

**June 29, 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 Thursday, June 29, 2023. The City Council met in regular session on June 29<sup>th</sup> because the Fourth of July Holiday fell on Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> which would have normally been the Council’s first regular meeting date for the month of July. The meeting was 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, Luke Ewald of Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services, Jackson Fire Chief Dave Bond, Community and Business Development Specialist Dave Schmidt of Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk, John Weland of the Jackson County Animal Protection Society, Jackson County Sheriff Chief Deputy Kelly Mitchell, Public Works Director Tony Oxborough, Dave DeJong of the Jackson County Friends of the Trails, Catherine Koppen, City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff, Justin Lessman of the Jackson County Pilot and Mathew Grisham of KKOJ/KUXX Radio. Joining the meeting via Zoom was Administrative Assistant Shelley Pohlman of Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA). (A quorum of the City Council was present.)**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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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**

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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**

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Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

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

Peterson said he wanted to make note of Consent Agenda Item 7(F) regarding accepting Ambulance Director Chris Burban's resignation effective August 1, 2023. Peterson said he wanted to thank Mr. Burban for the time he's put into straightening things out in the Ambulance Department to move forward.

Finck said Burban's resignation is being accepted with regrets.

**Council Discussion Items**

**RICK REED – REQUEST FOR BLOCK PARTY WITH A BAND IN THEIR BACKYARD AT 113 POND DRIVE ON SATURDAY, JULY 22, 2023 FROM 8 P.M. TO 12 A.M.**

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Mayor Polz said Rick Reed was unable to attend the June 29<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. He said Reed had made a request to host a block party with a band in their backyard at 113 Pond Drive on Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. Mayor Polz said Alderman Finck would be representing Reed at the Council meeting.

Finck noted there has been a block party held in the Pond Drive neighborhood for the past six to eight years. He said the event has grown a little bit and pointed out Reed's son is a member of the Jeremy DeWall Band that will be playing music at the block party. Finck said the neighbors are all aware of the upcoming block party and have all been invited to the party. He said the annual block party is a nice event for all family members. Finck said there have not been any complaints about the block parties over the years.

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve Reed's request to host a block party in their backyard at 113 Pond Drive.

**PELL/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Rick Reed's request to host a Block Party with a band in their backyard at 113 Pond Drive on Saturday, July 22, 2023 from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m.**

### **JACKSON COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN – LUKE EWALD**

Mayor Polz welcomed Luke Ewald to the Council meeting.

Skaret explained Ewald was attending the Council meeting on behalf of the Friends of the Jackson County Trails Committee. He noted Dave DeJong of the Trails Committee was also in attendance.

Skaret said the Jackson County Parks and Trails Master Plan was really a cooperative effort project. He said the City of Jackson had its name on the grant but it was really a Trails project in cooperation with Jackson County. Skaret said really the goal was to develop a Master Plan, not only for the trails within the City of Jackson, but also for the County and getting the trails connected into a system out to the County parks and so forth.

Ewald said it was in September of 2022 that the grant application was filled out and submitted to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). He said the MnDOT grant program is called the Active Transportation Program. Ewald said funding was received from the MnDOT grant to develop a Parks and Trails Master Plan so it focuses on parks and trails.

Referring to his slide presentation on the Council Chamber's Smart Screen, Ewald outlined the development of the trails system in Jackson. He noted the construction of trails began in Jackson in 1998.

During his presentation, Ewald outlined the goals for the Trails System as listed by community members during a community open house that was held on November 14, 2022. He said those goals focused on tourism, quality of life, recreation, health, environment, engagement, trails and community attractiveness. Ewald noted some of these goals would fit well with the City's Strategic Planning.

Ewald detailed the five or six proposed priority routes for new trails as outlined in the Parks and Trails Master Plan. He said the proposed trails all basically center around Jackson and the downtown area as a focal point and they all spur out from there. Ewald noted all together, it adds up to 67 miles of trails in the Master Plan. He said he didn't think that 67 miles included filling all the trail gaps within the County parks. Ewald pointed out not all of those trails connect. He said connecting those trails would be part of the vision as well.

