

**June 7, 2022  
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, June 7, 2022 with the meeting called to order by Mayor Wayne Walter. On the roll call, the following persons were present in-person, Mayor Wayne Walter and Aldermen Michael More, Jerome Palmer, Brandon Finck, Nathan Peterson, Marcus Polz and Dave Cushman. 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, Street Superintendent Phil Markman, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Tony Oxborough, MRES Jackson Distribution Maintenance Foreman Tony Nitchals, Jeff Johnson of the Tri-For-Health, Jim Syverson, Chris Scholten, City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff, Pastor Eunice Woodberry of Salem Lutheran and Belmont Lutheran Churches, Josh Schuetz of the Jackson County Pilot and Mathew Grisham of KKOJ/KUXX Radio. (A quorum of the City Council was present.)**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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Mayor Walter announced the Pledge of Allegiance would be recited before the City Council meeting was called to order. All those attending the meeting recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

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Mayor Walter 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.**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

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Mayor Walter entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

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

### **Council Discussion Items**

#### **TRI 4 HEALTH EVENT JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup> AND 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2022**

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Jeff Johnson of the Tri 4 Health informed Mayor Walter and Councilmembers that this will be the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Tri 4 Health event in Jackson. He requested that Springfield Parkway be closed to vehicle traffic for the Kid's Tri 4 Health on Friday evening, June 10<sup>th</sup> and traffic control for the adult Tri 4 Health on Saturday morning, June 11<sup>th</sup>.

Johnson said the Tri 4 Health is looking forward to another good year. He said there were a lot of participants signing up for the event this week.

Street Superintendent Phil Markman said the traffic cones and needed signage will be put in place for the Tri 4 Health.

**FINCK/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the street closures and signage needed for the Tri 4 Health Kids and Adult events to be held on Friday, June 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

Johnson thanked Mayor Walter and Councilmembers. He said the Tri 4 Health is a great event. Johnson estimated there have been about 2,500 athletes who have participated in the Tri 4 Health over the years.

### **Unscheduled Guests:**

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

Skaret noted that Tony Nitchals, the new MRES Jackson Distribution Maintenance Foreman, was present at the Council meeting.

Mayor Walter and Councilmembers welcomed Nitchals.

Nitchals commented that he's been working in Jackson for the past two weeks. He explained he's coming to Jackson from Estherville. Nitchals said he started his career in St. James working with Missouri River Energy Services Electric Distribution Superintendent Jeff Bechthold. He said he then moved to work for the Electric Department for the City of Estherville, Iowa.

Skaret welcomed Nitchals and said he's been a great addition to the City's team so far.

Nitchals noted he has 22 years' experience in line work and is looking forward to working in Jackson and keeping everything moving smoothly as the City progresses.

Mayor Walter and Councilmembers thanked Nitchals and welcomed him to Jackson.

### **OLD WATER STORAGE TANK PAINTING QUOTES**

Water/Wastewater Superintendent Tony Oxborough said painting the old ground storage water tank at the Water Plant has been talked about in the past.

Oxborough said the old ground storage water tank has been renovated to be used for storage. He said a couple of doors have been installed and the baffle wall in the inside the old tank has been removed. Oxborough said the renovation work on the tank has been completed. He said plans are to paint the old tank royal blue to match the new ground storage water tank and put the Husky logo on it. Oxborough said before the Husky logo can be put on it, the old tank needs to be repainted.

Oxborough noted two quotes were received for painting the old tank. He said the lower of the two quotes, at \$18,000, came from Color Dynamics LLC. Oxborough said Color Dynamics LLC is a water tower company that the City of Jackson has used in the past for patching the inside and outside of the City's water tanks. Oxborough said he is very confident with the work by Color Dynamics. He said Color Dynamics would like to get the old water tank painted before the Fourth of July.

Oxborough said he had money budgeted for the painting of the old ground storage water tank. He said he had enough money budgeted to move forward with the painting of the tank and it will not be over budget.

Finck asked Oxborough if he had someone available to paint the Husky logo on the old water tank after it's painted.

Oxborough said he has two people available that can paint the logo.

**POLZ/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the low bid of \$18,000 from Color Dynamics LLC to pressure wash and surface prep the old ground storage water tank at the Water Plant and paint it to match the existing ground storage water tank.**

Oxborough thanked Mayor Walter and Councilmembers.

