

**March 19, 2024  
Jackson, Minnesota**

**The Jackson City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers of City Hall and also by Teleconference and Zoom at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 with the meeting called to order by Mayor Marcus Polz. On the roll call, the following persons were present in-person, Mayor Marcus Polz, Alderwoman Sara Mix and Aldermen Mark Titus, Chris Naumann, Nathan Peterson and Joe Pell. Also attending in-person were City Attorney Brad Anderson, Public Works Director Tony Oxborough, Jackson Fire Chief Dave Bond, Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk, Luke Ewald of Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services, John Weland of the Jackson County Animal Protection Society, Helen Mekosch, Mike Schwartz, Ferman Woodberry, Bob Grunewald, Jeff Johson, Chris Tusa, Alan Stammer, Tim Beck, Jeff Johnson, Jessica Pederson, Bridget Kolander-Gilbert, Pastor Ted Carnahan of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Jackson, Mathew Grisham of KKOJ/KUXX Radio and Joshua Schuetz of the Jackson County Pilot. Joining the meeting via Zoom and Teleconference was City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff. (Alderman Brandon Finck was absent.) (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 except for Alderman Brandon Finck.

**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.

See 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.**

## **Council Discussion Items**

### **CLOSED SESSION AS PERMITTED BY ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, SECTION 13D.05 TO DISCUSS LITIGATION**

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

**PELL/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried for the City Council to go into Closed Session at 6:02 p.m. as permitted by Attorney-Client Privilege, Section 13D.05 to discuss litigation.**

### **COMING OUT OF CLOSED SESSION**

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

**PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried for the City Council to come out of Closed Session at 6:31 p.m.**

## **HELEN MEKOSCH REGARDING NEW DOOR AT SENIOR CITIZENS BUILDING**

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Helen Mekosch spoke to the Mayor and City Councilmembers about installing a new door on the east side of the Senior Citizens building that faces Highway 71. She explained the door is heavy and senior citizens have difficulty in opening it. Mekosch noted the door on the south side of the building that was installed with an automatic door opener and made ADA compliant in 2020 is still in good working order. She said getting a new door installed on the east side of the building would be wonderful.

**PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to send the request for a new door on the east side of the Senior Citizens Building to the Senior Advisory Committee to seek bids for a new door.**

Mekosch thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

## **TIM BECK, BRIDGET KOLANDER-GILBERT**

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Mayor Polz welcomed Tim Beck and Bridget Kolander-Gilbert to the Council meeting.

Mayor Polz noted the City Council earlier declared a Community Festival for the Cruise-in on Main Classic Car events this summer. He said the intention was to basically support Jackson's small-town businesses. Mayor Polz noted since the Council's action, concerns have been raised by some of the establishments that serve liquor.

Tim Beck representing the Jackson American Legion Post 130 and Bridget Kolander Gilbert of Bridget's Bucksports Brew HaHa and Grill said they wanted to discuss the City Council's action regarding designating the Cruise-In Event as a Community Festival so people could have alcoholic drinks on the street while they looked at the classic cars.

Beck explained the Legion and Bridget's Bucksports' insurance carriers will not allow patrons to leave their premises with alcoholic beverages. He said the Community Festival designation for the Cruise-In will not benefit their establishments. Beck said he doesn't think the request for designating the Cruise-In as a Community Festival to allow alcohol on the City street was properly presented to the City Council. He said there's concerns about who would be liable if an incident occurred due to allowing alcohol on the street for the Cruise-In.

Beck said if the Legion allows anyone to leave their premises with a drink, their liability insurance will not cover them. He said another concern was about alcohol being passed on to someone underage.

Jeff Johnson, the Legion's Bar Board President, said he was concerned about liability if liquor was allowed on the street. He noted the Legion's liability insurance only covers the liquor served on their premises and will not cover them if alcoholic drinks are allowed to leave their premises. Johnson said the Legion will shut down on Cruise-In nights to avoid any chance of losing their license or not being covered by their insurance if someone would walk off their premises with an alcoholic drink. He said he was attending the City Council meeting to express concern about potential liability, not only to the businesses, but to the community. Johnson said he also had concerns about how allowing alcoholic drinks on the street is going to be structured and how it's going to be regulated.

Beck said he and Kolander-Gilbert weren't aware of the request made by Tom Holthe of the Cruise-In Club regarding designating the Cruise-Ins as a Community Festival until they saw it in the newspaper.