Ewald said the goal is to really work with the City and County and try and save money so when road work is being done, rather than having to write grants or having to do a 20 percent or 50 percent match, the trail project could be constructed while the road project is being done which would be a cost savings.

Ewald said the next items that need to be done is updating the Complete Streets Policy on the County level, adopt a bicycle manual and referencing different types of bicycle lanes and boulevards. He also noted roundabouts.

Skaret said bicycle lanes and trails can also be incorporated into roundabouts.

Skaret noted most of the proposed bicycle routes shown in the Trails Master Plan would most conveniently be done with other County road projects. He said we're fortunate to have a County that's pretty involved and invested in trails. Skaret said the proposed trails outlined in the Trails Master Plan won't be done overnight. He said the Trails Master Plan is looking out 10 to 15 to 20 years. Skaret said it's important to have a plan because when grants are applied for, having a Master Plan is one of the key prerequisites to get funding.

Ewald added making the trail system in Jackson County of regional significance is one of the goals of the Trails Committee. He explained making the trail system of regional significance enhances tourism in the area and also increases the opportunities for additional funding. Ewald said connecting with the trails system in the Arnolds Park and Iowa Great Lakes areas will draw people into the area. He said that's what the whole Trails Master Plan in a nutshell is about.

Ewald said the Trails Master Plan is also about encouraging people to be active outdoors by walking, bicycling and going to the parks.

Skaret said if the trails can be developed in Jackson County and the Iowa Great Lakes Trails try to get connected to trails in Spencer, Iowa, it would be possible someday to bicycle from Jackson all the way to Spencer. He said development of the trails someday could also mean a person could bicycle from Jackson to Fairmont and almost to St. James if you travelled that way.

Ewald said the Trails Master Plan also incorporates a little bit of mental health as well within the parks. He noted there's a section in the Trails Master Plan about mental health and the benefits of people getting outside and utilizing the parks.

Skaret said development of the Parks and Trails Master Plan was over a six-month process. He said there were meetings at City Hall and noted the big meeting was held on November 14<sup>th</sup> last year when representatives from the engineering firm of HDR were in Jackson and a walking tour was held of the County trails.

Mayor Polz thanked Ewald, Skaret, Dave DeJong, Lynne Anderson and the rest of the Trails Committee that worked on the Parks and Trails Master Plan and for sharing the information with the City Council.

Ewald thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

### **QUOTES FOR RE-SEEDING GRASS ON SOUTH STREET**

Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk said he didn't have a whole lot of great news regarding the re-seeding on South Street, but he doesn't have bad news yet.

Nemmers said he's still working back and forth with the contractor that did the construction work on South Street. He said he didn't have a whole lot to report on yet. Nemmers said he hasn't been able to schedule a meeting with the contractor yet to see what can be arranged regarding the re-seeding. He noted he also received another quote from a private contractor. Nemmers said he hopes to have more information available at a future Council meeting.

## **NORTHRIDGE DRIVE CHANGE ORDER**

Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk said Northridge Drive was planned to be a mill and overlay project as part of the improvement program. He explained they basically grind up the existing asphalt material that's there and any aggregate that's underneath it and kind of blend it together, regrade and compact it.

Nemmers explained when paving began, a few soft spots were noticed coming down the hill on Northridge Drive towards Highway 71. He said two spots were patched ahead of the final paving lift. But Nemmers said when the final paving began and paving crews started to work their way out from the cul-de-sacs on Northridge Drive back down the hill, a lot more soft spots showed up on the hillside. He said there's probably seven or eight soft spots that are of pretty good size.

Nemmers outlined the options available to address the soft spots on the hill on Northridge Drive coming toward Highway 71. He said leaving it alone is not one of the options. Nemmers said there are options to address the approximately 650 feet of street that's in question and how it can be addressed.

