usurp the cities' local zoning authority and require cities first, to allow multi-family in any zoning district. He said there's some different variations of that bill, but under one of the bills, you would be required, for example, to allow a developer to build a multi-family apartment complex in Sunset View. Skaret said if a developer wanted to build an apartment complex in the "oval" area that's open in Sunset View, the City would be required to allow the developer to do so. He said if a developer wanted to build an apartment complex at the site of the former Coast of Coast building in Jackson, the City would be required to do so. Skaret said under the proposed legislation, there isn't any concern for aesthetics and the City would not have any authority regulating that. He said the City would be required to allow an apartment building, for instance, to be constructed on one of the lots in the Industrial Park. Skaret said the State's authority would supersede the City's zoning authority.

Skaret said the proposed legislation, in essence, really poses some serious implications regarding development when the City plans new developments such as a single-family housing development. He noted when the City plans new developments, such as a single-family housing development, the City sizes their infrastructure towards single family verses a multi-family development. Skaret said the same thing holds true for the downtown business district where the infrastructure is geared towards that purpose and not necessarily large multi-family housing developments.

Skaret said the Legislature is also getting into regulating the parking. He said one of the provisions in the proposed legislation would allow the City to only require one parking stall per unit. Skaret said for example, if there is an apartment building being constructed anywhere in town, the City would only be allowed to require one parking stall. He said, for example, if there's a house full of college students, the landlord or property owner would be only required to provide one parking spot for that one house. Skaret said that could pose potential problems like during snow emergencies. He said the City of Jackson already has that problem to some degree.

Finck asked Skaret why the State Legislature is pushing for this type of legislation.

Skaret said the Legislature is trying to encourage density when it comes to housing. He said the legislation is geared towards a few bad actors in the Twin Cities. Skaret said there's been some cities that have done some possibly objectionable things in the Twin Cities. He said the Legislature is trying to take, as they do in many cases, a metro problem and apply a statewide solution.

Skaret said that's just one of the legislative proposals. He said there's a lot happening at the Legislature.

Skaret said regarding EMS funding, the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is pushing an EMS Funding Bill. He said the Coalition is asking for \$120 million in one-time funding to go towards ambulance services throughout the State. Skaret said the Governor released his supplemental budget that called for \$10 million in EMS funding. He noted there's eight different EMS regions within the State of Minnesota. Skaret said under the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities proposal, every EMS region would receive significant funding. He said under the Governor's EMS funding proposal, there's only two regions that would get funding.

Skaret reported there's also a bonding bill that's going through the Legislature. He said the Legislature is looking at about a billion dollars in bonding. Skaret said what the Governor has proposed is primarily geared towards fixing State facilities, like schools, roads, bridges and those type of things. He said there's only about \$40 million in the current State Bonding Bill for other things like requests for funding from cities.

Skaret pointed out there's also language in the State Bonding Bill that's being pushed through the Legislature requiring non-State entities that receive bonding money to set aside replacement funding every year for that facility. He noted the City of Jackson received State Bonding money for the Library a few years ago and also for Memorial Park. Skaret said setting aside replacement funding every year might work in some cases, but in other cases that's going to be very hard. He said like, for instance on Memorial Park, how does the City start setting aside replacement funding for grass, trees, trails and some of the other things the City did at Memorial Park like earthwork.

Skaret said there's a lot of legislation for the City to keep their eyes on.

City Clerk Dave Maschoff

City Clerk Dave Maschoff said he wanted to thank Mayor Polz and Councilmembers for the plant they gave upon the passing of his father-in-law. Maschoff said he and the family of Harold Stammer appreciated that very much.

Mayor Polz offered his condolences.

Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo

Regarding the EMS Funding legislation at the State Legislature, Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo said there will be a vote in the Minnesota House on Thursday, April 4th. He said the legislation is Minnesota House Bill H.F. 3992 and SF 3886. Landbo said if the Mayor and Councilmembers want to call their State Representatives and encourage them to support those Legislative Bills, please do. He said that's for the \$120 million in EMS Funding and that vote is on Thursday, April 4th.

Mayor Polz thanked Landbo for that information.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Mayor Polz entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Jackson City Council meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Mayor Polz said the City Council meeting was now adjourned.

David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary

Marcus Polz, Mayor

