

**February 6, 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 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6, 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, John Weland of the Jackson County Animal Protection Society, Luke Ewald of Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services, Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk, Jackson County Sheriff Shawn Haken, Tom Holthe, Mike Schwartz, Brandi Fletcher, Brenda Nielsen, Mark Tusa, Chris Tusa, Pastor Nathan Janzen of the First Baptist Church in Jackson, City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff, Mathew Grisham of KKOJ/KUXX Radio and Justin Lessman of the Jackson County Pilot. (All Councilmembers were present.) (A quorum of the City Council was present.)

PRAYER

Pastor Nathan Janzen of the First Baptist Church in Jackson led the Mayor and Councilmembers and all those present in the Council Chambers in a moment of prayer before the Council meeting was called to order.

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.

Unscheduled Guests:

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

Chris Tusa said he and his father, Mark Tusa, had been invited to a meeting of the City's Nuisance Committee on January 25th. He said they have cleaned up items at their residence and wanted to attend the City Council meeting to see if they had accomplished what they needed to do or if they needed to do more cleaning up on their property.

Mayor Polz said he has noted progress in cleaning up at the Tusa's property on Morrison Avenue and thanked the Tusas' for their efforts.

Alderman Pell said he drove by the Tusa's property and it looks really good.

Alderman Peterson said he also drove by and it looked good. He said the property looked good for right now.

City Attorney Brad Anderson said he also drove by and thinks the Tusas' have their property maybe 90 percent cleaned up. He noted there's still some items behind the garage and house but it's hard to see it from the street unless a person is looking for items. He said the Tusa's made a lot of good progress.

Chris Tusa thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

Mayor Polz thanked Chris Tusa for his time.

Mayor Polz asked if there were any other unscheduled guests.

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

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

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

Council Discussion Items

BRANDI AND JASON FLETCHER

Mayor Polz welcomed Brandi Fletcher to the City Council meeting. Fletcher was joined by Brenda Nielsen.

Fletcher said she wanted to update the City Council as they have reconfigured their business plans to open a cannabis store in Jackson. She said changes by the Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management has drastically changed their timeline for opening a cannabis store in Jackson. Fletcher noted they had first approached the City Council last year about opening a cannabis dispensary in Jackson and purchasing land to do so with the timeline of constructing a building in the Spring of 2024. She said however, due to changes in communication issues with the Economic Board, their proposed timeline goal was not met. Fletcher said this has caused them to reconfigure their business plan goal.

Fletcher said during this time, there was another local business that reached out to them with support and actually offered them a commercial building to lease.

Fletcher said she and her husband are listed a “Social Equity Candidates”. She said because of that, the rules are proposed to be changed to allow them to apply to the State for a cannabis license as early as this summer. Fletcher said that does not give them time to purchase land, construct a building and have everything ready to go for license application time.

Fletcher said they did research. She said it’s proposed by the State that a cannabis store be 1,000 feet away from schools. Fletcher explained the building they’re looking at is located near the intersection of Riverside Drive and Highway 71. She said it would be the building behind the former Family Dollar store. Fletcher said the property owner has offered them that space at a very reasonable price. She said that gives them a chance to really grow as changes get made. Fletcher said there’s a lot of work that needs to be done to the building. She said doing a rough estimate, they have determined the building is at least 800 feet from the elementary school (Riverside Elementary). Fletcher said they went to the elementary school and looked around from the playground. She said you can’t see the building from the playground. Fletcher said the location where you can see the building from the school itself is the parking lot.

Fletcher said they have addressed issues with signage. She said they will make their signage so it's a respectable thing and not something that's going to be attracted to children. Fletcher said it would be difficult to even see their signage from the elementary school.

Fletcher said they've discussed with the property owner about loitering issues the property owner was concerned with. She said they do not plan to do any kind of on-site consumption.

Fletcher said basically why they're attending the City Council meeting is to actually have the Council consider that location for the proposed development of their cannabis dispensary so they can enter into a lease agreement with the owner of the property as soon as possible.

City Attorney Brad Anderson asked where does the State of Minnesota stand on this.

Fletcher said the State leaves the final decision up to the local government. She said the State is working with the Minnesota League of Cities to actually come up with kind of a guideline of sorts to help local governments make those decisions. Fletcher said the proposal is to have cannabis stores located up to 1,000 feet from schools. She said that's where the State's proposed standard sits as of right now.

