

**July 18, 2023
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, July 18, 2023 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, Sara Mix and Joe Pell. Also attending in-person were City Administrator Matt Skaret, City Attorney Brad Anderson, Public Works Director Tony Oxborough, Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk, David Wing from U.S. Representative Brad Finstad’s Office, Executive Director of the Jackson Center for the Arts Ferman Woodberry, Jackson Center for the Arts Board member Cay Gjertson, Jeff Anneke of DBS Development Group, Community and Business Development Specialist Dave Schmidt of Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), Jackson First Assistant Fire Chief and Park Board Chairman Michael Haeffner, Marty Seifert of the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities, Jackson EDA (Economic Development Authority) member Arlene Vee, Catherine Koppen, John Weland of the Jackson County Animal Protection Society, Paul Hargus, City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff and Justin Lessman of the Jackson County Pilot. Joining the meeting via Teleconference and Zoom was Grant Duchac of the DBS Development Group, Jackson EDA member Tim Olson, Engineer Eric Hanson of HDR and Administrative Assistant Shelley Pohlman of Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA). (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 the meeting in-person and by Teleconference and Zoom 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.

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.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Polz asked Councilmembers if they had questions regarding the Consent Agenda.

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

Council Discussion Items

DAVID WING – REPRESENTATIVE OF U.S. CONGRESSMAN BRAD FINSTAD’S OFFICE

David Wing introduced himself to Mayor Polz and Councilmembers. Wing said he’s the District Outreach Representative for Congressman Finstad for the western part of the State. He explained he was visiting the Jackson City Council meeting to make himself known to Mayor Polz and Councilmembers. Wing said he’s their voice to Congressman Finstad for any legislative concerns, Congressional regarded funding or questions.

Wing said he can connect people with questions to Congressman Finstad's Washington, D.C. staff. He said he can also connect those with questions to Congressman Finstad's case workers if there are people that are dealing with any kind of passport issues or anything like that.

Wing said if there are ever any concerns, their office in New Ulm is always open. He explained the office is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Wing said he can be contacted anytime of the week. He noted City Administrator Skaret had his contact information. Wing asked if there were any questions.

Mayor Polz said one of the concerns locally pertains to EMS (Emergency Medical Services) and funding for that. He noted Minnesota State Representative Bjorn Olson's legislation in the Minnesota House that would have provided a tax deduction of \$10,000 for a single person and \$20,000 for a couple for those that serve as local EMS volunteers. Mayor Polz said Olson's legislation failed to pass the Minnesota House. He told Wing he thinks incentives like that would be helpful to resolve some of the issues communities in our area have such as the shortage of EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) members. Mayor Polz told Wing anything that could help communities such as funding for EMT retention, training and things of that nature would be beneficial.

Skaret pointed out the licensing for a person to become an EMT is getting harder and harder and smaller communities need EMT's more and more. He said there's State and National licensing requirements and EMT's have to pass both. Skaret said the State licensing takes the National Testing's lead.

Peterson noted scheduling for the classes and testing for the National EMT licensing is getting harder and harder which also puts a burden on recruiting EMT's. He said testing for the National licensing is available only once this fall. Peterson said that's only one opportunity for people to test and meanwhile communities are losing out. He explained as people quit serving as EMT's, they're not being replaced fast enough. Peterson said it puts a crunch on scheduling EMT's.

Wing said he's heard similar concerns from other communities as well. He said it's an issue he's definitely going to bring up to Congressman Finstad's Washington D.C. staff. Wing said he would also contact State Representative Bjorn Olson regarding the legislation he introduced during the past Minnesota State Legislative Session.

Mayor Polz said whatever can be done to help with ambulance services in small towns would be appreciated. He said ambulance services are such a necessity and it's really hard to retain and encourage people to serve as EMT's.

Wing thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers for their time.

Mayor Polz and Skaret both thanked Wing.

AIRPORT RUNWAY RECONSTRUCTION PAY APPLICATION NO. 6

Joining the meeting via Zoon, Engineer Eric Hanson of HDR reported there's a lot of work that's been done at the airport. He said the concrete paving is finished and work is underway on the lighting. Hanson said pavement markings are going to be done the week of July 24th. He said things are getting pretty close to the airport runway project being wrapped up.

Hanson said for the City Council's consideration is the last of the big pay requests for the project. He said Pay Application Number 6 is in the amount of \$806,833.33 payable to Svoboda Excavating. Hanson said that amount pays for finishing up the paving and pays for a bunch of the lighting materials.

Skaret noted Pay Application Number 6 is contingent upon the City getting reimbursed for Application Number 5 which was in the amount of about \$1.2 million. He said the City is still waiting for reimbursement from the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and MnDOT (Minnesota Department of Transportation). Skaret said the check for paying Pay Application Number 6 will be held until the City gets that reimbursement.

Finck asked Skaret how long the City has been waiting for that reimbursement.

Skaret said the reimbursement request was sent to the State and FAA as soon as it was approved. He said it's been almost a month. Skaret said he was notified the reimbursement to the City would arrive by July 21st or the following week.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Airport Runway Reconstruction Pay Application Number 6 in the amount of \$806,833.33 payable to Svoboda Excavating of Jackson contingent upon reimbursement from the FAA and MnDOT for Pay Application Number 5.

NORA IBARRA – REQUEST FOR PEDDLER/TRANSIENT MERCHANT’S LICENSE FOR FOOD TRUCK

Mayor Polz noted that Nora Ibarra was unable to attend the July 18th City Council meeting. He said Ibarra is planning to attend the Council’s next regular meeting on August 1st.

CAY GJERTSON – JACKSON CENTER FOR THE ARTS – MINNESOTA STATE ARTS BOARD GRANT APPLICATION FOR BENCHES AND MURALS

Jackson Center for the Arts Board member Cay Gjertson along with Center for the Arts Executive Director Ferman Woodberry spoke to Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

Gjertson began by first passing out Kindness Rocks to Mayor Polz, Councilmembers and City staff. She said people at the Arts Center have been painting the Kindness Rocks. Gjertson explained it’s a national campaign to try and spread joy and happiness to people.

