

**May 21, 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, May 21, 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 Chris Naumann, Brandon Finck, Nathan Peterson and Joe Pell. Also attending in-person were City Administrator Shelley Oltmans, City Attorney Brad Anderson, Public Works Director Tony Oxborough, Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo, Luke Ewald of Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services, Engineer Troy Nemmers of Bolton and Menk, John Weland of the Jackson County Animal Protection Society, Jackson County Sheriff's Department Chief Deputy Kelly Mitchell, Ron Richards, Gary Elsbecker, Marcia Elsbecker, City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff and Justin Lessman of the Jackson County Pilot. Joining the meeting via Zoom and Teleconference was Jackson EDA Administrative Assistant Shelley Pohlman. (Alderman Mark Titus was absent.) (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 in-person and by Zoom and Teleconference 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 for Alderman Mark Titus.

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.

Alderwoman Sara Mix asked to have Consent Agenda Item 7(I) removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Alderman Brandon Finck requested to have Consent Agenda Item 7(J) removed from the Consent Agenda for clarification of where the funds are coming from.

FINCK/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented except for Consent Agenda Item 7(I) regarding approving an On Sale and Sunday Liquor License for Peanuts Hub LLC owned by Mary Jensen and managed by William Smith II doing business as the Double Shot Saloon inside the Jackson Inn at 2007 Highway 71 North in Jackson, Minnesota effective June 1, 2024 and except for Consent Agenda Item 7(J) regarding the EDA's recommendation to approve the Classic Hair Commercial Lending Program Loan of \$5,110.00 at 5.5 percent interest rate and Corinne Vacek agreeing to the interest rate change of 3.25 percent to 5.5 percent).

Regarding Consent Agenda Item 7(J), Finck said he was curious about the interest rate and asked whether the Classic Hair Commercial Lending Program loan is a UCAP (United Community Action Program) type program or is it a City type loan program.

Oltmans noted Jackson EDA Administrative Assistant Shelley Pohlman was attending the Council meeting via Zoom and asked her to clarify if the loan was a UCAP program or a City type program.

Pohlman said it is a UCAP Program.

Finck noted if it was a City Program, an interest rate had been established and that's why he was curious if the Classic Hair Commercial Lending Program was a UCAP or City program. Finck thanked Pohlman for the clarification.

FINCK/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Consent Agenda Item 7(J) EDA Recommendation: Approve the Classic Hair Commercial Lending Program Loan of \$5,110.00 at 5.5 percent interest rate.

Mayor Polz said next to be discussed is Consent Agenda Item 7(I) regarding approving an On Sale and Sunday Liquor License for Peanuts Hub LLC owned by Mary Jensen and managed by William Smith II doing business as the Double Shot Saloon inside the Jackson Inn at 2007 Highway 71 North in Jackson.

Mix said she understands there are new owners of the former Econo Lodge, but based on the history of the substantial illegal activity and the law enforcement presence that's occurred at that location, it deserves a pause to issuing a liquor license. She said she would like to see the new owners of the business have a period of time without having law enforcement called to that location before the City grants a liquor license to Peanuts Hub LLC.

Peterson asked if Mix wanted to table issuing a liquor license.

Mix said approving the liquor license application should be tabled until such a time that the new owners can successfully show they have no law enforcement calls.

Maschoff noted there are new owners of the property and they've had the business closed while a lot of renovation work has been underway. He said he's pretty excited for the new owners.

Mix said she's not against issuing a liquor license to the new owners, but would just like to see a period of them being open and successfully operating without law enforcement having to have a presence there.

Finck said he didn't disagree with Mix, but he did have a question. He asked if there's anybody new applying for a liquor license, is the City going to treat them the same because it's new ownership, not existing ownership.

Mix said she understands where Finck is coming from.

Finck said he wants to be really cautious on this.

Mix said she agrees with Finck that the City should give everyone a fair chance, however she doesn't think there's been another business in town that has had that much law enforcement presence at it.

Peterson noted that was the old ownership of the business.

Mix said it was, but the business hasn't reopened again and it hasn't been seen what the new owners can or can't do.

Finck asked Maschoff if the City Council were to grant the liquor license to Peanuts Hub LLC, what allows the City to pull the liquor license back. He asked what is the monitoring of the license.

Maschoff said that was a good question. He said the City has never run into that situation where a liquor license has been revoked or suspended. Maschoff said the new owners are hoping to open the first of June. He said Finck's question is a good question and he doesn't have an answer for it. Maschoff said the City has never had that situation where they've had to revoke or suspend a liquor license.