Skaret noted the City currently has a moratorium on the sale of the recreational cannabis.

Fletcher said they're not looking to open or really push anything forward to open until the City has their ordinances, rules and guidelines established. She said what they're wondering about is actually getting that facility up to code and making sure they are fitting any kind of zoning. Fletcher said they're not going to enter into any kind of lease agreement or spend money on any changes to the building without the City Council's approval.

Mayor Polz asked Fletcher what kind of time line she was looking at.

Fletcher said they're hoping within the next 60 days to try and finalize a lease agreement. She said the property owner is still showing the property to other businesses that have shown some sort of interest but have not come back to sign a lease.

Brenda Nielsen said with the cannabis licensing potentially opening this summer, that will allow them to apply for the Social Equity Grants being offered by the State of Minnesota to assist them in getting their business up and going.

Skaret said the latest he's heard is that the State is not anticipating the Office of Cannabis Management to be up and running and licensing cannabis shops until the spring of 2025.

Peterson said it's kind of difficult for the City Council to take any action without the State providing the City with guidelines of what can be allowed.

Fletcher said the proposed State's guidelines for the distance of a school from a cannabis shop is up to 1,000 feet, but ultimately, it's up to the City. She said that's what currently proposed in the State's guidelines. Fletcher said that's the guidelines they've been following.

Peterson suggested sending Fletcher's request and questions to the Planning and Zoning Commission for discussion.

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to send Fletcher's request to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to refer the Fletcher's request regarding using the building on Riverside Drive for a Cannabis Dispensary to the Planning and Zoning Commission for further discussion and to review the building requirements.

Fletcher thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

CAR CRUISE-IN REQUEST FOR 2024

Tom Holthe of the Jackson Cruisin' Club said last year was the first year that the Cruisin Club hosted the Cruise-in in Jackson. He said he thinks it went fairly well.

Holthe said he spoke with several of the local bar owners in Jackson. He said a request is being made of the City Council to allow open containers on First Street and Main Street during the Cruise-in events. He noted last year Pillar's Pub and Eatery probably profited more than any of the other bar establishments because bands performed in Pillar's parking lot during the Cruise-ins and Pillar's had a beer area on their parking lot. Holte said the Cruisin' Club would like the event to be more evenly spread out downtown so all the bars would benefit from those attending the Cruise-in. He explained the request is to allow people attending the Cruise-in to have a drink in their hand as they walk up and down Main Street looking at the cars.

Holthe said he spoke with Jackson County Sheriff Shawn Haken who didn't have a problem with the idea. He said he was looking for approval from the City Council to allow open containers for the Cruise-ins.

Mayor Polz asked if open containers could be allowed without any glass bottles or containers being used.

Finck noted no glass bottles or containers have been allowed for events on the street in the past. He said the other thing is not allowing coolers to be brought from home to be on First Street or Main Street. Finck asked Holthe if the intention is to allow alcoholic drinks on the street that were purchased at the downtown bar establishments.

Holthe said that was correct. He added the Cruisin' Club is also going to try to have more entertainment during the Cruise-in events. Holthe noted the first Cruise-in event will be held on May 23rd. He said Cruise-ins will be held for Hot Dog Night and for Hometown Night with the Fire Department, National Guard and City Departments. Holthe said other special events for the Cruise-ins include a movie night and on August 1st they are going to try to host a Bike Night for those travelling to Sturgis for the motorcycle rally. He said the Cruisin' Club has a whole bunch of ideas they're trying to work on, some which are preliminary.

Peterson asked Sheriff Shawn Haken if he had any comments or concerns regarding the Cruisin' Club's proposal to have open containers downtown during the Cruise-ins.

Haken said the Cruise-ins would be similar to the Softball League nights. He said he had no issues with the Cruisin Club's proposal. Haken noted every summer the local bars are trying to think of creative ways to hold events. He said as long as they can define the area where the event is being held, the Sheriff's Department is not going to oppose the idea.

Haken asked Holthe how long the Cruise-in events last during the evening.

Holthe said Cruise-in events usually last about four hours or so starting around 5 o'clock.