Mayor Polz thanked those attending to educate him and the City Councilmembers. He said the concerns have been received and heard. Mayor Polz entertained a motion to rescind the City Council's previous motion to declare the Cruise-Ins as a Community Festival.

**NAUMANN/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to rescind the City Council's February 6th, 2024 motion to approve the Jackson Cruise-in event dates as Community Festivals and not allow alcoholic beverages purchased at local establishments to be carried out onto the City streets.**

### **AIRPORT RUNWAY RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT CHANGE ORDER NO. 3**

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Skaret said the Airport Runway Reconstruction Project is completed. He explained the City is trying to get that project closed out with the grants from the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and MnDOT (Minnesota Department of Transportation). Skaret said if the project can be closed out, the City will be getting the \$600,000 which is being retained by MnDOT and FAA at this time.

Skaret said in order to get the grant closed out, the City Council needs to approve a Change Order which is just reflecting of the final quantities of the project. He explained the project did go over the budget by about \$100,000, primarily because of the extra dirt work that was involved with the project. Skaret said to keep in mind that \$100,000 on a \$5 million project is a small percentage.

**MIX/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Airport Runway Reconstruction Project Change Order No. 3.**

#### **WATER PLANT MEDIA FILTER REPLACEMENT PROJECT PAY APPLICATION NO. 4**

Skaret said Engineer Maria McCarty from SEH was joining the Council meeting via Zoom. He said Pay Application No. 4 in the amount of \$171,564.43 payable to Rubin Construction for the Water Plant project is before the City Council for consideration.

McCarty reported the filter media and automatic valves at the Water Plant have been installed. She said work is underway regarding the chlorine injection. McCarty said the project is getting close to being completed and wrapped up.

McCarty said Pay Application No. 4 pertains to a lot of the electrical work and also the programming. She said it also includes work on the chemical feed system.

**MIX/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Water Plant Media Filter Replacement Project Pay Application No. 4 in the amount of \$171,564.43 payable to Rubin Construction.**

#### **FIRST CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCE NO. 142 FIXING COMPENSATION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCILMEMBERS**

Mayor Polz said it's his understanding the compensation of the Mayor and City Councilmembers for attending meetings is reviewed from time to time. He explained the City Council cannot impose a raise upon themselves so they review the compensation on a regular basis for incoming Councilmembers and Mayors that may be elected in the future.

Mayor Polz said the recommendation from the Personnel Committee is that the salaries for the Mayor and Councilmembers would stay the same as it is now. He said the changes to note was that the compensation for the Local Board of Review would increase from \$35 to \$50 a meeting, a half-day meeting would increase from \$50 to \$100, compensation for a one-day meeting would go from \$100 to \$200. Mayor Polz noted a lot of people have taken personal time off to attend City meetings which is expected as an elected official, but the increase in compensation is to reflect more of the current compensation rates.

Skaret said attendance at Board, Commission, Committee and any other meetings will increase from \$35 to \$50 a meeting. He said language is also included in Ordinance No. 142 that pertains to any other City meeting that is attended because Councilmembers do, from time to time, attend other meetings that may not be an official committee, board or commission meeting. Skaret said those meetings may include a meeting with a potential business owner that wants to do business in Jackson or a meeting with the Fire or Ambulance Departments. He noted there's a fair number of informal meetings that do not fall under the current wording of the current ordinance. Skaret explained Ordinance No. 142 is more encompassing regarding compensation for various types of meetings.

Mayor Polz noted the compensation changes cannot take effect until January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 according to State Statue. He said a motion was needed from the City Council to approve First Consideration of Ordinance No. 142.

**PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to approve First Consideration of Ordinance No. 142 fixing compensation of the Mayor and City Councilmembers.**

## **CITY ADMINISTRATOR EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT**

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Mayor Polz said the City Administrator Employment Agreement for incoming City Administrator Shelley Oltmans was included in the Councilmembers' informational packets. He said Oltmans plans to begin her duties as City Administrator in Jackson on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mayor Polz said a motion was needed to approve the Employment Agreement.

**PELL/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the City Administrator Employment Agreement.**

## **HOTEL LICENSING**

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Skaret explained hotel licensing has historically been a function of the Minnesota Department of Health. He said hotels are supposed to be inspected by the Department of Health annually. However, Skaret said due to the Department of Health's workload and staffing problems at times, inspectors are not able to inspect all of the hotels once a year.