Gjertson said she had just completed and submitted a grant to the Minnesota State Arts Board for \$25,000 to continue to beautify Downtown Jackson.

Gjertson said the Arts Center plans to purchase and paint seven benches to be put downtown in front of businesses who want them. She said the benches will be painted representing the nationalities representing the diversity of the Jackson area. Gjertson said the idea is to place the benches in Downtown Jackson so that the disabled and elderly will have an easier time shopping in Downtown Jackson. She said the paintings will be on the back of the benches. Gjertson said the benches would be placed up against the building. She said the benches will be stored in the Ashley Park Shelter House during the winter so they’re out of the way for snow removal.

Gjertson said they are also planning to paint murals on the sides of four downtown businesses who were interested. She said those businesses include Cosmos and Clover, the back of the Shaffer building that faces Highway 71, Fiesta Brava and the Arts Center building. Gjertson said the grant will cover the cost of the murals.

Woodberry explained a picture can be taken of the artwork that's to be used for the murals and then a building wrap, which is a peel and stick, can be used to put a mural onto the building. He said the mural wraps, depending on sunlight and other factors, will last four to six years. Woodberry said that's about the same life as a mural that's painted. He pointed out the mural wraps are about the third of the cost of getting someone to actually paint a mural.

Gjertson said the Arts Center won't hear from the State Arts Board regarding the grant they've applied for until March, 2024. She said when they hear from the State Arts Board, they will return to update the Mayor and Councilmembers.

Mayor Polz thanked Gjertson and Woodberry for their time.

MARTY SEIFERT – COALITION OF GREATER MINNESOTA CITIES PRESENTATION

Marty Seifert of the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities gave a presentation regarding the 2023 Minnesota Legislative Session.

Seifert said the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities represents 109 rural Cities on concerns that only deal with rural municipalities. He said the City of Jackson has been a long-time member of the Coalition.

Seifert said one of the top priorities among Cities in the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is Local Government Aid (LGA). He said this year the formula for LGA was changed for the first time in ten years. Seifert said the City of Jackson will receive \$200,000 to \$300,000 in new Local Government Aid dollars. He said the new formula increase for LGA was included in the State Statue and the new LGA money going to Cities is permanent, not just one time, so Cities can depend on that money and spend it on permanent things and count on that funding coming in. Overall, Seifert said the Coalition of Minnesota Cities advocated the Legislature increasing Local Government Aid (LGA) by \$150 million and the Legislature approved increasing LGA by \$80 million.

Seifert also outlined the State Legislature's approval of bonding amounts Statewide for Point Source Implementation Grants, the Water Infrastructure Fund, Federal Water Infrastructure Funds and funding for lead line inventory and replacement. Seifert also listed the funding that was approved for the Greater Minnesota Child Care Facilities Grant Program, DEED Child Care Grant Program and Initiative Foundations to support providers.

Seifert explained changes that occurred at the State Legislature regarding the State's Gas Tax. He said the change will now provide a share of the State Gas Tax money to communities under 5,000 population. Seifert noted prior to that, Cities with a population of less than 5,000 received no share of the State Gas Tax. He explained Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities advocated and the Legislature developed a permanent formula to provide an ongoing revenue source that will go to Cities with a population of less than 5,000. Seifert said the formula will start next year and ramp up and get bigger every year to 2027.

Seifert outlined what the Legislature also approved for funding for improved regional funding allocations for corridors of commerce and funding for Greater Minnesota Housing Public Infrastructure Grants and for the Greater Minnesota Workforce Housing Development Fund.

Seifert pointed out the Legislature's approval of Public Safety Aid to Cities. He said every City in Minnesota is eligible for the Public Safety Aid. Seifert said \$300 million is the total amount to be distributed among local government units, counties and tribal governments based on their population. Seifert outlined some of the things the Public Safety Aid can and can't be used for.

Seifert also noted there was increases approved for additional funding for nursing home aid.

Seifert outlined issues that will be discussed at the 2024 Minnesota Legislative Session. He said those issues will include bonding, possible constitutional amendments and discussion about revising of the Paid Leave Program.

Seifert noted next year will be an election year. He said there will be a Presidential election, Senator Amy Klobuchar will be up for election, and Minnesota House seats will be up for election along with the elections for the U.S. House. He said there will be no election races for the seats in the Minnesota Senate next year.

Seifert asked if anyone had any questions.

Skaret said rural EMS (Emergency Medical Services) is really getting to be a real crunch. He said he thinks it's something the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is going to really have to start digging into. Skaret said Jackson is struggling tooth and nail as far as getting EMT's (Emergency Medical Technicians) licensed. He said the licensing requirements keep getting stricter and more stringent.

Skaret noted the lack of people in the rural area willing and able to go through the training. He explained Jackson is mostly an on-call ambulance service but yet the training is getting to be undoable for someone that has a fulltime day job.

Peterson said there are more and more ambulance services that are looking at closing in the Southwest Minnesota area.

Mayor Polz noted State Representative Bjorn Olson's legislation that would have provided tax credits up to \$10,000 for a single person and up to \$20,000 for a couple volunteering their services as EMT's.

Siefert said he knows Olson's proposed legislation was discussed, but he doesn't think it passed the Legislature, although he didn't know for sure. He said incentives like that are something that needs to be done. Siefert said part of it is money, but part of it is the time commitment as people with children are involved in baseball, hockey and other activities. He said families don't have time for these hours and hours of lengthy training. Siefert said at times the training is held in the Twin Cities and not in the rural areas. In addition to the shortage of EMT's, Siefert said some Fire Departments are also struggling to recruit volunteers as the requirements keep getting ramped up. He said for volunteers or for not highly paid compensated individuals, it doesn't work. Siefert said those agencies will shutter.