Pell suggested having the caveat that no alcohol would be allowed on the streets after 9 p.m.

City Clerk Dave Maschoff suggested the City Council declare the Cruise-in events as Community Festivals in order to allow alcohol to be on the City Streets.

Mayor Polz asked Holthe if containers would be placed on the street to dispose of cups for recycling and to collect garbage.

Holthe said that containers could be arranged. He said he's hoping the bars would also assist in providing containers.

Mix asked Public Works Director Tony Oxborough if he had any concerns.

Oxborough said cleaning up the street would be his biggest concern but that can be dealt with as they go. He said he basically had no concerns and noted the Cruisin' Club picked up after themselves during last year's Cruise-in events.

MIX/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the Jackson Cruise-in event dates for 2024 as Community Festivals.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to allow those attending the Jackson Cruise-in events to carry alcoholic beverages purchased from participating liquor establishments on First and Second Streets from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Mayor Polz thanked Holthe.

Holthe thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

NATIONAL PARKS SERVICES PARK MASTER PLAN GRANT – LUKE EWALD

Luke Ewald of Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services and a member of the City of Jackson's Park Board, provided a power point presentation to Mayor Polz and Councilmembers regarding the National Parks Services Park Master Plan Grant.

Ewald explained the National Park Service is soliciting for applications for the National Park Services Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. He said applications are accepted from January to March 1st. Ewald said the Program will benefit 350 communities nationwide so it's a bit competitive. He said Jackson and Jackson County has received services from the National Parks Service in past years so the Park Service is familiar with our area.

Ewald said the focus of the National Parks Services Park Master Plan Grant is building healthy communities, providing recreational opportunities and conserving land. He outlined the services the National Park Service would provide. Ewald explained as a collaborative partner, the National Park Service provides professional services to help communities achieve their conservation outdoor recreation project vision.

Ewald said the National Park Service does not provide grant dollars, but provides technical assistance free of charge. He went on to explain the questions that are asked in the grant application. Ewald noted the National Parks Service is also willing to review the grant application and provide feedback before it's actually submitted.

Ewald said what's being considered by the Park Board is completing a City Master Plan for the parks. He provided several case studies of projects that have occurred in Minnesota that benefited from the National Park Services Park Master Plan Grant Program. Based on past recreation survey results, Ewald outlined what could be done for all of the City's parks and revisiting the plans for Memorial Park. He said those plans could be included in the development of a City Master Plan for the parks in Jackson. Ewald outlined some of the things that have been accomplished already along the River and at Memorial Park and what the goals are for the future. He said developing a Master Plan could include plans for all the City's parks. In addition to the technical assistance, Ewald said the National Parks Service could also assist the City on where and how to seek and apply for grants. He said the National Parks Service also assists in community engagement in developing plans for the City's parks. Ewald said everyone is involved in some capacity.

Ewald said he was asking the City Council if they wanted to pursue applying for the National Parks Services Park Master Plan Grant.

Skaret noted the Park Board discussed applying for the Grant at their January 30th meeting. He said the Park Board was one short of a quorum, but those present indicated a desire to apply for the National Parks Service Park Master Plan Grant Program in order to develop a Master Plan for the City's parks. Skaret said it is also timely considering the Park Board completed its Safety First Plan Projects to bring the City's parks up to par safety-wise which the Park Board began nearly five years ago. He said it's very timely to move onto the next phase on improving the City's parks.

PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to authorize the City to apply for the National Parks Services Park Master Plan Grant.

Ewald thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

Mayor Polz thanked Ewald.

STREET DEPARTMENT SNOW BLOWER

Skaret explained back in 2022, the Council had approved purchasing a new used snowblower for downtown from the Elbow Lake Airport for around \$80,000 as they had been approved to get a new one. However, he explained this kept getting pushed back as Elbow Lake's grant money was getting delayed. Skaret noted Jackson County Maintenance Supervisor Kayle Koep recently found a different snowblower on Minibid-the State's Surplus equipment website.

Oxborough said the snowblower Koep found on Minibid is about six years newer and has fewer hours on it than the one the City was going to buy from Elbow Lake.

Skaret noted instead of \$80,000 the City Council authorized to purchase a snowblower before, the City is paying about half that amount for a newer snowblower. He said it was an opportunity that could not be passed up.