Skaret said the City of Waite Park petitioned the State Legislature a few years ago and actually received a special provision that allowed them to license hotels. He said during the 2023 Minnesota Legislative Session, a new law was enacted that allowed municipalities to have some licensing authority of hotels. He explained it's not full licensing authority. Skaret said anything pertaining to such things as health, safety and sanitation still has to be referred to the State Health Department. He said it's not the full teeth of the licensing authority for cities, but on the plus side it would give the City another tool in the toolbox particularly with inspections and being able to formerly report violations to the Minnesota Department of Health. He said that could be a benefit to the City.

City Attorney Brad Anderson said the hotel licensing allows the City to enforce the State's statutes and rules. He said the City could probably be a little more strict if the City would wish, but the City can't reduce any of the State's requirements. He said the hotel licensing gives the outstate areas of Minnesota who probably don't get visited by State inspectors as frequently as they should some authority. Attorney Anderson said it provides those outstate Cities the ability to address issues that may arise and then hopefully the State will get involved quickly thereafter.

**NAUMANN/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to have the City Attorney and City staff work on drafting a hotel licensing ordinance to be considered at an upcoming City Council meeting.**

## **VACATE PETERSBURG DRIVE**

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Mayor Polz noted Bob Grunewald was present at the City Council meeting to comment about the proposal to vacate Petersburg Drive.

Grunewald said he was opposed to vacating Petersburg Drive. He said Petersburg Drive is a public road that has access to the Des Moines River. Grunewald said Petersburg Drive is more than just a driveway for Svoboda Excavating. He said it's a really nice public road that goes right down to the old bridgehead for the Des Moines River. Grunewald said it's an historic area. He noted that bridgehead has been there for a very long time, well over 130 years. Grunewald noted the bridge is gone. He said hopefully there will be more discussion in the future and maybe get some answers to his concerns.

Grunewald said one of his concerns for vacating Petersburg Drive is an easement that was being talked about. He said the City is seeking improvements to the sewer in the Petersburg Drive location. Grunewald said there's a proposal to do a gravity feed through an easement. He said it was indicated somewhere that they wanted to do a "land swap" for the easement for the gravity sewer and that Svoboda Excavating will get the road. Grunewald said he doesn't think land swaps are good. He said he thinks land swaps are hard to understand. Grunewald said he thinks any easement should be cash. He said here's the easement, here's your money. Grunewald said that's his opinion and he hopes somebody can talk about that because land swaps are confusing to him.

As far as the options for the siphon (sewer), to reroute, repair or adjustments, Grunewald asked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers to look at all the options. He said as far as he can tell, there are at least four options for that siphon (sewer). Grunewald noted the siphon is working. He said as far as he can see, there would be four options there for something that isn't broken. Grunewald said one option is to do nothing because that won't cost the City anything, it will put the City at risk, but it won't cost the City anything. He said second, maybe the City should look at the cost of putting in a Lift Station. Grunewald said Lift Stations are really expensive and the City doesn't want that, but the City should look at that option which would help justify the cost for buying the easement and trading Petersburg Drive for that easement.



Grunewald said another option, if there are worries about the old siphon, is to put in a new siphon 15 feet away from the current siphon so now there are double siphons that are under there. He said siphons work. Grunewald said siphons are engineered and the City should look at what the cost of that would be and then certainly look what that gravity feed line would cost compared to the cost of the easement. He said he hopes that can be looked at before just going with trading Petersburg Drive for an easement across Kolander's property.

Grunewald said he's hoping there can be a certified appraisal for the value of Petersburg Drive before it's sold or traded to Svoboda's to find out what that road is worth, especially where it has access to the Des Moines River. He said locally, the DNR could be involved because they would have some knowledge as to how valuable an asphalt road touching the waterway in the City limits would be. Grunewald said it would be nice if there were engineering reports for the proposed construction.

Grunewald said he would also like to know a detailed timeline for when the City started seeking the easement. He said he would like information regarding the easement addressed because he found the information provided to him confusing.

Grunewald said he believes where the old footbridge used to be would be an excellent place for any future County trail going across the Des Moines River. He noted it has a high elevation. Grunewald said the previous bridge was an old bridge and the early bridge builders would not have put that bridge in a bad spot. He said they had any place they wanted to put that bridge and the early bridge builders chose to put it there because they had the elevation above the river. Grunewald said it's a wonderful site for the future and would hate to see that site lost.

Grunewald said he was wondering if that easement is being held hostage for the road so the City can't have an easement for the sewer unless someone gets the road. He said that's a thought he had.