Siefert suggested Skaret bring up the issue of the difficulties in recruiting EMS volunteers at the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities' Summer Conference to be held in Thief River Falls. He said the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is a grassroots group.

Naumann said mental health is also a concern in the Jackson community and rural areas. He said Jackson is in an area where they can't find mental health support in our area. Naumann said mental health services is a gigantic need in rural Minnesota. He said he deals with children that have to travel 200 miles away up to Fargo and everywhere else because there are no services in the area. Naumann said that poses an issue for parents to go and see their children. He said very few counseling services are available in rural Minnesota.

Siefert said he would check into the mental health issues.

Mayor Polz mentioned mental health also puts an unnecessary restraint on the local EMS when they have to transfer someone to Fargo, Thief River Falls and Hibbing.

Titus said another challenge is trying to stabilize childcare in rural areas. He said it continues to be a big challenge.

Mayor Polz thanked Seifert for his update.

Seifert thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE “FALLBROOK HEIGHTS” (AKA DBS HOUSING PROJECT) PRELIMINARY PLAT

Skaret said Jeff Anneke from DBS was present at the Council meeting and Grant Duchac, also from DBS, was joining the Council meeting via Zoom to talk about the DBS market rate housing project.

Skaret explained the Preliminary Plat being presented to the Mayor and City Council is really nothing different than what was discussed with the City Council back on May 23rd.

Engineer Grant Duchac explained the Preliminary Plat before the Mayor and City Council is the official planning document as well as the supporting engineering to back that up. He said the Preliminary Plat is a document to open up and allow development on the site. Duchac said it is not a definitive document. He said the Preliminary Plat doesn't need to represent exactly what's going to be built. Duchac said it's an idea and is the working document, the zoning document and the official legal document approved by the City in order to allow development to happen at the site.

Skaret noted the Preliminary Plat map calls the housing development “Fallbrook Heights” but that doesn't have to be the final name. He explained a name was needed to put on the subdivision and the streets right now. Skaret said those names can certainly be changed going forward.

Skaret said the PUD (Planned Unit Development) is a separate process and is going through the Planning and Zoning Commission. He said the City Council will have to consider the PUD separate from the Preliminary Plat. Skaret said it's really more of a procedural process. He said the Planning and Zoning Commission will need to hold a public hearing on the PUD at their August 14th meeting and then make a recommendation to the City Council for the Council's August 15th meeting.

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve the Preliminary Plat for “Fallbrook Heights”.

PETERSON/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the “Fallbrook Heights” Preliminary Plat.

Mayor Polz thanked Anneke and Duchac.

Anneke and Duchac thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

DOWNTOWN ALLEY IMPROVEMENTS PAY APPLICATION NO. 3

Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk reported there are three alleys remaining to be paved. He said one of those alleys had some base work that needed to get done. Nemmers said concrete should be brought in during the next few weeks and hopefully wrapping up the Downtown Alley Improvements Project.

Nemmers said in front of the City Council for consideration was Pay Application No. 3 in the amount of \$202,625.28. He said he was recommending approval of Pay Application No. 3.

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve the Pay Application.

TITUS/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Downtown Alley Improvements Pay Application No. 3 in the amount of \$202,625.28 payable to Jenson Excavating and Trucking for work completed through June 25, 2023.

2022 STREET AND UTILITIES IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT PAY APPLICATION NO. 4

Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk said 2022 Street and Utilities Improvements Project Pay Application No. 4 pertains to work on Emily Street, River Street, a little bit of the paving or finishing up on Riverside as well as the paving on Northridge and Westridge.

Nemmers said the cement pouring of the curb and gutter on Emily Street should begin on July 19th. He said the utilities are being finished up on River Street and the millings being put back down. Nemmers noted River Street is a County State Aid road. He said in 2024, the County is going to be putting down a new street surface with new pavement, curb and gutter, new storm sewer and some new sidewalks. Nemmers said that project is nearing the end as far as the City’s portion.

Nemmers said for consideration before the City Council is Pay Application No. 4 in the amount of \$714,032.14. He said he's recommendation approval.

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve Pay Application No. 4.

PETERSON/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve 2022 Street and Utilities Improvements Project Pay Application No. 4 in the amount of \$714,032.14 payable to Duininck's Incorporated for the work completed through June 25, 2023.

2022 STREET AND UTILITIES IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT CHANGE ORDER NO. 2

Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk said Change Order No. 2 pertains to some changes with the River Street project. He explained the big portion of that was some additional work that was being done on the lift station with the new force main being installed along with a couple other smaller items. Nemmers said that amounted to about \$15,000.

Nemmers said the other part of Change Order No. 2 is the resurfacing of 500 to 600 feet coming down the hill on Northridge Drive where the base is failing on the current street. He said that work is estimated at about \$92,000.

Nemmers said the Change Order No. 2 total is an increase of \$106,721.20.

Skaret noted the work on Northridge Drive is actually a little bit less than the \$140,000 that had been projected at the last Council meeting.

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve Change Order No. 2 as recommended by Engineer Troy Nemmers.

MIX/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve 2022 Street and Utilities Improvements Project Change Order No. 2 in the amount of \$106,721.20 as recommended by Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk.

SEAL COAT BIDS FOR 2023

Skaret said three bids were submitted for the Seal Coating for 2023. He noted the list of streets to be seal coated were included in the Councilmembers informational packets.

Skaret said Public Works Director Tony Oxborough recommended sealcoating portions on Brown Street, Sverdrup, South Highway, portions of Morrison, portions of Butler and the alley between Butler and Sverdrup.

Skaret said the bids came in lower than expected. He said \$75,000 has been budgeted for the sealcoating project.