City Attorney Anderson said he would have to research revoking or suspending a liquor license.

Maschoff said he thinks there is a provision in the City's Ordinance Book regarding the revocation or suspension of liquor licenses, but he was unable to quote the provisions off the top of his head.

Mayor Polz used the analogy of someone purchasing a new house and the new owner is being punished for what happened in the house by the previous owner. He asked is that how the City wants to welcome somebody into the community.

Mix said absolutely not, but she wants to make sure the City has some safeguards because they haven't had it before. She said with that particular business, there hasn't been just one or two visits by law enforcement, there have been a lot of visits by law enforcement. Mix said she just wants to make sure that it's a good business that's up and running. She said the City can be as welcoming as possible, but the City also has to have options if they need to take action.

Finck said that's what he would like to know is what are the City's options. Mix agreed with Finck.

Finck said his suggestion would be for any liquor license, not just for the new owners of the former Econo Lodge. He asked if the City had the ability to claw-back or can the City offer a temporary 30 day or 90-day probationary liquor license where everything Mix talked about goes well and the license converts to a full license. He asked if the City has some of those abilities.

City Attorney Anderson said he thinks the City would have those abilities. He said he could take a look at the City's ordinances.

Besides the new owners, Pell asked if there was new management as well. Maschoff said there is also new management.

Ron Richards asked Mayor Polz if he could provide some background from the Fire Department.

Mayor Polz asked Richards to provide background information.

Richards explained in addition to what they received from the new owners; the Fire Department also received a request from the owners to do a voluntary walk through of the building. He said the new owner informed the Fire Department that they evicted everyone that basically had been squatting and not paying rent at the former Econo Lodge. Richards said those people have been evicted and the new owner's whole idea is trying to turn it around and get it back to what it used to be in the 1990's. He said that's their goal to try and bring it back. Richards said the Fire Department has not been back to the motel because work is still continuing in the building. He said that's some of the background that the Fire Department received from the new owners just to let the Fire Department know they were attempting to turn that property around.

Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo said the Ambulance Department helped the new owners of the motel link up with a vendor that disposes of contaminated goods, such as needles, to clean those items up.

Maschoff said the new owners also indicated to him that they want to bring the property back to its glory days of the 1980's and 90's.

Peterson asked Maschoff if the new owners are definite on reopening on June 1st.

Maschoff said that's what owner William Smith II told him. He said he explained to Smith that if the City approves their liquor license application, then it has to be sent up to the Alcohol Division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety for review. Maschoff said the State is pretty good about processing applications in a timely manner. He said he informed Smith that having their license approved by the State by June 1st could vary by a few days which Smith was fine with.

Mix asked what the new owners estimated opening date is.

Maschoff said their target date to open is June 1st.

Mix asked if the Fire Department has returned to check their building and whether they've passed all their regulatory checks and Health Department licensing.

Maschoff said he thinks they have. He said he has good feelings about the new operators.

Peterson suggested tabling action on the liquor license application until the Council's next meeting on June 4th until more is found out about the liquor licensing and other information. He said the information can be gathered and discussed at the June 4th meeting.

Maschoff said new owner William Smith II could also be invited to attend the June 4th City Council meeting.

Oxborough mentioned that the City has new peddlers and food truck operators appear before the City Council to introduce themselves and that could be done with a new business owner seeking a liquor license. He said if the City Councilmembers would feel more comfortable, have the new business owner attend a Council meeting to meet the Mayor and Council.

Finck also asked for City Staff to research what the City's ability is regarding revocation or suspending liquor licenses if situations or criminal activity arises.

PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to table Consent Agenda Item 7(I) regarding the On Sale and Sunday Liquor License for Peanuts Hub LLC owned by Mary Jensen and managed by William Smith II doing business as the Double Shot Saloon inside the Jackson Inn at 2007 Highway 71 North in Jackson until the June 4th, 2024 Jackson City Council meeting.

Mix said she wishes the new owners of the Jackson Inn nothing but the best. She said the City is happy they're here but after the fiasco the City went through with that property in the past, the City just needs to make sure they're covering themselves.

Oltmans noted in the City Code, it's Chapter 116 that pertains to liquor regulations in the City.

Council Discussion Items

REQUEST FROM THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 130: MEMORIAL DAY PARADE AND PROGRAM AT ASHLEY PARK ON MAY 27TH. (PARADE WILL BEGIN AT 9:30 A.M. IN FRONT OF THE LEGION, GO UP SHERMAN STREET TO MAIN STREET AND THEN NORTH TO ASHLEY PARK FOR THE MEMORIAL DAY PROGRAM

Maschoff said, speaking on behalf of the Jackson American Legion, everyone is invited to attend the Memorial Day Program on Monday morning, May 27th in Jackson. He said he wanted to inform the Mayor and Councilmembers the parade and program will be the same as it's been in past years.

