

Jackson, Minnesota  
September 15, 2020

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, September 15, 2020 with the meeting called to order by Mayor Wayne Walter. On the roll call, the following persons were present, Mayor Wayne Walter, Aldermen Matt Madden, Larry Anderson, Brandon Finck, Jeffrey Gay, Nathan Peterson and Dave Cushman. Also attending in-person were City Administrator Matt Skaret, City Attorney Brad Anderson, Street Superintendent Phil Markman, Jackson Ambulance Director Stephanie Beranek, Jackson Fire Chief Dave Bond, Jackson First Assistant Fire Chief Michael Haeffner, Jackson County Sheriff Shawn Haken, Jackson County Sheriff's Deputy Riley Verbrugge and his canine partner Viper, Pastor Nathan Janzen of the First Baptist Church in Jackson, City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff and Justin Lessman of the Jackson County Pilot. Also attending via Teleconference and Zoom was Marcus Polz. (A quorum of the City Council was present.)

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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Mayor Wayne Walter asked Alderman Jeffrey Gay to lead those attending the City Council meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present in the Council Chambers recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

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Mayor Wayne 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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**FINCK/ANDERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.**

City Administrator Matt Skaret said he wanted to highlight a couple items that were approved on the Consent Agenda.

Skaret said it's nice to see additional members being added to the ranks of the City's Ambulance and Fire Departments. He thanked the individuals who are willing to step forward and serve on those very valuable Departments.

Skaret noted Consent Agenda Item "L" regarding the snow removal on the Safe Routes to Schools trails. He said the snow removal on those portions of the trail would be done on a trial basis.

Skaret explained the snow removal on those portions of the trail won't be done on the first day after a snowfall, but on the second or third day.

### **Unscheduled Guests**

Mayor Walter asked twice if there were any unscheduled guests in the audience. Seeing and hearing none, Mayor Walter said the Council meeting would proceed with the Council Discussion Items.

### **Council Discussion Items**

#### **FIRE HALL USE ON OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH THE 16<sup>TH</sup> FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING SPONSORED BY THE JACKSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT CANINE**

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Jackson County Sheriff Shawn Haken said the training is for drug interdiction. He explained it consists of a couple days of classroom training for law enforcement officers. Haken said the Jackson Fire Hall happens to be a perfect location.

Haken said plans are to train on the searching of vehicles.

Sheriff's Deputy Riley Verbrugge explained the training is a three-day class. He said the first two days are in the classroom focusing on criminal interdiction and rural patrol tactics which fits our area perfectly considering Jackson is a very rural community.

Verbrugge said the third day is more of a hands-on training. He explained there will be four to five vehicles set-up so the students can see where different drug items and drug paraphernalia and all those different types of things can be found in vehicles.

Verbrugge said there will also be a breakout session for any canine handlers so the handlers can learn better spots to run their dog around vehicles.

**ANDERSON/GAY moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the use of the Jackson Fire Hall October 14<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup> for Law Enforcement training sponsored by the Jackson County Sheriff's Department.**

### **Introduction of Jackson County Sheriff's Department Canine Viper**

(Deputy Riley Verbrugge leaves the Council room to get canine Viper from the Sheriff's Department patrol vehicle)

Sheriff Shawn Haken said Viper is the Sheriff Department's third canine. He said the Sheriff's Department has been really, really lucky. Haken said they have had two really good canines in the past and Viper looks like he will be as good.

Haken said the Sheriff's Department had canines Bear and Bosco in the past and they did really good things. He said the canines did things that humans could never do, mostly with their nose. Haken said the canines have also provided safety for officers on some tense calls. He said he doesn't know if those situations would have turned out as well as they did if a canine had not been at the call with officers.

Haken said for years the Sheriff's Department has seen the value of having a canine. He said he can't quite picture not having a canine at the Sheriff's Department.

Haken said the Sheriff's Department is happy and excited about having canine Viper. He pointed out Viper has been busy already for the first couple of months and has done some really good things.

Haken said Verbrugge and canine Viper went through training. He noted the training with a canine is certainly one of the hardest, most demanding trainings there is in the law enforcement profession.