Skaret said the low bid of \$67,099.60 was submitted by Pearson Brothers of Hanover, Minnesota. He said Pearson Brothers has done other sealcoat projects for the City in the past and have done a good job. Skaret said the recommendation is to award the sealcoating bid to Pearson Brothers.

Skaret said Oxborough asked if the Street Department could also finish off a part of Butler that is not on the sealcoating list that basically goes from North Highway down to White Street. He said that would bring the cost to just under that \$75,000 mark.

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve the low bid from Pearson Brothers for the sealcoating.

FINCK/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the low bid of 67,099.60 from Pearson Brothers of Hanover, Minnesota for the 2023 Seal Coating Project and including the rest of Butler Avenue from North Highway to Springfield Parkway to the list of streets for sealcoating.

UCAP HOUSING LOTS UPDATE

Mayor Polz noted an email had been received from EDA (Economic Development Authority) member Tim Olson regarding the UCAP Housing lots. He also noted that EDA member Arlene Vee was present at the Council meeting. Mayor Polz invited Vee to comment on the EDA’s recommendation if she wished to do so.

Arlene Vee said the EDA’s recommendation still stands to sell the three lots on Westridge for \$1,000 and use the lots on Pond Drive for construction of the UCAP houses. She said after further discussion, UCAP really just needs to know that the City Council is committed to donating lots for the UCAP housing project. Vee said the lots on Westridge Drive can still be for sale for \$1,000 each. She said if the larger lot doesn’t sell, it can be talked about next year as a lot for a UCAP housing project.

Economic Coordinator Dave Schmidt said he had talked to all the property owners adjacent to the empty lots and there was one neighbor adjacent to each lot that was willing to purchase the lot next to them. He said the other two lots would be combined into one larger lot.

Pell asked if the lots that would be combined into one would be sold for \$1,000.

Finck said the combined lots would be sold as one lot for \$1,000.

Finck said he thinks it's a good plan. He informed Vee that the City Council is already committed to the UCAP housing project for 2024.

Schmidt said UCAP's application for next year's housing project in Jackson has already been submitted to the State. He said if UCAP is awarded the grant sometime later this year or next spring, the City needs to let UCAP know which lots have been set aside for the 2024 housing projects.

Finck said the City is already 100 percent committed to the UCAP housing project for next year. He said he likes the idea of selling the lots on Westridge for \$1,000. Finck said let's have the lots for sale for \$1,000 and see where it goes. He said next spring if the lots haven't sold, there can be that debate on whether one of the lots on Westridge can be used or not by UCAP just as the EDA is recommending.

Mix said she agreed with Finck except for the one lot next to Paul Mohns that can't be developed.

Finck said he agreed with Mix.

Schmidt said Moens was interested in purchasing the lot next to him.

Naumann said the other neighbor to that lot, Marcia Bahr, may also now be interested in purchasing half of that lot.

Vee said she wanted to clarify that the lots to be sold to the adjacent homeowners are the lots next to Mary Muir, Paul Moens and Marcia Bahr.

Finck said he didn't want to see the lot next to Mary Muir sold at this time. He said he would like to keep the two lots open to see if someone will purchase the lots to develop them until spring when it's known what UCAP is going to do. In the meantime, Finck said to see if the lots can be sold for \$1,000.

Vee said it was her understanding that the lot next to Mary Muir's was unbuildable.

Finck said he would like to have a developer look at the lot next to Muir's and determine whether the lot is unbuildable before it's sold to Muir. He said if it's determined by a developer that the lot is unbuildable, then he agrees with Vee to sell the lot to Mary Muir.

Schmidt pointed out that no offers were made to the property owners adjacent to the empty lots. He said the adjacent property owners were simply asked if they would be interested in purchasing the lot, but no offers to sell the lots were made. He said Muir said she would be interested in purchasing the lot adjacent to her.

FINCK/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to accept the EDA's recommendation to sell the three lots on Westridge Drive for \$1,000 each.....with two of the lots (lots 1 and 2) combined to make one lot for a total of three lots available on Westridge Drive.....selling Block One, Lot 3 to one of the adjacent neighbors or splitting Block One, Lot 3 and selling half of the lot to each neighbor that's adjacent to Block One, Lot 3.....verify if the City has a utility easement on the lot known as "Addition 3" and have developer Jon Thaemlitz look at lot "Addition 3" to determine if the lot is buildable and if the lot is not a buildable lot, have the Economic Development Office engage both adjacent neighbors to lot "Addition 3" and sell the lot for \$1,000 and also lower the price on the combo lot (lots to be combined) to \$1,000. Also, as part of the EDA recommendation, use the lots on Pond Drive for construction of the UCAP housing projects in 2024 and if the larger combined lot on Westridge Drive doesn't sell, it can be talked about next year as a lot for a UCAP housing project.

Finck said to Skaret that he wanted to make sure it's in the Council meeting minutes that the City Council has approved the UCAP Development for 2024 to make sure the Council doesn't have to have another vote on it.

Skaret said yes that the City Council has approved the UCAP Development for next year.

Schmidt said UCAP's grant application for next year's housing project in Jackson has already been submitted to the State.

Finck said that's perfect. He said he didn't want to see the UCAP project for next year to be held up.

RESOLUTION NO. 31-0723 AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AIRPORT MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION GRANT CONTRACT

Skaret said the City has another two-year contract with the State for Operation and Maintenance reimbursement at the airport. He explained the City of Jackson's Airport is eligible for just over \$30,000 per year.

Skaret said the Minnesota Department of Transportation reimburses the City 75 percent of the Airport's expenses up to the \$30,124 per year. He said the City needs to execute a new contract with MnDOT from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025.

PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 31-0723 authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to execute the Minnesota Department of Transportation Airport Maintenance and Operation Grant Contract.