Mayor Walter commented it looks nice around the Water Plant.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF MIKE EDDY TO THE PARK BOARD**

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**FINCK/CUSHMAN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Mayor Wayne Walter's appointment of Mike Eddy to the Park Board.**

#### **REQUEST FROM THE JACKSON COUNTY FAIR BOARD TO PLACE A SIGN PROMOTING THE JACKSON COUNTY FAIR NEAR THE WATER PLANT SIGN ALONG HIGHWAY 71**

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City Clerk and Jackson County Fair Board member Dave Maschoff explained the Fair Board has a four foot by five-foot sign promoting the upcoming Jackson County Fair that they would like to place in the area of the City's Water Plant along Highway 71.

Maschoff said just a couple of fence posts would be needed to erect the sign. He said once the Fair was over, the sign would be removed. Maschoff said he could touch base with Water/Wastewater Superintendent Tony Oxborough on locating the fence posts to avoid hitting any underground lines.

Maschoff said the Fair Board would appreciate the Council approving their request. He noted the Jackson County Fair is only about seven weeks away.

**FINCK/MORE moved and it was carried to approve the request from the Jackson County Fair Board to place a sign promoting the Jackson County Fair near the Water Plant along Highway 71.**

**Voting in favor of the motion were Aldermen Michael More, Jerome Palmer, Brandon Finck, Marcus Polz and Dave Cushman.**

**Abstaining from the vote was Alderman Nathan Peterson.**

Maschoff said the Jackson County Fair Board thanks Mayor Walter and City Councilmembers on approving the Fair Board's request.

## **FRONTLINE WORKING PAY INFORMATION**

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Skaret said this agenda item was informational. He said the application period for Frontline Working Pay starts on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in Minnesota.

Skaret explained during this past legislative session, the State Legislature approved what's called "Frontline Pay" for workers whose job did not allow them to telecommute during the COVID pandemic. Skaret said everyone employed with the City basically worked all the way through COVID.

Skaret said there's more questions than answers at this point as is often found with legislation from the State Legislature.

Skaret said the categories of occupations that are eligible, or might be eligible, is fairly vague and wide open at this point. He said it's clear that firefighters, ambulance personnel being emergency responders and liquor store employees being retail employees are eligible for this extra incentive pay through the State. Skaret said according to the answer he received from the League of Minnesota Cities, some of the City's employees may be considered as "regulatory employees" and might be eligible for the Frontline Working Pay. He said it's not the City that determines who's eligible for the Frontline Working Pay. Skaret said each individual employee has to apply through the State to get the incentive pay.

Skaret said the Frontline Working Incentive Pay is up to \$1,500 but it might not be \$1,500. He said the amount depends on how many people apply for the incentive. Skaret said if the amount is more than \$600, it counts as taxable income.

Skaret said information about the Frontline Working Pay will be distributed to the City's employees on June 8<sup>th</sup> regarding what they need to do to apply. He said when an employee applies for the Frontline Working Pay, the State makes the determination of whether the employee is eligible or not for the money.

Skaret said this agenda item was informational and no action was required by the City Council. He said the Frontline Working Pay will be discussed further with City staff.

Through COVID, Skaret said he wanted to say “hats off” again to all of the City’s employees, firefighters, ambulance personnel, the street, water, sewer, electric, office staff at City Hall and liquor store employees. He said we all stayed open through COVID and the City’s service was uninterrupted to the residents. Skaret said his is very proud of the City’s staff and how they came through COVID.

### **FIRST CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCE NO. 123 FIXING COMPENSATION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCILMEMBERS’ SALARIES**

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Skaret noted that fixing the compensation of the Mayor and City Councilmembers had been discussed earlier this year.

Skaret said the last time the City Council approved an increase was back in 2014 which could not take effect until after the next General Election. He explained any increase in the Mayor or City Councilmember’s salaries cannot go into effect until January 1<sup>st</sup> following the General Election.

Skaret said serving as Mayor or as a City Councilmember is a demanding job. He noted it’s not a volunteer position. Skaret said everyone he’s worked with on a City Council has said it’s a lot more than what they envisioned when they decided to run. He said serving on the City Council is more than just two meetings a month. Skaret noted there’s a lot of board, committee and commission meetings in addition to the City Council meetings. He said the Mayor and Councilmembers are very visible to the public and are a City Councilmember 24/7. Skaret said residents will stop Councilmembers in the grocery store or on the street and so forth. He said serving as a Mayor or City Councilmember is a lot and is a major undertaking.

Skaret explained the Finance Committee talked about compensation for the Mayor and City Councilmembers. He said a lot of ideas were discussed and the Finance Committee looked at how other cities compensate their Mayor and Councilmembers and looked at some comparisons.

