

March 7, 2023
Jackson, Minnesota

The Jackson City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers of City Hall and also by Teleconference and Zoom at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 with the meeting called to order by Mayor Marcus Polz. On the roll call, the following persons were present in-person, Mayor Marcus Polz, Aldermen Mark Titus, Chris Naumann, Brandon Finck, Nathan Peterson and Joe Pell. Absent was Alterman Sara Mix. Also attending in-person were City Administrator Matt Skaret, City Attorney Brad Anderson, Engineer Eric Hanson with HDR, Charlotte Hanson, Sam Espy, Matthew Grisham of KKOJ/KUXX Radio, Joshua Schutz with the Jackson County Pilot, Fire Chief Dave Bond, Sheriff Shawn Haken, First Assistant Fire Chief and Park Board Chairman Michael Haeffner, First Assistant Fire Chief and Park Board Chairman Michael Haeffner, Luke Ewald of Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services(A quorum of the City Council was present.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Polz called the regular meeting of the Jackson City Council to order. He said the roll call showed all Councilmembers were present except Council Member Sara Mix and there was a quorum.

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

Unscheduled Guests:

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

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

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Polz 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

AIRPORT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION- APPROVE AIRPORT TAXIWAY AND APRON PAVING PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS AND AUHTORIZE ADVERTISING FOR BIDS

Engineer Eric Hanson with HDR was present to give an overview of the plans and specifications for the Airport Taxiway and Apron Paving Project. Hanson showed a diagram of proposed project area. The project entails reconstructing the apron, taxiways, and connectors to the new runway which is currently under construction. The Airport Commission met on February 23rd, reviewed the plans and recommend Council Approval. Just like the main runway, this project will be bid with both concrete and asphalt options. The total estimated construction cost is \$4.1 million for asphalt and \$4.255 for concrete. The local share would be \$205,000 and \$212,000, respectively for each option. If given the green light, the project would be advertised starting next week with a bid opening on Thursday, April 13th.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the plans and specifications for the airport taxiway and apron paving project and authorizing the advertisement for bids.

Pool Evaluation Proposal- Burbach Aquatics

As was discussed at the February 21st Council meeting Councilmember Nate Peterson reached out to Burbach Aquatics out of Plattville, Wisconsin, who also A representative of the company has been onsite and viewed the pool. City Administrator Skaret reviewed the details of the proposal. Burbach is having a separate mechanical engineer, Pleva Mechanical of Woodward, IA, evaluate the HVAC and pool mechanical equipment. Skaret noted that the fee of \$54,300 is

significantly more than the \$12,800 of the JLG evaluation in 2020-21. However, it is significantly more detailed and would involve the observation of the pool with it full and empty. Council strongly believes that a second evaluation is necessary. However, given the cost of the proposal Skaret was requested to go out and get a 2nd proposal.

Skaret noted that as for the Pool Task Force itself the initial meeting has been postponed due to scheduling conflicts. He is awaiting confirmation from the school on a meeting the week of March 20th.

Kris Hohensee from the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging

Kris Hohensee was present to introduce herself and provide an overview of the services and mission of the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAA). The mission of MNRAA is to assist communities in providing physical and social support for older residents. They also have a program where communities can work to be designated “Age Friendly Communities”, which carries a 5 year commitment. Council thanked Hohensee for coming.

Interior Designer Proposal for the City Council Chambers

City Administrator Skaret presented a proposal from Melissa Bunk at Timeless Designs of Lakefield to study the feasibility of making upgrades to the following in the Council Chambers:

- Repainting the current pink backdrop (#1 priority)
- Repainting the other walls (#2 priority)
- Updating the Council Chairs and spectator chairs (#3 priority)
- Installing City of Jackson lettering on the backdrop (#4 priority)
- Updating the upholstery for Council swivel chairs and spectator seats (#5 priority)
- Updating the carpet (#6 priority)

The complete upgrade will most likely need to be done in phases over multiple years depending on costs and funds availability. The priorities are certainly interchangeable and Council should provide feedback on if they wish to change up the priority ranking. Council discussed the spin chairs and perhaps it would be more feasible to just replace them rather than try and redo the upholstery. Council also indicated a desire to have Funk provide recommendations on lighting upgrades. Once the cost estimates come back Council can decide whether to do the Council Chamber remodel in phases or all at once.

Motion by Peterson/Titus and unanimously carried to approve the proposal from Timeless Designs to make recommendations on updates to the City Council Chambers to also include lighting for up to \$3,500.

Citywide Cleanup Days Follow Up

City Administrator Skaret recapped that at the February 7th City Council Meeting Council requested having Cleanup Days April 29th (west of Highway 71) and May 6th (east of Highway 71) and adding a second Cleanup Days for September 16th and 23rd for an added charge from Waste Management. Waste Management has confirmed the April 29th and May 6th dates, but is not able to accommodate the request for the second cleanup days, even for an extra charge due to staffing shortages and juggling the scheduling of clean up days in other communities they serve. With the timing of the Citywide garage sales May 4-6 Council requested to change the cleanup dates to May 6th and May 13th.