BRANCH AVENUE SEWER LINE REPLACEMENT

Public Works Director Tony Oxborough said he was proposing to replace about 300 feet of sanitary sewer line on Branch Avenue that serves three homes. He explained the sanitary sewer line is bad and they've had trouble with it in the past. Oxborough explained this section of sanitary sewer line has been plaguing City staff and they've been called out on the weekends to make repairs. He said he televised the line and can't get through it because it's old infrastructure. Oxborough noted it's the oldest part of town next to the railroad. He said it just makes sense for the City to replace the line themselves.

Oxborough said Svoboda Excavating quoted him a price of \$18,500 to install the new sanitary sewer line and City staff can put the gravel street back together. Oxborough said the replacement of the sanitary sewer line is not going through an engineer as the project is less than 500 feet and will be managed by himself.

Oxborough said funding is available in the City budget under sewer structures along with other funding so the City can pay for the sanitary sewer line replacement.

Mix asked if the Public Works Department has the time to do the work.

Oxborough said the sanitary sewer line would be replaced within the next week.

FINCK/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the quote of \$18,500 from Svoboda Excavating of Jackson to replace 300 feet of Sanitary Sewer Line on Branch Avenue (the gravel street near Zimmerli Park).

Mix thanked Oxborough for being proactive on replacing the sanitary sewer line.

ANIMAL SHELTER WATER AND SEWER LINE AND SITE WORK QUOTE

Skaret said the Animal Committee is continuing to work and make progress on the Animal Shelter building. He said the Committee is looking at a general size of about a 24-foot by 24-foot building. Skaret said the Committee is looking at options.

Skaret said the location for the Animal Shelter that the Animal Committee has picked out is located on Torgerson Lane basically across from Little Huskies near the detention pond. He said the Committee feels there's ample room and it's a good location on the outskirts of town.

Skaret there needs to be water and sewer service dug into that site. He said quotes have been received from Svoboda Excavating of Jackson to install the water and sewer service lines for \$8,500 and do the site work to prepare for the concrete pad in the amount of \$3,500.

Oxborough noted the City owns the property already for the proposed Animal Shelter. He said the property has enough room to put a larger building on it. Oxborough said plans are to make the building look nice and match the buildings that are in that area. Oxborough said the building will be presented well.

MIX/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the quotes from Svoboda Excavating of Jackson of \$8,500 to install water and sewer service lines and the quote of \$3,500 to do the site work to prepare for the concrete pad for the Animal Shelter building.

LIBRARY NEW BOILER QUOTES 2023

Skaret said the Library continues to have heating and cooling problems. He said it's really, really cold or really, really hot in the building. Skaret said the heart of the matter stems from the boiler. He said the Library needs a new boiler. Skaret said basically what the HVAC contractors are proposing is to take the one existing boiler in the basement and replace that with two smaller boilers. He explained this will make the cooling and heating system more efficient and allow the system to have a little bit more flexibility. Skaret said during times when the temperatures outside are not extreme, one boiler can be run and the other doesn't have to be run so both don't have to be running at the same time.

Skaret said two bids have been submitted for new boiler systems for the Library. He said the bid from Johnson Controls is \$48,000 and the bid from NAC is \$66,987. Skaret said they do appear to be comparable bids. He said it is a turn-key system. Skaret said Johnson Controls has assured him it's a turn-key system so there's not going to be extra charges that the City doesn't know about.

Peterson noted Johnson Controls currently has the service agreement on the Library's system.

Skaret said Johnson Controls currently has the service agreement. He said part of the problem is there wasn't maintenance done when the boiler was installed in 2016. Skaret said the maintenance fell through the cracks and that's kind of the large part of why we ended up where we are today.

Naumann noted there have been multiple service people that have tried to fix the system or make a patch to keep it limping along.

Mix asked how will the City ensure a lack of maintenance doesn't fall through the cracks again. She asked if the City has a process.

Skaret said the City has a maintenance agreement with Johnson Controls

Mix asked if the City has somebody that makes sure the maintenance on the boilers doesn't lapse again.

Skaret said the Library keeps pretty close tabs on their boiler system.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the quote of \$48,000 from Johnson Controls to replace the boiler at the Library with two smaller boilers for heating and cooling.

Mix asked how soon can Johnson Controls install the new boilers at the Library.

Skaret said as soon as the City staff can let Johnson Controls know their quote was approved and the installation will be scheduled.

AMBULANCE DIRECTOR POSITION UPDATE

Skaret said Chris Burban's last day as Ambulance Director will be on August 1st. He said Assistant Ambulance Director Crystal Nelson has indicated she would be willing to fill in as Interim Ambulance Director until a new fulltime Director is in place. Skaret said he would recommend the City Council appoint Nelson as Interim Ambulance Director effective August 2nd at Step 12.10, same as Director Burban is currently at.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to appoint Crystal Nelson as Interim Ambulance Director effective on August 2, 2023.

Skaret said Alderman Peterson, Mayor Polz and himself met with the Jackson Ambulance crew on Monday evening, July 17th. He said there's a big hole to fill losing Burban. Skaret said in addition to Burban being the Ambulance Director, he's an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician). Besides Burban having his regular duties, Skaret said he's been covering the ambulance shifts that need to be covered that no one else picks up.

Peterson noted Burban has been up to 160 hours a month in shifts that needed to be covered.

Skaret said up to 160 hours a month will be creating the hole in scheduling and so there's going to be a lot of holes to fill. He said Peterson, Mayor Polz and himself talked with the Ambulance crew and informed them that everyone's going to have to step up and it can't all fall on Nelson's shoulders.