Haken said the training is about three months long. He explained it's Monday through Friday and it doesn't matter what the weather is like. Haken said for the most part, the training occurs outside on most days.

Haken said the training is very demanding. He said Verbrugge lived in a motel like all the trainees do for five days a week, Monday through Friday. He said Verbrugge would get home Friday night from the training that takes place in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul). Haken said Verbrugge would be home Saturday with the family but by Sunday afternoon he would be back on the road heading to the Twin Cities. He said Verbrugge did that for about 12 weeks so it's very demanding.

(Verbrugge returns to the Council room with canine Viper)

Haken said Verbrugge will talk about Viper and give a demonstration as he and Verbrugge had earlier hidden some contraband in the Council room for Viper to find.

### **Verbrugge's presentation about Viper**

Verbrugge explained Viper is a two-and-a-half-year-old German Shepherd. He said Viper came from the top breeder in Europe from the Czech Republic.

Verbrugge said Viper is a third-generation police dog. He said he picked up Viper on March 17<sup>th</sup> around 2 a.m. at the airport in the Twin Cities after Viper made a 28-hour flight from the Czech Republic to the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

Verbrugge said he brought Viper to his home for six days and then began training with the dog at the end of March. He explained it was a 14-week training academy in the Twin Cities through McDonough K9.

Verbrugge said each week the training was long and hard. He said each day started between 6 and 6:30 a.m. with physical training which included a couple mile run, push-ups, sit-ups and other calisthenics. Verbrugge said they would then train for 10 to 12 hours a day after that.

Verbrugge explained they trained pretty hard in narcotic recognition and then patrol functions. He said Viper is trained to alert the odors of methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin and any drugs made of those duratives such as MDMA, ecstasy, crack cocaine and all those different types of things.

As far a patrol, Verbrugge said Viper is trained in criminal apprehension, article searches, area searches, tracking and a number of other patrol functions.

Verbrugge said Viper is an awesome dog and is excited to work on anything that involves his nose. He said Viper currently weighs 90 pounds. Verbrugge said Viper can also bite really good. Verbrugge said the opportunity has not yet arisen where Viper has had to bite any criminals which is good.

Verbrugge said Viper loves coming to work. Verbrugge said he loves coming to work and Viper is always trying to beat him to the front door of his house when it's time to go to work.

Mayor Walter asked Verbrugge if he and the dog were both involved in the three months of training in the Twin Cities.

Verbrugge said he and Viper trained as a team. He said literally from the day he picked up Viper at the airport until the end of July, Viper was by his side at all times. Verbrugge noted Viper did not participate in the physical training the officers had to do. He said the dogs got a break while the officers ran miles at a time. Otherwise, Verbrugge said he and Viper trained as a team which they needed. Verbrugge explained there's different things that he needs to be able to read with Viper's body language to show him different things. For example, Verbrugge said in searching for drugs, Viper will show him if he's found drugs without actually telling him.

Verbrugge said Viper is trained to sit or go into a "down" position as a final alert for the odor of narcotics. He said he can tell if Viper is close to finding narcotics just based on how Viper is breathing with his mouth open or closed, how big a breathes he's taking, how fast he's breathing, his body language, his tail movements along with other indicators.

For tracking, Verbrugge said when Viper is excited, his tail will kind of wag back and forth. He said if Viper is on scent of a track, his tail will hang down and to the right and he won't pick his head up. Verbrugge explained that's not something a person would pick up on unless you're doing it everyday for 14 weeks.

Verbrugge said he and Viper are still learning. He said they train constantly. Verbrugge said they put in hours and hours of training and they're doing something every day at work as far as training.

Haken asked how many dogs were at the training held in the Twin Cities.

Verbrugge said there were a total of 17 dogs. He said 15 dogs were dual purpose for narcotics and patrol function. Verbrugge said there was one dog from the Metro-Transit Police Department in the Twin Cities training for explosives detection and one dog from a small City in Wisconsin that was training strictly for narcotics.

Alderman Anderson asked Verbrugge how long did it take Viper to get use to him.

Verbrugge said the first week before he and Viper went to training was definitely interesting. He said Viper was getting use to his new surroundings but was obviously jet-lagged.