Motion by Pell, second by Naumann and unanimously carried to set the Citywide Cleanup Dates as May 6th and 13th.

Authorize Applying for a City Credit Card

City Administrator Skaret stated that much to his chagrin he believes it is time for the City to have a credit card for online purchases. The driver is our new Microsoft Office 365 Subscriptions. Each City email address has a monthly subscription. The subscriptions are currently charged on Dave Schrader's credit card and then he bills the City. This was set up as a temporary arrangement until we could switch the monthly billing over to the City. Unfortunately, upon much investigation Microsoft does not have an option for payment by check. They require payment by credit card only. Once we get a credit card then the subscriptions can be charged to the City and then we can upgrade the subscriptions to a level that would enable Councilmembers to have other programs like Word, Excel, Teams, etc. on their city issued ipads. Due to the potential risk of fraud, abuse, and misuse credit cards pose it my intent that the credit card be used sparingly and only when an option to be invoiced is not available. Bank Midwest has a credit card option designed for municipalities and non-profits so the cards are not tied to a specific individual or social security number.

Motion by Pell, second to Naumann to authorize the City applying for a credit card through Bank Midwest's program for municipalities and non-profits. Unanimously carried with Councilman Finck abstaining.

Resolution Approving Credit Card Use Policy

City Administrator Skaret noted that with the new city credit should come a credit card usage policy. Skaret noted that the credit card is intended to be used sparingly when the City is not able to be invoiced and pay by check. The policy is modelled after sample policies from other cities. Councilman Finck noted some flexibility may be needed as sometimes it is difficult go get receipts from some purchases with a credit card.

Motion by Peterson/Titus to approve Resolution 12-0323 Approving a Credit Card Use Policy. Unanimously carried.

2023 City Archery Deer Hunt

Jackson County Sheriff Shawn Haken was present to inquire if the Council wishes to have another deer hunt this year because the DNR is getting ready to put their booklet together of regulations for the upcoming hunting season. The 2022 hunt was considered a success with 16 deer harvested within the city of Jackson. If Council wished to open the deer hunt up to additional land in the city they would need to make some decisions fast and there is a lot to consider. Council expressed their desire to continue with the deer hunt with the same regulations as last year and then establish a committee to make recommendations to Council on opening up the season further in 2024 and beyond. Haken recommended having these rules established by February 1, 2024.

Motion by Peterson/Naumann and unanimously carried to approve having another special archery deer hunt in 2023 with no changes and have a committee meet prior to February 2024 to study opening up the deer hunt to additional land.

Go Gov Mobile

City Administrator Skaret reported that the Go Gov App was ready to go "live" and would be launched by the end of the week. The app can be used for citizen notifications and bring the City's website and most popular links right to the palm

of their hand. This will be a useful tool in communicating and engaging with our residents.

Sam Espy- Local Option Sales Tax for Outdoor Athletic Recreation Complex

Sam Espy spoke as a Jackson baseball coach, a downtown business owner, and an avid local shopper against the proposed Local Option Sales Tax for the outdoor athletic complex. He noted that he has 20 retailers and restaurants in Jackson that signed a petition against the sale tax. He said that a general consensus among business owners is that an imposed sales tax will essentially be a shop local tax that will drive customers away from patronizing our businesses. We can talk about how people coming to town will spend money and create revenue, but those folks coming to town will never outspend local shoppers. It is currently a struggle to convince people who are already in town to keep their dollars local, it will be even harder with an extra sales tax. The idea that independently owned local businesses charge more than the large retailers is fairly common and it had been around for years. The mindset that Wal-Mart and Amazon will save money is not going to go away because people will gravitate towards whatever they think will keep more in their pocket. I have experienced this with someone who came into my store to purchase a bike tube. I had exactly what he needed, brought it up to the counter and told them him the price. Only to have him tell me it was \$1 cheaper on amazon and walked out before I could say I'd sell it for a dollar less. He spoke of difficulty of reaching residents who think there is nothing downtown and that after being here for years there are still people in town that don't know of his business downtown.

Espy also expressed concerns about the County's proposed one cent sales tax to build a jail and law enforcement center. If both City and County taxes are approved we are talking about an 8.875% sales tax which would tie for the highest in the state. Why would anyone want to shop in Jackson is it going to cost more to do so? Even more so, an extra tax is certainly not going to encourage the thousand plus people who commute to Jackson for work to shop here. Food and alcohol establishments that would benefit from hosting a baseball tournament. However, they think a sales tax it is not the right thing to do and would ultimately adversely affect their bottom line.