Maschoff said everyone will gather in front of the American Legion around 9 a.m. with the parade beginning at 9:30. He explained the parade will start in front of the Legion going north to Sherman Street and then west on Sherman to Main Street and then north on Main Street to Ashley Park for the Memorial Day Program beginning at 10 a.m. Maschoff said following the program at Ashley Park, there will be a program at the Sunset Cemetery also.

Mayor Polz thanked Maschoff for the background information.

MIX/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the request from the Jackson American Legion Post 130 to hold the annual Memorial Day Parade and the annual Memorial Day Program at Ashley Park on May 27th, 2024.

Maschoff thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers.

RON RICHARDS – REQUEST FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO RESERVE THE ASHLEY PARK SHELTER FOR SATURDAY, JULY 20, 2024 AND WAIVE THE SHELTER HOUSE RENTAL FEE FOR THAT DAY

Mayor Polz welcomed Ron Richards from the Jackson Fire Department.

Richards explained the Fire Department members are going to be doing a maintenance and clean-up day on July 20th at the Fire Hall. He said members will be scrubbing down the Fire Hall and doing the maintenance that's required on the ancillary equipment, not just the trucks, but all the other equipment.

Afterwards, Richards said the Fire Department members are planning a family day at Ashley Park where they'll be grilling up burgers and hot dogs. He said the Fire Department is not providing anything but soft drinks, but members may bring their own beverages of an alcoholic nature. He said the whole idea is to get all the members of the Fire Department and their families together in mid-summer. Richards said this will be the first time the Fire Department is having a family picnic. He said the Fire Department Auxiliary will also be involved with the picnic.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the request from the Jackson Fire Department to reserve the Ashley Park Shelter House for Saturday, July 20th, 2024 and waive the shelter house rental fee for that day.

JACKSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE REQUEST TO TRADE IN A 2016 FORD SUV SQUAD CAR TO GUARDIAN FLEET SAFETY AND THE PURCHASE OF A NEW 2023 FORD SUV

Oltmans referred to the information that was sent out by Jackson County Sheriff Chief Deputy Kelly Mitchell that was included in the Mayor and City Councilmembers' packets.

Oltmans explained in the past, used squad cars were stripped of their equipment and then the vehicle sold on-line. She said typically the vehicles don't sell very well because they have a lot of miles on them. Oltmans said it also takes hours to remove the Sheriff Department's equipment and get the vehicle posted on line.

Oltmans said what the Sheriff's Department started to do two years ago is trade-in the entire squad car. She said then the vehicle doesn't have to be stripped of equipment and it saves time and labor to do all that work. Oltmans noted anything useable from the old squad vehicle is removed and installed in the new vehicle. She said the process reduces the number of hours of labor in stripping an old squad car. Oltmans said the Sheriff's Department has found that process is much more efficient.

Oltmans requested the City Council change the process in disposing of old squad vehicles and purchasing new.

Mix asked if the City's cost of the new vehicle is budgeted for. She said she wanted to make sure the City's portion had been budgeted.

Finck asked if the City's cost stays within the budget by changing the process of trading-in the old squad vehicle and purchasing a new one.

Oltmans said the process doesn't really change the cost. She said it just reduces the manpower that goes into stripping an old squad car of equipment. Oltmans said the amount of money the City will receive back for the old squad will be about the same. She said the expense for the new vehicle for the City will not change at all.

Peterson suggested to keep note that next time a squad vehicle is going to be traded, that it be looked at keeping the vehicle for the Ambulance Service to upgrade the Ambulance Department's response vehicle in the future.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the Jackson County Sheriff's Office's request to trade-in a 2016 Ford SUV Squad Car to Guardian Fleet Safety and the purchase of a new 2023 Ford SUV.

AWARDING OF 2024 SEAL COATING BID TO M.R. PAVING AND EXCAVATING WHO SUBMITTED THE LOW BID OF \$50,752

Public Works Director Tony Oxborough asked if the Mayor or Councilmembers had any questions regarding the seal coating bid from M.R. Paving and Excavating. Hearing none, Mayor Polz entertained a motion.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to award the 2024 seal coating bid to M.R. Paving and Excavating with the low bid of \$50,752.