Skaret said currently the Mayor is paid \$5,000 per year and City Councilmembers are paid \$4,200 per year and are paid monthly.

Skaret said the Finance Committee is recommending increasing the salary for the Mayor to \$6,000 per year and increasing the salary for Councilmembers to \$5,000 per year to be paid monthly. Also, according to the Finance Committee's recommendation, he said the pay for the Local Board of Review meetings will increase from the current \$25 per meeting to \$35.

Skaret said the pay for the Mayor or Councilmembers to attend a half-day meeting such as the League of Minnesota Cities or Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities will remain the same at \$50 for a half-day meeting and \$100 for a full-day meeting.

Skaret pointed out one thing that's been added is attendance at Board, Commission and Committee meetings. He said in the past there hasn't been any extra pay for that, but the Finance Committee is recommending adding a line to pay \$35 a meeting for those who attend.

Skaret noted if a Councilmember has an unexcused absence from a Council meeting, there would be a reduction of \$60 a meeting. He explained an unexcused absence is if the Councilmember doesn't contact the Mayor, City Administrator or City Clerk prior to the Council meeting to let them know they won't be attending. Skaret said an unexcused absence would be if the Councilmember doesn't contact anyone and doesn't show up.

Skaret said if approved, the changes in the compensation for the Mayor and City Councilmembers would take effect on January 1, 2023 per State Statute.

Mayor Walter asked for a motion to approve first consideration of Ordinance No. 123.

**FINCK/PALMER moved and it was unanimously carried to approve First Consideration of Ordinance No. 123 fixing compensation of the Mayor and City Councilmembers salaries effective on January 1, 2023 per State Statute.**

## **CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE ON THE JBDC BOARD**

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Skaret said Economic Development Coordinator Dave Schmidt informed him that at the most recent JBDC (Jackson Business Development Committee) meeting, the JBDC inquired whether the City Council would be interested in having a Council representative on the JBDC Board as basically a liaison between the Council and the Committee. Skaret said it was noted that it doesn't have to be the same Councilmember attending the JBDC meeting each time.

Skaret said the JBDC meets monthly on the first Thursday of the month at 11 a.m. He asked the Councilmembers if any of them were interested in attending the JBDC meetings.

Skaret said the JBDC is different than the JEDC. He explained the JBDC is really more focused on the retail and service sector of the community. Skaret noted the JEDC is a fully private group where as the JBDC is just really more of an advisory group to the EDA and City Council. He said the JBDC wanted to reach out and invite any Councilmember if they would like to have a seat at their table.

Cushman said to him it seems like the representation on the JBDC should fall back on CEDA who is the City Council's representative to that board. He said the CEDA person could report back to the full City Council instead of just one Councilmember gathering that information which the City is already paying someone to get. He said that's his take on it. Cushman said he has no problem if a Councilmember wants to attend the JBDC meetings, but it just seems like we're doubling up on a process the Council might not otherwise have to.

Mayor Walter said for the short term, he would be the City Council's representative on the JBDC Board.

Mayor Walter asked for a motion regarding his appointment as the City Council's representative on the JBDC Board.

**PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried that the City Council will have a representative on the JBDC (Jackson Business Development Committee) Board and the representative will be Mayor Wayne Walter.**



## **DEER HUNT UPDATE**

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Skaret said he's continuing to communicate with the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) regarding archery deer hunting in the City of Jackson.

Skaret said the DNR is in the middle of their rule making process for the upcoming archery deer hunting season. He said based on all communications with them, the DNR is likely to approve a two-tag special provision for the archery season this fall in the City limits.

As was discussed at the May 17<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, Skaret said the archery hunting would be on private land. He explained that way the City doesn't have to be involved and doesn't have to issue permits and regulate how many tags are issued.

Skaret said the DNR is likely to approve two tags, where basically the archery hunter is allowed two deer but the first deer harvested has to be a doe. He said the DNR is very confident that it will be approved in formulating the final regulations for the upcoming archery season.

Peterson asked if obtaining the deer hunting tags will be an online process or will hunters have to come to City Hall to obtain their tags.

Skaret said the entire process will run through the DNR.

Mayor Walter noted there was a person in the Council Chambers who wanted to make a comment.