Nemmers referred to a memo that was distributed to the Mayor and Councilmembers. He pointed out there were three options outlined, but there are probably only two options that are worth considering.

Nemmers explained Option Number 2 is really just cutting out the soft spots and trying to patch in those areas and putting another inch of asphalt on it because it's known that it's a soft area due to either soils or moisture or a combination of both.

Nemmers said Option Number 3 is basically what he calls a resurface project. He explained that's where two feet of material would be dug out, new sand installed, drain tile installed because there's a water issue, new aggregate and then four inches of asphalt. Nemmers said in that scenario, you're really putting back a street that's planned to be there for an extended period. He explained when you're doing a mill and overlay, you're hoping for 15 or 20 years of use. Nemmers said when it's a resurfacing project, you're hoping for 30 to 50 years of use depending on how things hold up. He said that's what Option 3 is. Nemmers said the estimated cost for Option 3 is in the \$140,000 range which is a pretty substantial add to the project.

Nemmers said he's been working with Public Works Director Tony Oxborough about the project on Northridge Drive. He said Oxborough noted the sanitary sewer that runs in the street on Northridge Drive was relined and has good manholes. Nemmers said there is no watermain line in that stretch of Northridge Drive. He said the water main actually runs up along the lot line and it doesn't get into the street until it kind of reaches the top of the hill. Nemmers said the City could spend the extra money, get a good street, and have something that's going to last 30 to 50 years and probably not have to come back and dig up a water main that's 60 or 70 years old. He also pointed out the sanitary sewer has already been addressed.

Nemmers said he thinks the consensus among City staff is to look at going with the expensive option, but probably the better option. He said he wanted to have the discussion with Councilmembers to see if everyone was comfortable with Option Number 3. Nemmers said he could get more information and get a final price from the contractor to get the work done. He said he kind of wanted to have some Council discussion or input before putting together a \$140,000 change order.

Finck said from his perspective, the City needs to fix that road. He said the City has a 25-to-30-year-old beautiful neighborhood in the Northridge and Westridge Addition and is still trying to develop some lots in that neighborhood. Finck said doing only half a job to repair the road doesn't really make sense. He said \$140,000 is a lot of money and he understands that, but that road is the gateway to that whole community up there and it needs to be right.

Pell said he agrees with Finck. He said Options One and Two just seem like a band-aid. Pell said if the City is going to do it, do it right. He said spend the money and do it.

Titus asked Nemmers if it was determined what was the cause of the soft spots.

Nemmers said he's sure it's soils, but there's some drainage issues with seepage. He noted there's some water seeping out of the side hill. Nemmers said it was also noticed there was water seeping out of the gaps in the street following a recent rainfall.

Oxborough said Option Number 3 would be installing a good road on top of good utilities. He noted the water main itself is not in the roadway.

Titus said spending \$140,000 to fix the problem hopefully fixes the problem. He said that's his concern that there are some causes that haven't been discovered or we don't understand.

Nemmers said there's options to solve the situation, but you really don't know until you start opening things up and see what you have.

Finck said if there are other issues found, let's figure it out and get it right so we don't have to redo the street again 10 years from now.

Finck asked Skaret if the Council need to make a motion.

Skaret said there would be a motion to direct Nemmers to prepare the official change order or Option 3.

Finck asked Skaret if he would work on the City's finances to find the funding.

Skaret said most likely some extra money will have to be transferred into the Project Fund from the City's General Fund.

**TITUS/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to have Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk prepare an official Change Order for Option Number 3 to resolve the conditions on the hill portion of Northridge Drive towards U.S. Highway 71.**

## **AIRPORT TREE RE-PLANTING PAY APPLICATION NO. 2**

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Skaret said one of the phases of the Airport Runway Project was replanting some trees due to height restrictions particularly on the property where the City had to obtain an easement from the property owner. He said the City worked with the property owner, Knute Meneely, in coming up with a plan that was amenable to him. Skaret said those trees have been planted and the contractor has fulfilled their obligation on the contract. He said Engineer Eric Hanson of HDR is recommending final payment of the retainage that the City is holding on that project in the amount of \$1,740 to VIP Landscaping of Slayton, Minnesota.

**PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Airport Tree Re-Planting Pay Application No. 2/Release of Retainage in the amount of \$1,740 payable to VIP Landscaping of Slayton, Minnesota.**



## **RESOLUTION NO. 29-0623 AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE STATE AIRPORT ZONING GRANT**

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Skaret said Resolution No. 29-0623 also relates to the Airport Runway Project. He explained with the runway being relocated about 240 feet to the northeast, the City's airport zoning ordinance has to be redone. Skaret said the City has a grant offer from the State to redo the airport zoning. He noted the City has already approved a contract with HDR because the State last year had offered the City a grant. Skaret said the City informed the State the City would take the grant. However, Skaret said something got lost in the shuffle on the State's end and the money was lost. He said the airport zoning project was then delayed. Skaret said the State was able to assemble funding for the City this year to complete the airport rezoning.

Skaret said Resolution No. 29-0623 will authorize City staff to execute the contract with the State for the airport rezoning. He said the cost for rezoning will be paid 75 percent through the State grant and 25 percent through City funds.

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve the authorization to execute the State Airport Zoning Grant.

**PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 29-0623 approving authorization to execute the State Airport Zoning Grant.**

## **REFER THE DONATION OF LAND FOR THE UCAP HOUSING PROJECT BACK TO THE EDA BOARD**

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Mayor Polz asked if this was an issue the City Council wanted to discuss. He noted there are two sides of every issue. Mayor Polz suggested, in instances when the City Council and the Committees differ, to kick those items back to the Committee for resolution. He said he realizes the Council is not always going to agree with Committees and that sometimes the Council and a Committee are going to just differ and those things are going to occur and be voted upon. Just as a courtesy, Mayor Polz said that was something that he neglected to do himself and thinks maybe the EDA should have the option to take the issue back for discussion.

Mayor Polz said he and Finck were absent at the EDA meeting when it was discussed which lots should be used for UCAP housing projects for next year. He said Finck had previously discussed what was going to occur during the EDA meeting and then the Council was presented with a different plan. Mayor Polz noted there's been a lot of emails that went back and forth. Instead of emails, Mayor Polz suggested getting everyone together in the same room to discuss it and we can probably come up with a resolution.

Finck said he's very disappointed with the EDA Committee on personal attacks. He said that's not the way to approach the issue. Finck said he's very disappointed and will share the emails if he needs to and what they've done. He said the EDA Committee was offered an opportunity to discuss the issue. Finck said after the last meeting, he sent an email that included the Mayor, Skaret, Schmidt and the EDA Committee on some of the challenges with the proposal. He said the response back was "we're not interested". Finck noted no one from the EDA attended the Council meeting which disappoints him because they knew the position a week in advance.

Finck said he's fine with sending the issue back to the EDA Committee, but how we handle ourselves can be done in a professional manner. He said he has no problem sending the issue back to the EDA to be discussed, it's not an issue at all.

Following further discussion regarding which lots should be used for next year's UCAP housing project, Peterson suggested having a Special City Council meeting with the EDA (Economic Development Authority) members and look at the lots on Pond Drive and Westridge Drive all together.

Finck said that would be great. He would have no problem with that. Finck said a Special City Council meeting could be held at noon and all the Councilmembers and EDA members could look at the lots together and really have the conversation on where the UCAP houses for next year should be placed.

Pell agreed with Finck.

**FINCK/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to call a Special Jackson City Council meeting on Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 12 noon to meet with the Jackson EDA group and actually do a tour of lots and explain the logic and really have that deep conversation, but the City Council is not rescinding the project as has been approved.**

Schmidt said a shuttle bus could be arranged through UCAP and Councilmembers and EDA members could all ride together to look at all the lots on Pond Drive and Westridge Drive.