Verbrugge said the breeder where Viper came from is the top breeder in the Czech Republic. At the breeder, Verbrugge said Viper had a small kennel with dirt floors. He said the average temperature in the Czech Republic is 50 degrees year-round whereas when Viper arrived in Minnesota it was 20 degrees and he began sleeping inside a house. Verbrugge said Viper had never seen wooden floors or carpet. He said when he first brought Viper to his house, he had to carry Viper back to his kennel because the dog was afraid of the floor.

Verbrugge said it took a good month just to build up the trust and relationship between himself and Viper and to have Viper realize they are going to be together 24/7. He explained Viper also had to realize that Verbrugge will be the one who feeds him so he can't bite him. Verbrugge said Viper had to learn to listen to him if he wants to get fed.

Verbrugge noted he and Viper have been together six months and they're still learning about each other.

Alderman Anderson asked if Viper works every time Verbrugge goes to work.

Verbrugge said Viper goes to work with him every time. Verbrugge said he loves going to work and absolutely loves working in Jackson County. He said Viper also loves to work. Verbrugge said as soon as his collar goes on Viper knows it's time to go to work and is racing to the front door and squad car.

Gay asked how long Viper had lived at the kennel in the Czech Republic.

Verbrugge said Viper was two years and one week when he picked him up. He said Viper had been training since he was eight weeks old. Verbrugge said Viper is now two-and-a-half years old.

Attorney Anderson asked Verbrugge if there was a language barrier between him and Viper when he first had him.

Verbrugge said there was a language barrier. He said he had to learn Czech to speak to Viper and then he slowly worked Viper into English commands.

Verbrugge said they started with Czech commands and added hand signals with the commands. He explained he then kept the hand signals and started using English commands. Verbrugge explained in a stressful situation, he's not going to be able to remember Czech but will remember English commands.

Mayor Walter asked if Viper has been training for his job since he was a puppy.

Verbrugge said Viper has been training every day for his job since he was eight weeks old. He said training involves rewarding Viper with his toy or food.

Verbrugge explained during the first couple weeks of training in the Twin Cities, the way the dogs were fed is they had to do the things their handlers asked them to do. He explained for simple tracking, a person scuffs their feet on the ground for 20 yards and a piece of food is laid down every three feet to teach the dogs to keep their nose to the ground. Verbrugge said if the dogs keep doing that, eventually they're going to get rewarded with food or a toy.

For odor recognition for narcotics, Verbrugge said the training starts by putting drugs inside a paint can and teaching the dogs to sit. He said when the dogs make their final indication for the drugs, they get a piece of food and then that advances to the dog getting their toy and figuring out what the dog craves and what he'll do anything for. He said Viper likes his tug or a tennis ball. Verbrugge said Viper will do anything to get a tennis ball.

Attorney Anderson asked how did Viper get selected for this type of work.

Verbrugge explained the breeder in the Czech Republic has so many dogs and keeps records of the bloodline and pedigree of all those dogs. He said the trainer that the Jackson County Sheriff's Department goes through flies over to the Czech Republic. Verbrugge said the trainer then calls each law enforcement agency to find out about the size of the department, what the area is like and what a department needs. He said the Jackson County Sheriff's Department is obviously a rural agency and Viper is the Department's only canine in the County. Verbrugge said the Jackson County Sheriff's Department wanted a dual-purpose dog so they could have the patrol function as well as the narcotics. He explained the trainer then works off of what the breeder has available in selecting a dog from those that are available. Verbrugge said there's a list of things the trainer looks at in a selection of a dog such as the size of the Department, size of the handler and the terrain of the area where the dog will serve.

Verbrugge said Viper was one of the bigger dogs at the training in the Twin Cities. He said a lot of the metro law enforcement agencies also had German Shepherds but they were smaller. Verbrugge noted the Department sizes are larger in the metro area so the officers have backup whereas here, Viper is his backup. He said that's how Viper got chosen for the Jackson County Sheriff's Department.