Mayor Polz said he's going to type up a letter and send it out to everybody. He noted there's got to be a lot of EMT's that possibly work in the Industrial Parkway and throughout the community. Mayor Polz suggested sending out a letter to reach out to industries such as AGCO to see if they would let their employees leave work to respond to ambulance calls. He said, for example, somebody from Estherville that's an EMT and working in Jackson could respond to an ambulance call during the day. Mayor Polz also suggested sending second-chance letters to Ambulance crew members who may have recently resigned or got off the Ambulance Service to see if they're interested in serving again. He said they also discussed an hours requirement such as a 43-hour requirement. Mayor Polz said instead of maybe being mandated, making it a guideline if it's achievable. He also asked if there's things that could be offered like incentive type programs. Mayor Polz suggested something that could be done that would be fun for ambulance crew members, like if you get the most hours in the month, maybe the crew member would get a bonus or some type of incentive.

Skaret noted the Ambulance Department has already been doing the incentive program pertaining to the most hours worked in the month.

Mayor Polz informed Councilmembers those types of incentives have been discussed. He also mentioned working with the Fire Department. Mayor Polz said the Fire Department probably has more EMR's (Emergency Medical Responder) than EMT's but to also start engaging some of those individuals.

Mayor Polz said he thinks there's going to be some lobbying at the State Legislature and discussing with local State representatives to see what can be done as far as funding, training requirements, scholarship items for training and what sort of retention programs can be put in place for EMT's for them to want to stay on the Ambulance Department crew.

Peterson said currently the Jackson Ambulance Department has eight EMT's.

Skaret noted those eight are EMT's that live in the City of Jackson that are on the on-call crew. He said they basically have to live in the City or very, very near in order to be able to respond. Skaret said there's more EMT's on the part-time Ambulance crew but a lot of the part-time EMT's live out of town.

Mix said she thinks a letter should be sent to the Ambulance Department's EMT staff from the City Council expressing how important they are and how much the Council values them and their contribution to this community because we can't survive without them.

Mayor Polz said he would like to see the Council, as a team, put together some sort of appreciation bar-b-que. He said they should be doing that for City employees and determine what can be done to bring people together to bridge the gap and let City employees know the Mayor and City Council is there for them with support. Mayor Polz said sometimes City employees want to know the Mayor and Council have their back.

Peterson noted the City also needs to encourage people to join the Fire Department because they need the help as well going forward.

Skaret said the other piece of this is how does the City fill the fulltime Ambulance Director's position going forward. He said there's been some conversation about having a recruiter or a director agency come in and do the search for the City.

Skaret said there are three proposals from national recruiter firms. He said all of the firms do have some experience in Fire, EMS and Ambulance Director recruitment. Skaret said the proposals for a full-fledge effort basically cost anywhere from \$15,000 to about \$25,000. He said the firms do offer a scaled down service package that kind of ranges from about \$4,500 to \$9,000 depending on the firm.

Peterson said he thinks the City Council needs to move forward on recruiting a new Ambulance Director, the sooner the better. He said he knows it's been talked about going to the Ambulance Advisory Board, but the issue is just going to get kicked back to the City Council.

Finck said the proposals from the national firms indicate the hiring process may take 30 to 60 days. He said he agreed with Peterson to get the process of hiring a new Ambulance Director moving forward or the City is going to be four months out from hiring someone compared to two months.

Peterson noted also allowing time for the new person hired to relocate.

Mix asked is the City Council sure they don't want to first start the hiring process by looking internally before starting to go through a national recruiting firm.

Peterson said even if there are internal candidates interested, he still thinks the City needs to go through this recruiting process. He said he and Burban talked about that.

Finck asked if the recruiting firms will allow excluding internal candidates from the recruiting fees.

Skaret said he doubts it because the candidates still have to go through the process.

Peterson said it may be beneficial for the City if the internal candidates did go through the recruiting process. He said he doesn't want to go four years and then be recruiting a new Ambulance Director all over again.

Mayor Polz said he proposes when it comes down to interviewing finalists for the position, a panel should be assembled of interviewers that consists of representatives from Sanford, Law Enforcement, Fire Department, Ambulance Department and City Staff so that way we, all as a community, have buy-in and direction, we all have teeth in the game and can all be on the same page in hiring the next Ambulance Director.

Finck asked if the recruiting firm will lead the interviews.

Mayor Polz said that was correct.

Finck said during the interviews, the panel is all there to observe, listen and when the interview is over, have a discussion on what the panel's thoughts are.

Mix said she liked the idea of the recruiting process to make sure the City gets a long-term correct person to serve as Ambulance Director.

Peterson said he liked the proposal from the SGR recruiting firm.

Finck noted SGR's in-depth portion of their proposal. He said SGR proposed to interview the candidates and really try and put together the position as well as find a candidate instead of finding a person that fits whatever role. Finck noted SGR's proposal was \$10,000 more in cost.

Mix said the Ambulance Director is a pretty valuable position in the community and the City wants to make sure they get it right.

Finck said it's an important position.

MIX/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to accept the full proposal from SGR for services to recruit a new Ambulance Director for the City of Jackson.

Finck asked Mayor Polz if he would be working to contact people to serve on a panel regarding hiring a new Ambulance Director. He said that process needs to occur as SGR begins their services.

Mayor Polz said he would begin contacting people to serve on a panel. He said he also wants to rely on the City's Personnel Committee in the process of hiring a new Ambulance Director as well.

CODE OF ORDINANCES REVIEW: CHAPTER 32

Skaret said Chapter 32 of the City's Code of Ordinances is probably the Chapter that needs the most updating. He said Chapter 32 is not really reflective of current times. Skaret said it still refers to the City as owning the hospital and still having a Hospital Board. He said it also refers to the City owning the Cable TV system and having a Housing Appeals Board. Skaret said Chapter 32 also refers to a Star City Commission which is no longer in existence.

Skaret said he would recommend that Chapter 32 be updated to reflect those changes.

Skaret said one thing interesting of note is the City's Boards and Commissions. He said Chapter 32 says all of the City's board members generally have a four-year term. Skaret said the City hasn't really followed that to the letter. He said the City's Boards and Commission members are appointed on an annual basis. Skaret said the City doesn't really have citizens lined up out the door to serve on volunteer boards and commissions. He said the only "con" of actually enforcing four-year terms is when the term expires and you ask someone if they want to serve another four years, they may say four years is a long time and they might serve one or two years, but don't want to serve another four years. Skaret said the City could lose some valuable people that way.