Oxborough said two Street Department personnel travelled to Fargo to pick-up the snowblower. He said Koep gets all the credit in finding the snowblower on Minibid-the State's Surplus equipment website.

PETERSON/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to ratify the purchase of the SnoGo Snowblower for \$40,100 from Minibid-the State's Surplus equipment website.

BELMONT HEIGHTS PAY APPLICATION NO. 2

Skaret explained Belmont Heights Pay Application No. 2 covers the work from November 1, 2023 to December 11, 2023 in the amount of \$1,007,548.67 payable to Holtmeier Construction. He explained Pay Application No. 2 had been tabled at the December 19th City Council meeting pending clarification from DBS on several line items in the pay application. Skaret said the clarification reduced the pay application by about \$30,000.

Skaret said he and Engineer Troy Nemmers from Bolton and Menk recommend the Council approve Belmont Heights Pay Application No. 2.

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve Belmont Heights Pay Application No. 2

PELL/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Belmont Heights Pay Application No. 2 in the amount of \$1,007,548.67 payable to Holtmeier Construction of Mankato, Minnesota.

PAY EQUITY COMPLIANCE REPORT 2024

Skaret explained pursuant to the Minnesota Local Government Pay Equity Act of 1984, all local governments including cities, counties and school districts, are required to submit pay equity reports every three years. He said the purpose of the law is to eliminate any gender-based wage inequities in compensation.

Skaret said according to the Minnesota Management and Budget Office, Pay Equity is a method of eliminating discrimination against women who are paid less than men for jobs requiring comparable levels of expertise. He said this goes beyond the familiar idea of equal pay for equal work where men and women with the same jobs must be paid equally. Skaret said a policy to establish pay equity usually means that all jobs will be evaluated and given points according to the level of knowledge and responsibility required to do the job and that salary adjustments will be made if it's discovered that women are consistently paid less than men for jobs with similar points.

Skaret said every three years the City has to fill out a Pay Equity Compliance Report which has to be approved by the City Council.

Skaret said the City is in compliance. He said increasing the wages for the Liquor Store Clerks in 2023, all of which are currently female, really helped improve the City's pay equity.

Skaret said City Council approval of the Pay Equity Compliance Report is required so it can be submitted to the State.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the City's Pay Equity Compliance Report for 2024.

LITTLE HUSKIES LEARNING CENTER FUNDING REQUEST

Skaret explained the Little Huskies Learning Center Board is requesting an additional \$40,000 from the City Council to continue operations. He said it's anticipated that this \$40,000 should help sustain Little Huskies through the end of the lease of the current building until June 1st. Skaret said it should be noted that of the \$60,000 the Council approved last October, the Board only drew \$40,000.

Skaret said since the change in management late last August, the financials at Little Huskies have stabilized. He noted the Little Huskies Center is within \$1,000 to \$3,000 of breaking even most months if it weren't for the \$5,500 rent and insurance payment on the building.

Skaret said the Little Huskies Learning Center Board is continuing to work on a long-term plan for the Center. He said the Board is in regular contact with USDA Rural Development, Minnesota Southwest Initiative Fund and First Children's Finance. Skaret said the Board is also utilizing a couple different grant programs from the State to help with staff wages and groceries.

Skaret pointed out the City Council adopted a \$30,000 operating levy for 2024 knowing there would need to continue to be some sort of operating subsidy this year.

Skaret said things have been running really smoothly at the Little Huskies Learning Center. He said the Learning Center is fully staffed and enrollment is slowly increasing.

Titus said Learning Center Interim Manager Betty Bettin is doing a great job. He said Bettin, along with fellow Little Huskies Board members, have helped in trying to find some economies with such things as groceries and other items and eliminating some of the extras that were causing the serious deficient. Titus said it's still not a great business model but it's such an important asset to the community. He said we spend all this time worrying about housing, but if you don't have daycare, you still have a major impediment for people wanting to live here.

Skaret noted Little Huskies has done fundraisers. He said they did a pizza fundraiser a while back.

Peterson said another fundraiser is going to be held at the end of February.

Naumann asked if there's a business plan going forward.

Skaret said a business plan is being worked on.

Titus said the building is going to be the critical piece of a plan and has to be sorted out.