Grunewald asked the Mayor and Councilmembers to please table the issue of vacating Petersburg Drive for further discussions, preferably through the Parks and Trails Committees, so they can have some input. He said of the couple of Parks and Trails Committee members he's talked to, they didn't know anything about this. Grunewald said those Committee members thanked him for letting them know.

Grunewald asked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers to please give the proposal to vacate Petersburg Drive some consideration and if they could refer it to another Committee so there could be more discussion. He said it would be a shame to lose that road (Petersburg Drive) because it's a really good road. Grunewald noted before Petersburg Drive was rebuilt, there was maybe two inches of asphalt there and mostly potholes. He said it's much different today.

Grunewald thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers for their time and asked to please give the matter some consideration.

Mayor Polz thanked Grunewald for his time. He asked if vacating Petersburg Drive has been discussed with the Street Department.

Public Works Director Tony Oxborough said vacating Petersburg Drive was his original idea. He noted that Harlow and Carol Kolander used to own property along Petersburg Drive. Oxborough said in October 2023, Svoboda's purchased the Kolander property and now owns the land on both sides of the street. He explained now that one block of Petersburg Drive coming off South Highway 71 to the Des Moines River services one person and splits up the property Svoboda's own. Oxborough said currently, for snow removal purposes, the City will be basically plowing Svoboda's driveway for them. He said he doesn't see a purpose for it and that was his intent for vacating that block of Petersburg Drive.

Oxborough said currently the City has a utility easement that Svoboda Excavating actually installed back in 2021 when the sewer line crossed the Des Moines River. He said there's also a natural gas main that goes through there as well. Oxborough said the City would not be foregoing that utility easement and the City would still retain that. He said it's just the idea of why would the City maintain a road that's really somebody else's property. Oxborough said the City could earn the tax revenue based off turning that portion of Petersburg Drive over to Svoboda's. He said if the City vacated Petersburg Drive, they would still maintain a utility easement.

Oxborough said he doesn't want to make enemies with people. He said he understands the Trails Committee has ideas for the area so he would suggest referring the matter to the Trails Committee. If the biggest goal is to have a trail established, Oxborough said instead of a road, it could be changed to create a trail easement. He said he doesn't think it has to be treated as a road anymore.

Oxborough said nothing had to be accomplished at the March 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. He noted he had mentioned about vacating Petersburg Drive to Alderman Peterson and Peterson wanted to do something about it and that was great. He said that's how the matter came up to be presented to the Council. Oxborough noted vacating that portion of Petersburg Drive to Svoboda Excavating represents turning over about 60 yards of river access while the City currently owns 1.12 miles of Des Moines River shoreline. He said he didn't think giving up 60 yards of shoreline was going to be that big of an issue. Oxborough said installing a walking trail bridge from Petersburg Drive up to Spirit Lake Drive at some point may be costly.

Oxborough said at this point, the issue is informational. He suggested referring the issue of vacating Petersburg Drive to the Trails Committee for discussion.

**PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to refer the matter of vacating the one block of Petersburg Drive coming off South Highway 71 to the Des Moines River to the Trails Committee for discussion.**

#### **DECLARE MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE SURPLUS PROPERTY AND AUTHORIZE THE SOLICITATION OF BIDS**

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Skaret said the EDA Office has been doing some cleaning out of their Conference Room closet. He said there's a number of miscellaneous items that were obtained by the City years ago when a business on Main Street defaulted on their loan through the City and closed. Skaret said none of the items are overly valuable but just things the EDA Office would like to clean out.

Skaret said the EDA Office would like to mount the TV that used to be in the City Council Chambers in the EDA's Conference room to be used for Zoom meetings. He said the person who installed the two new TVs in the Council Chambers can install the TV in the EDA's Conference Room.

**MIX/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to declare the miscellaneous items from the Economic Development Office Conference Room Closet as surplus property and authorize the solicitation of bids.**

## **NO PARKING OR HANDICAPPED PARKING SIGN WEST END OF GRANT STREET**

Skaret explained ever since the Disc Golf Course was installed a couple of years ago, it's been kind of an ongoing complaint regarding parking on Grant Street. He said Grant Street ends right there at the trail and right at the start of the Disc Golf Course. Skaret said Public Works Director Tony Oxborough and the Street Department crew have done a wonderful job of creating a designated parking area off of North Highway. He said the Street Department is actually working on improvements right now that are defining the parking area and expanding it.

Skaret said the Disc Golf League and the people who have spearheaded the Disc Golf Project and have adopted it as their own have worked really hard to spread the word about not parking at the end of Grant Street and to park in the designated parking area. He said 99.9 percent of the users of the Disc Golf Course do comply. However, Skaret said the word doesn't reach everyone and the Disc Golf Course gets new users all the time who come to Jackson and automatically park at the end of Grant Street.