Finck asked if the wording could be changed to say appointment on an annual basis.

Skaret said he thought so.

Mayor Polz said the appointments could be done on an annual basis.

Skaret said those were really the main things to be updated on Chapter 32. He said the changes to Chapter 32 will be prepared in ordinance form for the next City Council meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION MONTH PROCLAMATION – JULY 2023

Mayor Polz said he had a proclamation designating July 2023 as Parks and Recreation Month in Jackson.

Mayor Polz read:

WHEREAS parks and recreation are an integral part of communities throughout this country and the State of Minnesota, including the City of Jackson; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation promotes health and wellness, improving the physical and mental health of people who live near parks; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation promotes time spent in nature, which positively impacts mental health by increasing cognitive performance and well-being, and alleviating illnesses such as depression, attention deficit disorders, and Alzheimer's; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation encourages physical activities by providing space for popular sports, hiking trails, swimming pools and many other activities designed to promote active lifestyles; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation programming and education activities, such as out-of-school time programming, youth sports and environmental education, are critical to childhood development; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation increases a community's economic prosperity through increased property values, expansion of the local tax base, increased tourism, the attraction and retention of businesses, and crime reduction; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation is fundamental to the environmental well-being of our community; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation is essential and adaptable infrastructure that makes our communities resilient in the face of natural disasters and climate change; and

WHEREAS our parks and natural recreation areas ensure the ecological beauty of our community and provide a place for children and adults to connect with nature and recreate outdoors; and

WHEREAS the U.S. House of Representatives has designated July as Parks and Recreation Month; and

WHEREAS the City of Jackson recognizes the benefits derived from parks and recreation resources.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE JACKSON CITY COUNCIL that July is recognized as Parks and Recreation Month in the City of Jackson.

Signed this 18th day of July, 2023

Marcus Polz, Mayor

FIRST CONSIDERATION: ORDINANCE NO. 134 CANNABIS INTERIM ORDINANCE

Skaret said Ordinance No. 134 is a follow up to one of the things that Marty Seifert had referenced during his Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities update earlier in the Council meeting.

Skaret said there's recreational cannabis, or marijuana, coming soon. He said there's going to be a Statewide Office of Cannabis Management that's going to be licensing all of the retail marijuana sellers. However, Skaret said the State licensing of marijuana retail outlets is not going to be happening until 2025 so there's a lot of uncertainty of what's going to happen between now and then.

Skaret said there's a lot of Cities adopting moratoriums on cannabis basically until January 1st, 2025 to clarify that there is to be no retail selling of cannabis in City limits until 2025 at the earliest.

Skaret said Cities are allowed to have a moratorium for a year. He said if a City has a moratorium it has to be due to wanting to study the issue further. Skaret said Ordinance No. 134 references that the City will be studying the issue further and looking at what other Cities are doing and what further guidance may be issued by the State and so forth.

City Attorney Brad Anderson said Ordinance No. 134 is a general ordinance that gives the City time to figure out what the State is going to do with the approximately 160-page State Statute concerning cannabis. He said it would be ridiculous for the City to even try to put something together that's going to be permanent at this point.

MIX/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to approve First Consideration of Ordinance No. 134 Cannabis Interim Ordinance.

FIRST CONSIDERATION: ORDINANCE NO. 135 REGULATION OF THC EDIBLES

Skaret said the moratorium the City Council approved last year prohibiting the sale of THC edibles in Jackson will expire on August 25th, 2023. He said the moratorium cannot be extended.

Skaret said Ordinance No. 135 actually sets the framework and provides the parameters regarding the sale of THC edibles within the City of Jackson. He said the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed proposed Ordinance No. 135. Skaret said the proposed ordinance is largely based ordinances approved in neighboring Cities.

Skaret said Ordinance No. 135 would require that the sale of THC edibles would have to be done out of a fixed building. He said there would be no selling of THC edibles out of the back of a truck, food truck, van, concession stand or anything like that. Skaret said THC edibles could only be sold by persons age 21 or older. He noted the THC edibles can't be sold within 300 feet of a park, library, City or publicly owned property.

Skaret said if the City doesn't adopt an ordinance regarding the regulation of THC edibles, then it's a free-for-all. He said Ordinance No. 135 is kind of an interim ordinance because after the State Agency that's going to deal with marijuana issues is up and running, the issues pertaining to THC edibles will all be run through the State Office of Cannabis Management. But between now and 2025, Skaret said it would be a free-for-all grey area if the City didn't have an ordinance such as Ordinance No. 135, it would be a free-for-all where there wouldn't be any regulation.

Peterson said Ordinance No. 135 is a way to set some rules, otherwise it will be a free-for-all. He said the State of Minnesota said the City has to allow the sale of THC edibles.

PELL/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve First Consideration of Ordinance No. 135 regarding the regulation of THC Edibles.

FIRST CONSIDERATION: ORDINANCE NO. 136 UPDATING CHAPTER 30 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES PERTAINING TO CITY GOVERNMENT

Skaret explained Ordinance No. 136 covers all the changes the City Council talked about at the June 29th City Council meeting giving the Council a little bit more flexibility in setting their meeting dates along with some other minor housekeeping issues to make the City Code more compliant with current practice.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve First Consideration of Ordinance No. 136 updating Chapter 30 of the Code of Ordinances pertaining to City Government.

Other:

Alderman Joe Pell

Alderman Joe Pell said the monthly Liquor Store Report looks really good now since it's being done electronically. He said he was wondering if the labor, utilities and maintenance costs could also be added to the monthly report to see what the pulse of the store actually is. Pell said right now the City Council is just seeing information on the sales at the Liquor Store.