JACKSON AMBULANCE SERVICE BILLING SERVICE CHANGE

Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo said he was requesting to change the company the Ambulance Department uses for billing services.

Landbo explained currently the Jackson Ambulance Service uses a company called EMS M/C for billing for all of the Ambulance Department's ambulance runs. He said the Jackson Ambulance Service was using a company called TransMedic for EMS billing services, who was purchased by EMS M/C. Landbo reported the level of service the Ambulance Department is receiving from EMS M/C is not at the level they need it to be. Landbo explained the Jackson Ambulance Service is one of 80 clients that their customer service representative is assigned to, leading to extensive gaps in communication. He said the Jackson Ambulance Service is facing revenue loss as when calls are difficult to bill, EMS M/C will write them off rather than sending them back to the Jackson Ambulance Service for clarification or making amendments.

Landbo said the Jackson Ambulance Service needs a billing company that can offer complete full-service billing, can review patient care reports and translate their reports to a billing code, provide customer service, has the ability to grow as the Jackson Ambulance Service grows and enters new service lines such as community paramedicine and can help submit the Ambulance Service's Medicare Cost Data collection paperwork. He noted if the Ambulance Service does not submit their Medicare Cost Data collection paperwork, they will take a 10 percent reduction in their Medicare reimbursement.

Landbo said the two billing services that meet those criteria and would be a good fit for the Jackson Ambulance Service are Paramedic Billing Services (PBS) of Elmhurst, Illinois and ECP Services of Lake Mills, Wisconsin.

Landbo recommended the City of Jackson/Jackson Ambulance Service signs a contract with ECP Services. He said PBS originally provided a proposal requesting a 7 percent commission. Landbo said he negotiated that down to 5 percent, but they have the caveat of re-evaluation after 12 months.

Landbo said ECP Services is a small business that deals primarily with small clients. He said he anticipates an intimate relationship between Jackson and ECP Services. Landbo noted ECP Services reports were much clearer and their ability to build custom reports is top notch. He also pointed out ECP Services is roughly two hours closer by ground, making it easier to travel for in-person meetings.

Landbo said he wasn't asking to sign a contract at this point, but was requesting approval to move forward in contract negotiations with ECP Services.

PETERSON/MIX moved and it was unanimously carried to authorize Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo to move forward in contract negotiations with ECP Services.

REQUEST FROM CITY STAFF FOR FUNDS TO UPGRADE TECHNOLOGY NOT TO EXCEED \$15,000 BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR

Oltmans said there was \$3,000 originally budgeted for new computers and hardware for the City Administrator's and City Clerk's offices. She explained City Department Heads met following the May 7th City Council meeting and identified several things that the City is lacking in technology that would make City staff's jobs much easier and efficient. Oltmans said that includes everything from having the ability to edit PDF documents to having actual cell phones that are connected to positions that allow for security aspects, for instance, if phones are lost, they can be shut off. She explained one of the struggles the City has had is when there's a change of staff because personal phone numbers have been attached to work phones and a significant amount of time was taken to get things changed. Oltmans also noted with public phones, it's nice to have that separation between a private phone and public phone.

Oltmans said the City Department Chairs are working together to identify what they need, what do they want to do and what it's going to look like before they actually move forward with anything.

Finck asked if the request for \$15,000 to upgrade technology also includes payroll software and those items that have been discussed in the past.

Oltmans said it includes software and hardware.

NAUMANN/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the request from City Staff for funds to upgrade technology not to exceed \$15,000 before the end of the year.

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE CITY TO DESIGNATE SPRINGFIELD PARKWAY FROM PARK STREET TO HIGHWAY 71 AS A SCHOOL ZONE

Peterson said he knows the Jackson County Central School District has been trying to get Jackson County to designate Springfield Parkway from Park Street to Highway 71 as a School Zone. He said the School District has been trying to get that portion of Springfield Parkway designated as a School Zone for a while.

Peterson said he thought the City could help the School District by sending a letter of support to the County asking them to consider designating Springfield Parkway from Park Street to Highway 71 as a School Zone.

Mix asked what the School Zone designation provides.

Mayor Polz asked Jackson County Sheriff Chief Deputy Kelly Mitchell, who was in the audience, what the School Zone designation does.

Mitchell explained a School Zone lowers the speed limit down to 15 or 20 miles per hour when children are present.

MIX/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried for the City to send a letter of support to Jackson County asking the County to consider designating Springfield Parkway from Park Street to Highway 71 as a School Zone.