Skaret said he thinks the only way to solve that problem is to put up a No Parking sign on that last block of Grant Street on the north side of the street. He said there's already a No Parking Sign on the south side of that block of Grant Street. Skaret suggested either putting up a No Parking sign or a Handicapped Parking Only sign.

Skaret said otherwise he thinks it's going to be an ongoing problem just because there's new people coming to play the Disc Golf Course all the time which is a great, great thing to have.

Mix asked if putting up a No Parking sign will affect the people living on Grant Street. She said that's her only concern is if the people who live there want to park in front of their house.

Skaret said it would affect one house in particular. He said that's the residence that has been registering the complaints about people parking and blocking their driveway, their garbage can and mailbox. Skaret said the residence on Grant Street has requested something be done regarding the parking on the north side of the street.

Mix suggested putting up signage directing motorists using the Disc Golf Course or Trail of where appropriate parking is located and try that first instead of installing a No Parking Sign and blocking off a street.

Peterson agreed with Mix.

Oxborough agreed with Mix's suggestion.

**MIX/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to install a new sign on the dead-end of Grant Street directing motorists on where the appropriate place is to park to use the Disc Golf Course.**

### **SWIMMING POOL SURVEY**

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Mayor Polz said Alderman Peterson asked to have this item on the agenda.

After giving the matter much thought following the March 18<sup>th</sup> Joint City Council/Jackson County Central Schoolboard informational meeting, Peterson said he thinks the City needs to share in half the cost, up to \$5,200, with the School District in conducting a swimming pool survey.

Peterson explained by participating in paying for half of the survey costs, the City will have a say in what the survey says. He said the City can then review the survey before it goes out and knows exactly what's being presented to the public. Peterson said also if the City approves paying up to \$5,200 for half the cost of the survey, it's going to force the School District to get going on their side.

Peterson said if the City pays for half of the survey, the City has input and is invested in the survey so they can get the results and help with the survey questions.

Mayor Polz said he spoke with Jackson County Superintendent Barry Schimdt on March 19<sup>th</sup> and Schmidt indicated wishing to continue the partnership the School District and City has had over the years regarding the swimming pool and finding a direction.

Mix asked if the City of Lakefield would contribute to the cost of a survey since Lakefield is in the JCC School District.

Peterson explained it's the City of Jackson and Jackson County Central School District's survey. He said the swimming pool is a partnership between the City of Jackson and the School District.

Mix said if a survey is going to be conducted, then there should be a timeline determined of when the survey will be prepared, sent out and results compiled.

Attorney Brad Anderson noted JCC Superintendent Barry Schmidt reached out to him and Mayor Polz on March 19<sup>th</sup> at Schmidt's request and showed a real sincere effort to move ahead as partners regarding the pool. He noted the company that conducts the survey has done them in the past and they were very accurate. Attorney Anderson said the surveys were done very well. He said the survey company is very good about finding out what you need and what you want. Attorney Anderson said the company is pretty quick and responsive. He noted the survey process may take 60 to 90 days.

Mayor Polz asked what time constraints is the City and School District really under if bonding appropriations are going to sought from the State next Legislative Session.

Skaret said he, Schmidt and the City's Financial Consultant Shannon Sweeney met on March 19<sup>th</sup>. He said the School District is going to talk about the pool and the partnership between the School District and City at their April 8<sup>th</sup> work session. Skaret said the next Pool Task Force meeting will be held on Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>.

**PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried for the City to spend up to \$5,200, to share in half of the cost of a swimming pool survey with the Jackson County Central School District.**

**Other:**

**Alderman Chris Naumann**

Alderman Chris Naumann asked for clarification if it was possible to purchase two lots in the Sunset View housing development.

Mayor Polz noted that was a discussion at a recent EDA meeting. He said the talk was "yes", the EDA would be interested in the idea of people being able to combine lots. Mayor Polz said one of the questions was whether the EDA wanted to change the covenants for requirements such as square footage, three-car garages or anything like that.

Mayor Polz said at this time, the EDA decided they initially didn't want to change the covenants because there were other homes that have been built that abided by the covenant requirements.

City Attorney Brad Anderson said going back quite a few years there was a policy of one house, one lot. He explained the reason behind it was because when the development area was financed, the idea was that there needed to be that many houses to pay back the City for the whole development. Attorney Anderson said subsequently, there have been a couple of times when a person was permitted to purchase two lots. He said he doesn't know if the old policy is in place anymore.