Pell said he wanted to also report about some potholes in town. He noted a large pothole at the intersection of Sherman and Sixth Street. Pell said he was wondering if there were plans to address potholes.

Public Works Director Tony Oxborough said he's been working on getting work done on the streets that are going to be sealcoated on August 10th. He said once that's done, the Street Department will start patching potholes.

Alderwoman Sara Mix

Alderwoman Sara Mix said she wanted to thank the Street Department for all the cleaning up they have been doing around town. She noted that they have been cleaning along and around the curbs and all of that is starting to look very nice. Mix said the extra effort is being noticed and it's really nice seeing the City make some improvements.

Alderman Nathan Peterson

Alderman Nathan Peterson said the Street Department's painting on the downtown streets looks good.

Oxborough noted the State also did painting on Highway 71 through Jackson as well.

On another issue, Peterson asked if there was an update regarding the grass seeding along South Street.

Engineer Troy Nemmers said discussions were held with the contractor that worked on South Street regarding grass seeding. He said through some negotiations, the contractor is willing to help out with reseeding, but not willing to do it all. Nemmers said the contractor feels they've met the contract. He said he talked with the contractor and informed him that the City Council was pretty adamant that they want to see some help with this project. Nemmers said the contractor, Duininck's, is willing to work on it and do some of the removals. He said Duininck's would like the City to provide the top soil and pay for the actual work. Nemmers said Duininck's would do the placement of the top soil and help with watering. He said Duininck's wants it to be a partnership between them, the City and the homeowners to try and get the grass established and try to make things look nice. Nemmers said he didn't know what the City Council's direction would be regarding that. He said the trick is trying to put a price number to it. Nemmers said someone is going to have to walk the project and determine what grass is good and what isn't and try and put some sort of limits on how much is going to be replaced and that's where the cost could be \$8,000 or it could be \$20,000. Nemmers said he thinks it's going to kind of be a group effort on who's going to determine what grass is good and what isn't and who gets grass.

Finck asked Nemmers if he could work with Oxborough and Duininck's on what needs to be replaced.

Nemmers said if it's OK with the Council, he will work with Oxborough and Duininck's on what needs to be replaced. He said reseeding may not occur until spring so the grass can get a good start.

Alderman Brandon Finck

Alderman Brandon Finck said people using the Disc Golf Course are parking everywhere around the course, on the grass and the side street between Minnesota West and the residential area. He said there have been complaints on where vehicles are going and where they are all parking. Finck said he thinks the City needs to find a place to park people.

Skaret said there is a parking area for the Disc Golf Course already. He said the parking area is off North Highway. Skaret said he reached out to Bill Swan on July 17th and informed him of the problem. He said the information regarding where the parking area is located for the Disc Golf Course has been posted on the City's Facebook page and the Disc Golf Course's Facebook Page. Skaret said those using the course are not to park on the west end of Grant Street.

Finck said people have been walking through residential yards to get to the Disc Golf Course. He said there's been a lot of complaints on how people are handling themselves out there. Finck said if it continues to become an issue, the City may have to somehow stripe an area to show that's where Disc Golf players are supposed to park. He said maybe parking will need to be restricted on one side of the street to keep the street open and free for residential residents who haven't had to deal with this before.

Mayor Polz asked if there's any signage to the parking area of the Disc Golf Course.

Finck said he hadn't seen any.

Mix suggested signage welcoming disc golfers and also outlining the rules and parking.

Oxborough said there is a sign on West Street for the Nelson Creek Trail/Frisbee Disc Golf Course access that points down Grant Street. He said it's an access point for the Nelson Creek Trail and the Disc Golf Course. Oxborough said currently there's a mowed grass area that is the parking lot for the Disc Golf Course.

Finck said somehow the City needs to be respectful of the residents and right now it's not. He said a solution needs to be found regarding the parking and issues of people walking through resident's yards.

Oxborough said it's an issue that can be discussed by the Park Board.

Alderman Chris Naumann

Alderman Naumann thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers for the plant the City sent for his mother's visitation and funeral.

Naumann also mentioned to keep moving forward on discussions of what may be done with the former Coast to Coast building.

Skaret said the City is waiting for the final report from the structural engineer. He said the environmental assessment of collecting samples for potential hazardous materials has to be completed. Skaret said the hazardous materials assessment has to be done regardless of what the City does with the building.

Mix said she asked Skaret to check with the structural engineer to see if it was possible to keep the front of the building, like the front wall, to keep the history of downtown Jackson. She said the front wall could be an entrance to whatever the City does with the property if the building has to come down. Mix said she's trying to think creatively because the former Coast to Coast building has been a staple of Jackson.

Alderman Mark Titus

Alderman Mark Titus recalled he thought at one time it was talked about having a workshop relative to what would qualify as nuisances and blighted properties. He said there's a lot of blighted properties in town. Titus also mentioned properties where the property is not maintained and negatively affects the neighbors.

City Attorney Brad Anderson said a revised list of approximately 20 properties has already been compiled to discuss with the City Council.

Titus said the City Council needs to know what are the steps, what can be done and what is reasonable in order to address blighted properties. He said he realizes it can be problematic and sometimes confrontational.

Mix asked Attorney Anderson if there was any information regarding the former Prairie Winds Motel property.

Attorney Anderson said the Judge in the case regarding the property has not issued a decision yet.

City Administrator Matt Skaret

City Administrator Matt Skaret reported the evaluation of the swimming pool began on July 18th. He said the swimming pool will not be in operation for at least two weeks.

Skaret said he and Economic Coordinator Dave Schmidt will be attending the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Conference in Thief River Falls. He said they will be leaving late Tuesday afternoon, July 25th and arriving back in Jackson on Friday evening, July 28th.

ADJOURNMENT

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

PELL/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Jackson City Council meeting at 8:36 p.m.

David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary

Marcus Polz, Mayor