Jim Syverson said he has lived in Jackson his entire life. He said he was just going to point out the positives. Syverson said the deer are really an enhancement to living in Jackson for a lot of people, some people anyway. He said he doesn't know what the quantity of deer has been in the past, but thinks it's really nice that the deer are out there. Syverson said if you feed the deer, the deer kind of get to know you and a lot of friendly deer in the community is really unique. He said you can live a lot of places where there aren't deer, but it's just something that's really unique to Jackson and he just wanted to point that out and keep it in mind.

Mayor Walter thanked Syverson for his comments.

(This agenda item was informational and no Council action was needed.)

## **ENERGY EMERGENCY ALERTS**

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Skaret said on June 2<sup>nd</sup> he attended a Web Ex meeting hosted by Missouri River Energy Services. He explained our area is in what's called the MISO footprint for the transmission and electric grid.

Skaret said MISO is predicting that there is a strong possibility that we may not be able to meet our peak demand this summer. He said the reason is because we're making the switch very fast from carbon-based energy to renewable based energy such as wind and solar.

Skaret said in the last year, there are EPA regulations that are hitting the coal fired power plants hard, particularly with the ash pits more towards the eastern part of the MISO footprint. He said we're losing some of that easy capacity where you can flip a switch and fire up the coal plant and be able to meet the energy demand in short order on really, really hot days or really, really cold days. Skaret noted in February of 2021, there was a massive shortfall of electricity in being able to meet the capacity in a large area of the country. He said a shortfall of electricity could happen this summer because with the renewable energy, there's just no way to efficiently and effectively store wind and solar power. Skaret said it basically has to be used as it's produced. He noted when there are the really, really high peak demands on hot days, a lot of times the wind isn't blowing very strong. Skaret said with the capacity already lost with the coal fired power plants being shut out, it's just not possible to meet the demand for electricity.

Skaret said there might be some situations this summer where there's going to be some Emergency Energy Alerts. He said at EEA-Zero, everything is fine and normal. Skaret said when you get to level EEA-1, the electric system is at risk and we're at or near maximum capacity. He said at level EEA-2, appeals will be made to electric customers to reduce usage, if a person is not home, they should shut their air conditioner and lights off during that peak time in the afternoon or late afternoon when it's the hottest out. Skaret said an appeal would also be made to those with generators to please turn them on. He said that might affect some of the industries in Jackson. Skaret said the City is going to try and find out how many of the industries in Jackson have generators.

Skaret said the City is going to be working with Missouri River Energy Services on setting up an official City Plan for these situations when we reach EEA Level-1, EEA Level-2, EEA Level-3 and so forth.

Skaret explained EEA Level-3 is when the electric system is at risk. He said that's basically the worst-case scenario when there will be rolling blackouts and brownouts where the City has to involuntarily reduce their electric load.

Skaret said he's not trying to scare people, but make them aware about the possible issuance of Energy Alerts and potential rolling blackouts for now and for at least the foreseeable future until more capacity can be built back into the electric system. He said there are some projects in the works that Missouri River Energy is studying such as a ground storage system in Gregory County, South Dakota. Skaret said that system would basically allow water to be stored underground in the side of a hill which would then be ready to be released and used for hydro power when it's needed. He noted that project and others are years away from coming to fruition.

Skaret said he wanted to make the Mayor, Councilmembers and the public aware of what may be occurring regarding electric power during periods of peak demand.

MRES Jackson Distribution Maintenance Foreman Tony Nitchals said if more volunteer efforts can be done as a community in conserving electric power, then it will lessen the risk for having the involuntary blackouts or brown outs. He said if it's shown the community is voluntarily making efforts to conserve energy during peak times, it will be less likely that the community may experience rolling blackouts.

## **STREET AND UTILITIES PROJECT BID SCHEDULE UPDATE**

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Skaret reported the bid opening for the Emily Street, Riverside Drive, River Street Project and Northridge Drive projects have been pushed back. He said the bid opening will be held on Friday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. Skaret said the bid opening for the Downtown Alley Project and the alternate for the paving in the skating rink area will be held on Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.

Skaret said all the bids will be submitted online and all done electronically. He said hopefully at the next Council meeting on June 21<sup>st</sup>, the Council will be able to approve bids.

## **DOG PARK UPDATE**

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Skaret said the Finance Committee met on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and discussed the proposed Dog Park.

Skaret said the Finance Committee, financially, very strongly supports continuing to have a Dog Park.

Skaret said the Park Board is going to be talking about looking at some alternative locations other than the baseball field at Albertus field at their meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup>. He said other potential locations may include utilizing the south part of Memorial Park. Skaret said the Park Board will look at the details surrounding an alternative location for a Dog Park.