Peterson said the Little Huskies Board is working with the USDA, First Children's and the Benda's regarding the building.

Finck asked if the Board was working with the Benda's regarding the building or looking at other options.

Peterson said the Board is looking at all the options.

Skaret asked for clarification if the \$40,000 would be considered as a forgivable loan or would it be tacked onto the Little Huskies Learning Center's current loan.

Finck suggested for now to have the \$40,000 tacked onto the Center's current loan until a business plan can be formulated.

Naumann asked when a business plan possibility could be completed.

Peterson said the Little Huskies Learning Center Board is working on developing a business plan.

MIX/PELL moved and it was carried to approve the additional \$40,000 to the Little Huskies Learning Center.

Voting in favor of the motion were Alderwoman Sara Mix, Alderman Mark Titus, Alderman Chris Naumann, Alderman Brandon Finck and Alderman Joe Pell.

Abstaining was Alderman Nathan Peterson.

PART-TIME SENIOR ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR JOB DESCRIPTION AND ADVERTISING

Mayor Polz suggested tabling Council action on the Part-time Senior Activities Coordinator job description and advertising. He noted there's a Senior Activities Committee meeting coming up on February 8th. Mayor Polz said there's so many people that would really like to have input about what the Senior Activities Coordinator's job description should be. He suggested having the Senior Activities Committee put their input into that job description before the City Council goes forward and approves it.

Skaret said everybody is very excited about the Senior Activities Coordinator's position. He noted it's one thing that comes up at every Senior Advisory Committee meeting that Jackson needs some sort of Senior Living Activities Coordinator. Skaret said it's just how broad does the City make those duties and what can be fit into 15 to 20 hours a week. He said the position could certainly grow over time but right now what is being looked at is 15 to 20 hours a week.

Mayor Polz said Senior Activities Coordinator may not even be the right job title. He said other options have been discussed.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to table action regarding the Part-time Senior Activities Coordinator Job Description and advertising for the position until the City Council's second regular meeting in February.

MOVE THE FEBRUARY 20TH REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING TO FEBRUARY 22ND DUE TO CITY ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS AND MOVE THE MARCH 5TH COUNCIL MEETING TO ANOTHER DATE DUE TO THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION

Pell noted he would be unable to attend the February 22nd City Council meeting as he will be out of town that day.

Peterson suggested moving the March 5th Council meeting to Wednesday, March 6th.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to move the February 20th regular City Council meeting to Thursday, February 22nd due to City Administrator Interviews and moving the March 5th Council meeting to Wednesday, March 6th due to the Presidential Primary Election.

RESOLUTION NO. 06-0224 APPOINTING JUDGES FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION PRIMARY ON MARCH 5, 2024

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 06-0224 appointing Election Judges for the Presidential Nomination Primary on March 5, 2024.

CLEAN-UP DAYS FOR 2024

Skaret said Waste Management has their calendar open for this year's Citywide clean-up days. He asked the Councilmembers if they would like to schedule Clean-up on June 8th and June 15th and the fall Clean-up for September 14th and 21st. Skaret noted Waste Management will normally pick-up one half of the City on one weekend and the other half of the City on the next weekend.

PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to schedule the Citywide Clean-up Days for Saturday, June 8th and Saturday June 15th and Saturday, September 14th and Saturday, September 21st, 2024.

RESOLUTION NO. 07-0224 ESTABLISHING REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING DATE AND TIME

Skaret explained last year the City Council amended the City's ordinance that allowed the Council a little bit of flexibility in setting the Council's meeting schedule and time.

Skaret said there was a request for the City Council to exercise that option and change the time of the regular Council meetings from 6:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Finck noted the 5:30 p.m. starting time would present a challenge for him. He said 5:30 p.m. would be pretty tough for him to get things done and make it to City Hall for the meeting.

Titus asked how would starting the Council meetings at 6 p.m. work for everyone.

Finck said starting at 6 p.m. would probably work for him.

Mayor Polz said the discussion about the earlier start time would give Councilmembers the opportunity to attend their children's event.

Finck said he understands and that makes a lot of sense.

Peterson noted a lot of the City's Committee and Commission meetings start at 5:15 or 5:30 and that's why he suggested starting the regular Council meetings at 5:30.