## **SECOND CONSIDERATION: ORDINANCE NO. 132 – PLUMBING PLAN REVIEW**

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Skaret noted First Consideration of Ordinance No. 132 was held at the June 20<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. He said Ordinance No. 132 was initiated by Councilmember Finck to provide another option to give contractors and builders especially for the non-residential plumbing plans that need to be reviewed by the State.

Skaret said sometimes the State gets backlogged and are slow in getting plumbing plans reviewed in a timely manner. He explained there are certified building inspectors who are approved to sign-off on plumbing plans that the State would normally review.

Skaret said Ordinance No. 132 would give the City another venue, another option to help builders and developers move projects along.

Finck said Ordinance No. 132 does not mean contractors or builders have to use building inspectors certified by the State. He said builders and contractors can still go through the traditional plumbing plan review by the State. Finck pointed out when the JEDC build the spec building in the Industrial Park, it took an extended period to get the plumbing plans approved by the State. To keep projects moving, Finck said Ordinance No. 132 would speed up the plumbing plan review process to a two-week window instead of what traditionally has been more of a 60-to-90-day window. Finck said it's just an option on the table for builders and contractors to use. He said it's nothing they have to use, but something the City has in their toolbox.

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve Second Consideration of Ordinance No. 132.

**MIX/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Second Consideration of Ordinance No. 132 regarding Plumbing Plan Reviews.**

## **SECOND CONSIDERATION: ORDINANCE NO. 133 – ESTABLISHING A PLUMBING PLAN REVIEW FEE**

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Skaret noted the plumbing plan review fees in Ordinance No. 133 are based off of the State fees. He said it doesn't cost the City anything.

Finck said the cost to developers is the same as if they had the State review their plans, so it's a wash either way.

Mayor Polz asked for a motion to approve Second Consideration of Ordinance No. 133.

**MIX/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Second Consideration of Ordinance No. 133 establishing a Plumbing Plan Review Fee.**

## **ORDINANCE REVIEW CHAPTERS 30 AND 31 OF THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES**

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Skaret said in reviewing Chapters 30 and 31 of the City Code, there is actually a fair amount that is a little outdated and needs to be clarified.

Skaret said there was an amended draft in the information packet sent to the Mayor and Councilmembers prior to the Council meeting.

Skaret said he and City Attorney Brad Anderson went through Chapters 30 and 31 again and had some more changes. He pointed out Chapter 30.02 refers to the City Seal. Skaret said, as a City, there's a lot of contracts and the City Seal has only been put on major contracts like street projects and things like that. He said the City has a lot of minor contracts that are not for very much dollar amounts at all. Skaret said that's kind of more of a technical thing regarding Chapter 30.02.

Skaret noted Chapter 30.04 regarding Council meetings. He explained it's actually set by ordinance right now that the regular Council meetings are the first and third Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. Skaret said there's really nothing magical about having a Council meeting on a Tuesday verses a Monday or a Wednesday.

Skaret said he and City Attorney Anderson suggest giving the Council a little bit more flexibility by changing the verbiage to *the time, place and frequency of regular meetings of the City Council shall be set by resolution of the City Council*. He said it's easier to pass a resolution rather than go through the ordinance process.

Finck asked if the Council meetings could be as Skaret just described or could the meetings be set as the first and third week of the month and then announce the dates of that week to allow flexibility. He said for example, if one of the Councilmembers were going to be gone on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday but would be available Thursday and Friday on the first and third week. Finck asked if the regular meetings could be set to be held on the first and third weeks of the month, instead of saying it's the first and third Tuesdays of the month so Special City Council meetings wouldn't have to be called if the Council couldn't meet on a Tuesday. He said traditionally the Council meetings will still be held on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, but setting the regular Council meetings on the first and third weeks of the month would give the City Council the flexibility to move the meeting to a different day on the first and third weeks instead of calling for a Special City Council meeting. He said his comments were just food for thought.