Skaret said the whole discussion about the Dog Park has become Dog Park verses ballfields. He said it's gotten to be somewhat of a debate of either/or. Skaret said the position of the Finance Committee is it's not an either/or but we can have both.

Skaret said, if anything, the discussion about the Dog Park put a spotlight on Albertus Field. Skaret said the baseball fields at Albertus Field have been largely unused since the flooding of 2018 and 2019. He noted there has been some usage at the Albertus Field ballfields the last couple summers with practices and a few games so there's a little bit of usage.

Skaret said the discussion has really brought to question should the City be looking at the ballfields in the larger picture and asking if they currently meet our needs and if not, what does the City need to do to make them meet the needs. He asked are the ballfields at Albertus Field meeting the needs of the community as a whole when it comes to baseball and softball. Skaret said if they're not, why aren't they. He said these are larger questions for the Council and Park Board and for some engagement with the community on what would it take to bring the ballfields at Albertus Field up to par and make them a benefit. Skaret said another question is whether the City should continue to have ballfields in Albertus Field because it floods all the time. He said if Albertus Field is not the proper place, should the City be looking elsewhere in the community to build a decent baseball, softball and recreation complex and where is a good spot for that? Skaret went on to say that if there isn't a good spot, what does the City need to do to make Albertus Field a good spot.

Skaret said the City would have to address the flooding at Albertus Field. He said it might potentially mean expanding the levy and continuing the levy further south all the way to Highway 71. Skaret said if the levy is expanded to Highway 71, then basically a bowl has been created in Albertus Field. He said to be able to handle the water when it rains, the drainage and storm sewer situation would have to be addressed.

Skaret said there really needs to be some larger questions regarding how much are these different options going to cost, how is the City going to pay for them and how much is it going to affect the taxpayer.

Skaret said we're not going to answer or solve all those questions at the June 7<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. He said having a discussion offers a preview of what the City Council will be talking about going forward in the upcoming weeks and months.

Chris Scholten thanked Mayor Walter and Councilmembers for discussing the proposal regarding turning one of the ballfields at Albertus Field into a Dog Park. He thanked the Mayor and Council for hearing the concerns of those that feel that both ball diamonds are needed at Albertus Field. Scholten agreed with the comment that the community can have both the ballfields at Albertus Field and a Dog Park, we don't have to pick just one.

Scholten said he appreciates the Mayor and Council taking time to talk about matter and going forward with future conversations.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 33-0622 DESIGNATING MMUA REPRESENTATIVES**

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As discussed, a couple of Council meetings ago, Skaret noted Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) still had himself and former Alderman Matt Madden as the City's designated representative and alternate representative. He noted at that Council meeting, Alderman Michael More was designated to be the City's alternate representative to MRES. Skaret said he would recommend doing the same and having More also serve as the City's designated alternate representative to the MMUA. Skaret asked More if he would be willing to also serve as the City's alternate representative to the MMUA.

More said he would.

Mayor Walter entertained a motion to approve Resolution No. 33-0622 designating MMUA Representatives.

**PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 33-0622 designating City Administrator Matt Skaret as the City's MMUA Representative with Alderman Michael More as the City's Alternate MMUA Representative.**

**Other:**

**Alderman Marcus Polz – No Mow May**

Polz noted there were comments on social media during May about “No Mow May”. He asked if it could be noted for the City Council to revisit the “No Mow May” proposal next year. He said if it’s something residents want to participate in, there could maybe be a registration process or something like that so it’s known who’s participating other than someone who’s simply not mowing their lawn. Polz asked if a note could be made to readdress the “No Mow May” in the future.

**Alderman Nathan Peterson**

Peterson noted there are partially orange and partially white lights in the downtown street lights. He asked MRES Jackson Distribution Maintenance Foreman Tony Nitchals if he could look into what it would cost to switch the orange lights to white or to LED’S. Peterson said it would clean-up the look of the lights and make it look nicer.

## **Mayor Wayne Walter**

Mayor Walter announced that he will not be seeking re-election as Mayor this year. He said if someone wants to consider running for Mayor, they are more than welcome to do so.

Mayor Walter said serving as Mayor has been a real learning experience and a great pleasure. He said he wanted to thank everyone he has worked with.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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With no further business, Mayor Walter said he would entertain a motion to adjourn.

**POLZ/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Jackson City Council meeting at 7:07 p.m.**

Mayor Walter thanked everyone for attending.

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**David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary**

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**Wayne Walter, Mayor**