Finck said the Council meetings could start at 6 p.m. and see how it goes. He said if it needs to be changed again, the Council can do so.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to start the City Council meetings at 6 p.m. beginning on February 22, 2024.

Finck asked whether the Council should start their earlier meetings the evening of February 22nd considering all the activities going on that week.

Mix suggested beginning the 6 p.m. starting time for Council meeting in March because there's too much going on the week of February 22nd.

Peterson suggested beginning the 6 p.m. start time at the Council's first meeting in March.

Peterson said he would amend his original motion to start the Council meetings at 6 p.m. beginning on March 6, 2024.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to amend the motion to start the City Council meetings at 6 p.m. beginning on March 6, 2024.

RECAP OF STREET COMMITTEE MEETING REGARDING DOWNTOWN SNOW REMOVAL

Public Works Director Tony Oxborough reported the Street Committee's recommendation regarding downtown snow removal is to keep with the current practice of pushing snow to the west side of Second Street (Main Street) and then picking it up early the next morning. He explained this is because there are more parking stalls on the east side of the street with the diagonal parking. Oxborough said if the snow falls on a Friday, the Street Department will let the snow sit over the weekend and come in early Monday morning and pick up the snow. He explained this allows time for the business owners to clear the snow off their sidewalks as most have no other place to push their snow other than the street.

Oxborough said if the snow sits during the weekend, the Street Department will poke holes in the windrow midway through each block. He said they will also clean up the intersections and clear out the parking spots near the laundromat.

Oxborough provided a map to Mayor Polz and Councilmembers showing where the Street Department already cuts holes in the windrows due to the alley entryways and also showed where the new cuts in the windrows will be. He said the Street Department will poke a hole in the windrows on Main Street in the middle of each block.

Oxborough said the Street Department will also do a better job of making sure that the crosswalks and pedestrian ramps are open and cleaned of snow. He said one of the things the Street Department has always done is clear the path for the drop box at the Post Office. Oxborough said the Street Department is also going to try to at least get two parking stalls opened up in front of the laundromat.

Oxborough said he created a picture that will be posted on the City's Facebook page that will better explain the City's plans for snow removal.

Skaret noted this was an informational recap regarding downtown snow removal.

ECONO LODGE LETTER

Skaret said the Econo Lodge in Jackson has been a source of consternation and frustration for law enforcement, the City and for patrons coming to Jackson for a number of years. He said the Econo Lodge was the main topic of discussion at the most recent Law Enforcement Liaison Committee meeting. Skaret said law enforcement has spent an inordinate amount of time at the Econo Lodge. He noted law enforcement had been called to the Econo Lodge twice this week already. Skaret said the Sheriff's office has been up to the Econo Lodge dozens of times in the past year, oftentimes multiple times a week responding to drug activity by the employees and guests, including a fentanyl overdose, domestic disturbances between the employees, disputes between the management and customers over bills and demanded refunds, and tips on the whereabouts of people with warrants who are reported to be hiding out in the motel. He said there's also concerns about the safety of those staying there, the hotel is very unkept and not well maintained.

Skaret said the Minnesota Health Department is currently addressing violations at the Econo Lodge and also misrepresentation of their facilities on their promotional materials and web site. He said the hotel's parking is also broken up.

Skaret said the Law Enforcement Liaison Committee recommended the City Council draft a letter to executives at Choice Hotels who franchises the Econo Lodge and have the Mayor and Councilmembers sign it.

Skaret said the Jackson Econo Lodge is independently owned and operated but they still fly underneath the name of the Econo Lodge and Choice Hotels.

Skaret said the Law Enforcement Liaison Committee thought it was really important that a strong message was sent to Choice Hotel's corporate headquarters that the City needs them to do something immediately. He said it's a very dire situation at the Econo Lodge.

Skaret said the letter would be signed by the Mayor and all the Councilmembers. He said a motion was needed to approve sending the letter to Choice Hotels.

Sheriff Shawn Haken said he has also sent a very blunt letter to Choice Hotels summarizing all the calls for service by the Sheriff's Office to the Econo Lodge for the last two years. He said he's expecting a phone call from Choice Hotels any day.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to approve sending the letter to Choice Hotels.