City Attorney Anderson said the City Council could do that. He said it would open up the flexibility a little bit more for when the City Council is going to meet for their regular meetings. Attorney Anderson said the Council could approve a resolution at their current meeting to set the day for their next regular meeting.

Skaret said it would also give the City Council more flexibility on setting the starting time for the meeting. He said maybe starting the meeting earlier or later works better for some people.

Titus asked if the City Council would set the day and time for their next regular City Council meeting by resolution each time they met.

Skaret said the Council could have a resolution that says Council meetings will be on the first and third weeks of the month with dates and times to be set by the City Council. He said the verbiage can be worked on.

Mayor Polz said it gives the City Council more flexibility.

Attorney Anderson said for example, if something comes up, the Council can approve a motion to have the next regular City Council meeting on a Wednesday night on the third week of the month.

Peterson asked if the City Council meetings could still be the first and third Tuesdays of the month unless the Council approves a resolution to change the meeting date.

Skaret said that was correct.

Skaret said Chapter 30.05, subsection 5(B) talks about the means of communication of meeting materials. He said right now, it says all meeting materials have to be “snail-mailed” (sent through the U.S. Mail). Skaret pointed out a change to the verbiage to say mail *or delivered by other electronic means to the Mayor and each Alderman*. He also noted that *Consent Agenda* was not part of the current City Code. He said it would be added to Chapter 30.05, subsection 5(B) as among the materials to be distributed to the Mayor and Councilmembers prior to a Council meeting.

City Attorney Anderson said the changes adjust into what is currently being done. He noted the *Consent Agenda* is a pretty important part so that was added.

Skaret said he and Attorney Anderson did not have any suggested changes to Ordinance Chapter 31.

Skaret said the changes in Chapter 30 will be brought back to the City Council in ordinance form so the City Council can actually change the ordinance. He said the City Council will see these changes two more times in ordinance form.

Mix thanked Skaret for taking the time to review the ordinances. She said she knows it’s a lot of work but thinks it’s the right thing to do.

Skaret agreed it’s the right thing to do and a really good project.

## **Other:**

### **Alderman Joe Pell**

Alderman Joe Pell asked Skaret when the next Animal Control meeting will be held.

Skaret said a meeting hasn’t been scheduled yet.

Pell said there needs to be a meeting scheduled.

## **Alderwoman Sara Mix**

Alderwoman Sara Mix said she thinks the UCAP housing is a fantastic project. But in moving forward, she said the City needs to make sure they're vetting out projects. Mix noted a single realtor was chosen for this project and she thinks when City money is being used, the City needs to make sure it's fair bargaining and everyone has an opportunity at things. Mix said she doesn't know if everyone is aware that UCAP selected only one realtor in town. She said she doesn't think that's quite the right thing to do based on the City donating the lots for the UCAP housing.

Finck said the City has always had the approach that it's an open listing for all realtors when it comes to the City's lots. He said he thinks the concern is when one realtor is chosen, it means as Councilmembers, they're endorsing one real estate agent and not the others. Finck asked Councilmembers to keep that in mind because the UCAP housing project is a City project. He said it can be perceived, maybe, that with one sign in the yard for the City project that the City Council made that decision.

Mayor Polz said he spoke with Jeff Gladis, Housing Director at United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) who explained UCAP's procurement process. He said an open listing complicates things for UCAP because UCAP needs to have the realtor educated about policy and things of that nature. Mayor Polz noted Gladis said if the City had contingencies on the land it was donating, such as requiring an open listing, UCAP may be inclined not to accept the donated land which would then impact UCAP's grant scores. He said that would make it less likely that Jackson would get UCAP housing so it would endanger bringing the housing to the Jackson community. With that being said, Mayor Polz said Gladis understands completely where the City is coming from. He said people may not identify the housing project as a UCAP project, but as a City project, especially when there's dollars tied into these lots. Mayor Polz said having just the one realtor sign on the lot looks as though the City is supporting just this one individual business, when in reality, the City would like to have all three signs of the local realtors in the yard and give them all equal opportunity to make the sale. He said Gladis explained it's based on a bidding process and in this instance, Exit Realty was the lowest bidder amongst the other realtors. Mayor Polz said he doesn't know how well it was communicated among the other realtors.