Espy stated that people come to town for events they don't come to spend money. He said that when families come to a town for a sporting event, that is what they are there for. If they have a break in competition they figure out where

the quickest place is to eat and go right back. When the activities are over they want to go straight home because it had been a long day.

Espy noted that he hasn't seen anything to believe that baseball/softball tournaments would bring substantial financial benefit to the community or that people would relocate to Jackson because of baseball fields. In fact, the tax will ultimately take revenue away from local businesses with the loss of sales, will ever be offset by folks coming into town. He thinks maintaining our fields is a great budget line item to be upheld. But sales taxing the entire community when not even half of our youth play baseball just doesn't add up.

Espy's team he coached last year practiced at Albertus fields regularly from May to July, and it did the job just fine. To say we those fields are not good enough or that we need new fields to host tournaments is untrue. There have been tournaments held at Albertus fields before and can be again. If there is a desire to host tournaments, then we should host one on a smaller scale before making a multi-million dollar investment with the dream of drawing thousands of people. Espy questioned how much research has gone into baseball fields and tournaments before taking this leap of a shop local tax. This entire plan really should be slowed down and worked through.

Espy thought more investment should be made in Albertus Fields. Yes, it is a flood plain, but most floods have been before Memorial Day. Albertus fields is a location because it will get people to come into town rather than stay along the interstate. Plus, nobody wants to have to put up with all of the traffic noise and wind.

Espy stated that if we are going to spend money for new ballfields the City should at least allocate some money to address the cat issue. People don't want to come to a business district with dozens of stray cats.

Councilman Brandon Finck responded to Espy's comments by saying that the issue has been well researched and information gathered on the possibility of Jackson being able to host tournaments and the benefit of drawing visitors to our community. He said that the Council is trying to grow Jackson. This would add an amenity and help bring people to town. There is nothing like it within 80 miles of Jackson. He has heard from many business owners who support the local option

sales tax proposal for an outdoor athletic complex because it will help bring more customers in their door. Moreover, the sales tax would ensure that some of the project is paid for by non Jackson residents. The location for the facilities in close proximity to I 90 and Highway 71 is ideal because of the visibility to high traffic and ability to showcase Jackson from the highway. It also makes the facility highly accessible to residents and visitors alike. With a daughter in sports he is often traveling to other communities for events and tournaments and knows first hand how families and fans spend money in other communities. The sales tax proposal is currently at the legislature. If approved it would come back to the City Council for them to put on the ballot at the next General Election in November 2024. Ultimately, the voters will have the final say on if the Local Option Sales Tax is adopted.

Mayor's Proclamation Congratulating the Jackson County Central Huskies Wrestling Team for Back to Back State Class A Championships

In recognition of the Jackson County Central Huskies recent State Championship win Mayor Polz read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS The Jackson County Central (JCC) Wrestling Team has won State Championships in Class A State Wrestling in 2022 and 2023; and

WHEREAS The team overcame many obstacles, including two medical forfeits; and

WHEREAS The JCC Wrestling team has made the community proud and conducted themselves exemplary on and off the wrestling mat; and

WHEREAS The JCC Wrestling team has a long history of tradition and success, including nine State Championships in the program history; and

WHEREAS The Jackson City Council is proud of the JCC wrestling team and commends the team for their outstanding achievements; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY that the Jackson City Council congratulates and commends the JCC Husky Wrestling team for their back to back Class A State Wrestling Championships.

Signed this 7th day of March, 2023

Other

Councilmember Pell noted he attended the League of Minnesota Cities training for newly elected officials recently in Plymouth and thought it was excellent. He met a mayor who had been in office for 40 years and said whenever there is any opportunity for training he goes. Councilmembers Naumann and Titus concurred that the same training they went to in Mankato was excellent and strongly recommended others to attend sometime if they have the chance.

City Administrator Skaret noted that he will be placing an order to Apple soon for ipad accessories and asked if any of the Councilmembers needed anything for their ipads. Councilmembers Pell and Peterson need pens and Councilmember Mix needs a charger. Skaret will order these items.

Closed Session Regarding the Consideration of Purchasing Property Located on the South Side of the Intersection of Co. Road 34 and Highway 71-Parcel ID No. 23.026.1600 Pursuant to MN Chapter 13D.05, Subd. 3(C)

Motion by Peterson/Finck to go into closed session pursuant to MN Chapter 13D.05, Subd. 3(C) for the purpose of considering the purchase of real estate. All ayes. Motion passed. Council went into Closed Session at 8:15 p.m.

COMING OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Pell/Naumann to come out of closed session. All ayes. Motion passed. Council came out of Closed Session at 8:33 p.m.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Motion by Finck/Titus to adjourn. All ayes. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Matt Skaret, Council Administrator

Marcus Polz, Mayor