LMCIT PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE RENEWAL – MOTION TO NOT WAIVE THE MUNICIPAL TORT LIABILITY LIMITS ESTABLISHED BY MINNESOTA STATUTE 466.04

FINCK/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried not to waive the Municipal Tort Liability Limits.

**JOINT COUNCIL/JCC SCHOOL BOARD MEETING REGARDING THE POOL:
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21 AT 5:30 P.M.**

In speaking with the City's Financial Consultant Shannon Sweeney, Mayor Polz said he just wanted to make sure that all the City Councilmembers were available to attend the February 21st joint Council/JCC School Board meeting. He said it was felt it's important to have 100 percent participation between the School Board and the City Council going forward to remove any potential hurdles.

Mayor Polz said Sweeney felt it was important to have 100 percent participation by the School Board and City Council.

Mayor Polz said he's waiting to hear from the School Board that all their members will be able to attend the February 21st meeting.

FINCK/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried that the Jackson City Council recommends having Wednesday, February 21st as the date for the scheduled joint City Council meeting with the Jackson County Central Schoolboard at 5:30 p.m. regarding the Pool.

BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION APRIL 16, 2024

Skaret said this agenda item is informational.

MIX/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to set the Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting for Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. at the Jackson City Hall.

Other:

Alderman Chris Naumann

Alderman Chris Naumann noted the City Administrator candidates' interviews will be held on Wednesday, February 21st.

Alderman Brandon Finck

Alderman Brandon Finck asked for an update on the sale of the new UCAP (United Community Action Partnership) houses.

Mayor Polz said he believed both UCAP houses have been sold.

Finck said he believes someone has purchased and moved into one of the houses and the sale is pending on the other UCAP house.

Finck said the next thing is to have Interim Economic Coordinator Wendy Anderson reach out to UCAP and City Attorney Brad Anderson regarding the lots for construction of four more new homes this coming year.

Alderman Nathan Peterson

Alderman Nathan Peterson noted that on Wednesday, February 14th, interviews will be held with the final three candidates for the position of Ambulance Department Director.

Alderwoman Sara Mix

Alderwoman Sara Mix asked if there were any updates regarding the former Coast to Coast building.

City Attorney Brad Anderson said there was a flurry of activity on the morning of February 6th. He said he understands that Attorney Lachlan Muir has a signed deed for the building. Anderson said he doesn't have the deed in his office but understands it has been signed by building owner Mitch Jasper. He said there was one contingency that Jasper be allowed until February 29th to remove his personal property from the building.

Pell noted to make sure Jasper removes all the items he has in the building.

Finck suggested maybe having an inspection of the building before the deed is accepted.

Mix said it should also be noted that the City is not going to wait indefinitely for Jasper to hand over the deed to the building and February 29th should be the deadline.

City Attorney Brad Anderson

City Attorney Brad Anderson said regarding the former Prairie Winds Motel building, there was a filing in Court on the afternoon of February 6th. He said the attorney representing the City in the legal proceedings is probably going to be filing a letter with the Court of Appeals once he finds out what's in the filings by the appellate and will ask the Court of Appeals to dismiss the case because it's just wasting everybody's time.

Anderson said he's hoping the City will receive something back from the Court of Appeals in the next week or so.

CLOSED SESSION AS PERMITTED BY ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, SECTION 13D.05, SUBDIVISION 3(B) TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL LITIGATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING THE CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Polz asked for a motion for the City Council to go into Closed Session.

MIX/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried for the City Council to go into Closed Session at 7:52 p.m. as permitted by Attorney-Client Privilege, Section 13D.05, Subdivision 3(b) to discuss potential litigation and possible action following the Closed Session.

COMING OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Polz entertained a motion for the City Council to come out of Closed Session.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried for the City Council to come out of Closed Session at 8:25 p.m.

Mayor Polz said the City Council was now out of Closed Session.

DECLARE A CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AT 9 A.M. ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE JACKSON CITY HALL

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to declare a City Council Work Session at 9 a.m. on Monday, February 19th.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to declare a City Council Work Session at 9 a.m. on Monday, February 19, 2024 in the Council Chambers of the Jackson City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Mayor Polz asked for a motion to adjourn.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Jackson City Council meeting at 8:26 p.m.

David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary

Marcus Polz, Mayor