Mayor Polz said it's another one of those things where we've learned moving forward and are working to address it.

Schmidt said UCAP communicated with all the realtors at the beginning of the project, both in writing and verbally, outlining what they were going to do, explaining how the project works and what they were expecting. He said all three realtors presented a bid and UCAP picked the low bidder. Schmidt said all of the real estate agents in town were given an opportunity to be a part of this. He said UCAP went through the bid process and it's not any different than when the City awards a street contract. Schmidt said UCAP has a bid procedure which they follow.

Finck said he thinks there was a lot of misunderstanding in the interview process by UCAP. He said he works with all the real estate agents in town and all do a great job. Finck said he thinks it didn't get vetted out maybe quite the way it could have from what he's been told. He noted he had not spoken with Jeff Gladis from UCAP. Finck said he's disappointed in UCAP's bidding process. He said he would like to see all three real estate agents selling the property. Finck said we want these two houses to be sold so the next two can be built and complete the four-house project. He said limiting it to one real estate agent limits the pool of people to reach because each real estate agent works with their own buyers. Finck said the more information about the new houses that's on the web and the more advertising we get out of this, the better it is for the community long term. He said that's where he's disappointed in the process. Finck said the City needs to make sure everyone understands that this is a UCAP project and it's not the City that interviewed and made this choice regarding realtors to sell the UCAP houses.

### **Alderman Nathan Peterson**

Alderman Peterson said first of all, he wanted to thank the previous City Council for the purchase of the Fire Department's new platform truck. He said the Fairmont Fire Department has been thinking about purchasing a similar truck. Peterson noted the platform truck Jackson ordered for \$1.3 million now costs \$1.95 million. He said being proactive in approving the purchase of the truck last year saved the City \$600,000.



On another note, Peterson said he's attended a few meetings held in the City Council Chambers over Zoom and the audio is absolutely horrible. He said he knows that upgrading the audio was going to be done in the second phase of upgrading the City Council Chambers, but there's been a lot of meetings where important information hasn't gotten across because the sound cuts out. Peterson suggested looking at upgrading the audio system in the first phase of the Council Chamber upgrades. He said maybe City Administrator Skaret could look for funding to include the audio upgrades in the first phase of the remodeling.

Peterson said during the City Council's Strategic Planning Sessions, it was talked about how we want to upgrade the City's streets. He suggested bringing back street assessments to the community. Peterson said currently the City bonds for street improvements in which the cost is spread out over all the homeowners in Jackson. He said the street assessments bring the majority of the tax to the people that benefit from the street. Peterson said the City still gets everyone contributing.

Peterson said in doing some research, Jackson is one of the only communities in Southern Minnesota that does not do street assessments. He said Skaret found the City of Redwood Falls was the only other City in Southern Minnesota that doesn't do street assessments and they're struggling to catch up on upgrading their streets.

Skaret noted the last major project that the City special assessed was the Downtown Project in 1984 and 1985.

Peterson said he thinks special assessments is something that needs to be brought back. He said in the long term it's going to benefit Jackson as a community.

Mayor Polz said when there is a special assessment, it has to add value to a property owner's home, so it is an improvement to a person's home adding home value that's a positive. He said he remembers his parents having assessments on their houses. Mayor Polz said he also remembers when the City used to do assessments for seal coating.

Peterson said he thinks special assessments is something that needs to be brought up and discussed.

## **Alderman Brandon Finck**

Alderman Finck asked for an update regarding the Pool Task Force.

Skaret said the Task Force is waiting for the second study of the pool. He said he's been in touch with Burbach Aquatics multiple times. Skaret said the hold-up for Burbach Aquatics is getting the mechanical subcontractor scheduled.