Skaret said the lots in the oval in Sunset View are the small lots that were originally platted for townhomes and duplex type buildings. He said he thinks the EDA has had discussions and there had been talk about re-platting Sunset View. Skaret said the EDA received quotes for re-platting and it would cost a few thousand dollars to do that. He said the EDA decided rather than going through the process of re-platting, if people want to buy two lots to build a single-family home, instead of having a 50-foot lot they could have a 100-foot lot and combine the two lots. Skaret said the EDA would be open to that.

Naumann said if someone wants to build a new house, he would love to have them come to Jackson.

Mayor Polz said that was the discussion that it's better to have someone want to combine two lots and build a new home and put it on the tax roles than having empty lots.

Skaret said the debt service on that bond for Sunset View is all being paid back with TIF (Tax Increment Financing) Revenue and the City is not doing any levying. He said the Sunset View Development is already generating enough income to make the debt service payment so there's no issues with that anymore. Skaret said he could certainly see in the earlier days where that would be a concern.

Naumann thanked everyone for the information.

## **Alderman Nathan Peterson**

Alderman Nathan Peterson said he knows the School District has been trying for the past two years to get Jackson County to designate the area in front of Riverside Elementary School on Springfield Parkway a school zone between Park Street and Third Street.

Peterson said he was wondering if the City could send a letter of support to the County to designate the area a school zone to reduce the speed of traffic. He said traffic is bad when you drop children off at Riverside Elementary along Springfield Parkway. Peterson said he knows the County has to approve the designation for a school zone because Springfield Parkway is a County road.

Mayor Polz said he knows the Sheriff's Office has posted signs and monitored the speed of motorists along Springfield Parkway at Riverside Elementary. He noted the Sheriff's Office has the statistical data.

Peterson said he also spoke with Sheriff Shawn Haken who suggested the City send a letter of support to the County to designate that area as a school zone.

Mix suggested having a stop sign on Springfield Parkway which would slow traffic down.

Peterson noted Springfield Parkway is a County Road.

In other news, Peterson noted the new Ambulance Director begins his duties on April 1<sup>st</sup> in Jackson.

## **Mayor Polz**

Mayor Polz extended condolences to City Clerk Dave Maschoff on the passing of his father-in-law.

Skaret said Maschoff's father-in-law's funeral was held on March 16<sup>th</sup>. He said Maschoff was very appreciative of the plant the Mayor and City Council sent.

Skaret noted Maschoff was attending the Minnesota Clerks and Finance Officers Association (MCFOA) Conference this week in St. Cloud, Minnesota.



Skaret noted he would be out of the office on Wednesday, March 20th and Thursday morning, March 21<sup>st</sup>. He said he would be attending the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Legislative Lobby Day. Skaret said the Legislature has been very, very busy. He said there's a lot at stake again. Skaret said there's an EMS bill being considered. Skaret said the Coalition and the League of Minnesota Cities have requested \$120 million to go to ambulance services. He said that dollar figure is based on the operational deficits for last year. Skaret said the effort is to get some one-time money to ambulance services to cover the deficit that many ambulance services have including the Jackson Ambulance Department. He said there's a lot of problems facing rural EMS especially, but none of those problems will be solved without funding. Skaret said the EMS funding bill is a pretty big deal.

Skaret said there's some Legislative bills pertaining to planning and zoning and housing that really usurp the City's zoning authority. He said the proposed legislation would take a lot of flexibility away from the cities and probably result in the City making some major modifications to their zoning ordinances if these bills become law.

Skaret said there's some Legislative bills pertaining to open meeting law particularly opening up the remote participation and making it easier for Councilmembers to participate in a meeting remotely.

Skaret reported there's some amendments being made to the earned sick and safe leave. He said there's a lot of ambiguity with how that applies to on-call Ambulance and paid volunteer Fire Departments like Jackson. He said there's no clarity whatsoever on how to treat those people right now. Skaret said the Legislature is being asked to provide some clarity. Skaret said there's some bills introduced, but that this point, it looks like they're not helping clear the waters.

Skaret said there's a lot of stuff going on in St. Paul. He said the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities has a lot on their plates.

Mayor Polz thanked Skaret for the update.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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**With no further business, PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Jackson City Council meeting at 7:39 p.m.**

Mayor Polz said the City Council meeting was now adjourned.

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**David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary**

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**Marcus Polz, Mayor**