CONSIDER DECLARING A COMMUNITY FESTIVAL FOR THE CRUISE-IN EVENT FOR THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2024

Peterson said he asked to have this item placed on the City Council's agenda. He said he had also spoken to Jackson County Sheriff Shawn Haken about declaring a Community Festival for the Cruise-In.

Peterson said the thought was to declare a Community Festival for the first Cruise-In event for May 23rd for the three hours of the event. He said that way if someone wants to have an open container next to their vehicle, the Community Festival designation allows that. Peterson said if two people set up their lawn chairs between the cars they're displaying and want to have a cocktail or alcoholic beverage, they won't get in any trouble.

Peterson said the Community Festival could be designated one event at a time for the Cruise-Ins to see how things go and it can be monitored.

Mayor Polz asked who would supply the alcohol.

Peterson said the individuals participating in the Cruise-In would supply their own beverages.

Naumann asked for Chief Deputy Mitchell's thoughts about the Community Festival designation for the Cruise-In.

Mitchell said he doesn't perceive that there will be any issues.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to declare the Cruise-In event in Jackson on Thursday, May 23, 2024 as a Community Festival.

MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION – POPPY DAY ON MAY 24, 2024

Mayor Polz said he had a Proclamation for Poppy Day which is in honor of supporting veterans and the American Legion families.

Mayor Polz read:

***Whereas** the red poppy is a nationally recognized symbol of sacrifice worn by Americans since World War I to honor those who served and died for our country in all wars*

***Whereas** the poppy reminds Americans of the sacrifice made by our veterans while protecting our freedoms*

***Whereas** The American Legion Auxiliary Poppy fund provides support for veterans and their families*

***Whereas** these services include socks for hospitalized veterans, transportation for veterans to a VA hospital and providing a holiday dinner for a veteran's family*

***Whereas** Poppy Day is celebrated in countries around the world and the American Legion Family brought National Poppy Day to the United States by asking Congress to designate the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day*

Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, Marcus Polz, Mayor of Jackson, Minnesota, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 24, 2024 as Poppy Day in the City of Jackson, Minnesota.

I encourage all business and community members to engage with the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 130 in Jackson, Minnesota to recognize this important day.

*IN WITNESS WHEREOF I hereunto set my hand
Marcus Polz, Mayor*

Other:

Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo

Landbo reported on Friday, May 17th, State House File 4738 was passed. He said it's going to change the current regulatory board for EMS in the State of Minnesota to a State Office of EMS. Landbo said the State Office of EMS will have a director appointed by the Governor that starts on January 5th, 2025. He said hopefully that will make things a little bit easier for Ambulance Services and EMS to get changes pushed through.

Landbo said one of the other things that was stuck into House File 4738 at the last minute was \$24 million in funding for EMS. He said it's not the \$120 million that had been proposed, but there is \$24 million in EMS funding for all of Minnesota. Landbo said the funding will be distributed based on how many square miles an ambulance service covers in their primary service area and how many calls they run. He said within the next couple months, information should be available on how much that's going to be for the Jackson Ambulance Service.

Landbo also reminded Mayor Polz, Councilmembers and City Staff that the Ambulance Department's Bar-B-Que is Thursday, May 23rd and they'd love to have everyone attend.

Mayor Polz thanked Landbo for his update.

Alderman Nathan Peterson

Peterson reminded everyone of the joint City Council and Jackson County Central Schoolboard public input informational meeting regarding the swimming pool that will be held on Wednesday, May 29th at 6:30 p.m. at the Jackson County Central High School Auditorium.

CLOSED SESSION AS PERMITTED BY ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, SECTION 13D.05, SUBDIVISION 3(B) TO DISCUSS LAND NEGOTIATIONS (NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN)

Mayor Polz entertained a motion for the City Council to go into Closed Session as permitted by Attorney-Client Privilege, Section 13D.05, Subdivision 3(b) to discuss land negotiations, no action will be taken.

PELL/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried for the City Council to go into Closed Session at 6:43 p.m. as permitted by Attorney-Client Privilege, Section 13D.05, Subdivision 3(b) to discuss land negotiations with no action to be taken.

COMING OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

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

FINCK/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried for the City Council to go out of Closed Session at 7:49 p.m.

BANNER TO BE PLACED ON FRONT OF FORMER COAST TO COAST BUILDING

MIX/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried for the City to spend up to \$1,000 to create signage promoting the City or upcoming events to cover the front doors of the former Coast to Coast building.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Mayor Polz asked for a motion to adjourn the City Council meeting.

PETERSON/FINCK moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the Jackson City Council meeting at 7:50 p.m.

David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary

Marcus Polz, Mayor