On another note, Finck said "hats off" to Public Works Director Tony Oxborough and his crew in re-striping the City streets. He said he appreciates the lines are painted on the streets when the kids are out of school this time of year and moving around the community. Finck said it's nice to see the lines highlighted. He said thanks to the Street Department for painting the lines on the streets.

## **Alderman Mark Titus**

Alderman Titus asked for an update on the City Council Chambers remodeling.

Skaret said the remodeling is scheduled to take place during the last two weeks of August. He said the City Council Chambers will be out of commission for about three weeks. Skaret said there may be a need to have one Council meeting off site.

Mayor Polz noted the remodeling costs came in less expensive than was originally approved.

Skaret noted the lighting in the Council Chambers will be upgraded before the painting takes place. He explained the new lighting will help to determine the paint color to be used. Skaret said the upgrades also include new Councilmember chairs and 24 new audience chairs. He said some of the current audience chairs will be kept.

Finck suggested the Library may be an alternative site to hold a regular Council meeting while the Council Chambers are being remodeled.

## **Alderman Chris Naumann**

Alderman Naumann asked if there was any update regarding the former Coast to Coast building.

Skaret reported the structural engineer inspected the building on Monday, June 26<sup>th</sup>. He said the building is very water-logged. Skaret said he thinks the building has gotten a lot worse since Building Inspector Harry Jenness inspected it earlier this spring.

Skaret said he was in the building with the structural engineer on June 26<sup>th</sup>. He said even on the first floor, the water is dripping down from the second floor. Skaret said the structural engineer didn't feel even comfortable walking up on the second floor and just viewed it from the doorway. He said there's about 30 percent to 50 percent of the framing in the building that would have to be redone because it does not meet current code according to the structural engineer.

Skaret said anything can be rehabbed with an unlimited budget, but what is that amount?

Titus said the building is an 1891 building with a 1940 brick shell around it.

Skaret said when the structural engineer went into the building, he pointed out where the original building was and it was about 18 inches or maybe two feet where the outer shell is.

Peterson asked if there are historical grants available.

Skaret said it really isn't a designated historical building.

Titus noted A.C. Whitman had a drug store/mercantile store in that building in 1891. He said Whitman is the gentleman who built the building according to the historical research he has done.

## **City Administrator Matt Skaret**

Skaret said he wanted to wish everyone a Happy Fourth of July. He said he plans to be gone on vacation beginning Friday afternoon, June 30<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, July 5<sup>th</sup>. Skaret said he will be back in the office on Thursday, July 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **Alderman Brandon Finck**

Alderman Finck informed the Council the Personnel Committee had met and conducted City Administrator Skaret's performance review. He said Skaret has a very good review. Finck said the Personnel Committee tasked him with a couple projects. One thing as a Personnel Committee, Finck said the Committee recognizes they've put a lot more on Skaret's plate than what occurred maybe two years ago as we've grown as a City and as we have restructured. He said the Personnel Committee has asked Skaret to figure out how to get a work and home life balance noting they're putting a lot on Skaret with a lot of evening meetings and expecting him to attend. Finck said we know what it's like being Councilmembers in regards to meetings, so we may be seeing some more noon meetings. He asked the Mayor and Councilmembers to please be more receptive to those things so Skaret doesn't have to be at City Hall until 8 o'clock every night.

Finck said he and Personnel Committee members Sara Mix and Mayor Polz felt Skaret has done a very good job and they appreciate the extra efforts he's done. He said the Personnel Committee has asked Skaret to look "at a day in the life of Matt" and see what duties he can delegate to other individuals within the City to relieve some of that extra work.

Finck said he just wanted to report to the whole City Council on how Skaret's review went.

Finck thanked Skaret for the work that he does for the City.

Skaret thanked Finck for his comments and thanked the Personnel Committee and full Council for their support and certainly their patience during the first six months of the new Council.

Mayor Polz thanked Skaret.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

**FINCK/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Jackson City Council meeting at 8:10 p.m.**

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**David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary**

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**Marcus Polz, Mayor**