With no more questions, Verbrugge gave a demonstration with Viper to find contraband that was hidden in the Council room earlier in the evening. Verbrugge then lead Viper around the room searching for the contraband. Viper found the contraband hidden on a top shelf of the podium in the Council room. When Viper found the contraband, he alerted Verbrugge by sitting down. Viper was rewarded with his toy.



Verbrugge explained the different types and amounts of illegal narcotics that are used in training Viper to locate drugs.

Verbrugge said he and Viper train in the basement of the Law Enforcement Center, at the Highway Department building using the cars in the impound lot and also train with area dog handlers. He said the previous week they trained with a couple of canines from Worthington law enforcement and a State Trooper from Windom. Verbrugge said he and Viper take any opportunity they can get to train. He said the training will make them better as a team.

City Attorney Brad Anderson asked if the scent of a substance can be masked enough so Viper won't pick up the scent.

Verbrugge said it all depends. He said someone can try to mask the scent, but it all depends on the amount someone is trying to hide. Verbrugge said in training he's put cotton balls next to a bag of two grams of methamphetamine and left it sit for an hour. He said he's also put the cotton balls that were next to the bag of meth into an electrical outlet and left it sit for 30 minutes. Verbrugge said Viper was able to find the cotton balls. He said Viper is able to find very, very small amounts of substances. Verbrugge said weather conditions can play a factor in Viper finding substances. He also said contradicting odors can also play a factor if there's two different drugs present. Verbrugge said it's hard for Viper to figure it out because he'll smell one drug and then the other drug and he can't figure out which drug he's trying to smell. He's said that's their biggest thing. Verbrugge said he's a dog and is not going to be perfect a 100 percent of the time. He said he and Viper are training with a lot of different things and are presenting as many distractors to Viper as they can as part of the training.

Alderman Anderson asked if Viper had a bullet-proof vest.

Verbrugge said they are applying to get a bullet-proof vest for Viper through the Vested Interest in K9s Program. He said it's a program where an application can be made for a vest donation that is funded strictly through donations from citizens.

Haken said in the last two-and-a-half months, Verbrugge and Viper have found quite a bit of meth and marijuana.

Verbrugge said he and Viper have had up to 18 deployments so far. He said they've had one decent sized arrest with a couple user amounts and a couple good human finds with some burglary suspects.

Haken pointed out in one of the cases in finding a burglary suspect, Viper actually reversed tracked a suspect leading to an arrest. He said it was a phenomenal effort by Viper in reverse tracking the suspect.

Verbrugge said Viper is also trained in protecting an officer or apprehending a suspect. He said Viper has a strong bite.

City Attorney Anderson asked if Viper can work with any other officer in the Sheriff's Department if Verbrugge is ill.

Verbrugge said no. He explained they tried having Viper work with another officer to see if Viper would listen to commands from someone else. Verbrugge said Viper will listen to simple obedience commands such as sitting, downing, standing up, heeling and such things. But as far as searching an area for drugs, tracking someone or making an apprehension, Verbrugge said Viper won't listen to another officer's commands. He said Viper will actually try and find him. Verbrugge said Viper is strictly confined to himself.

Mayor Walter and Councilmembers thanked Verbrugge for his presentation and demonstration of Viper.

**DESIGNATE OFFICE MANAGER DEBRA MITCHELL, MAYOR WAYNE WALTER AND CITY ADMINISTRATOR MATT SKARET AS DESIGNATED SIGNATORIES AT ALL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, CHECKS, AND OTHER FINANCIAL RELATED MATTERS AS NEEDED**

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Skaret said this agenda item came about with the opening of Security State Bank in Jackson. He explained Security State Bank had a C.D. (Certificate of Deposit) special going on and the City took advantage of that.

Skaret said Security State Bank needs an official copy of the City Council minutes in which it was stated that Debra Mitchell, Mayor Wayne Walter and City Administrator Matt Skaret have been officially designated as signatories on the City's financial paperwork.

Skaret said although nothing was found in the City's records, it's been done this way for many years in having the City's Office Manager, Mayor and City Administrator be the designated signatories. He said something needs to be noted in the City Council minutes officially designating that.

**CUSHMAN/MADDEN moved and it was unanimously carried to designate Office Manager Debra Mitchell, Mayor Wayne Walter and City Administrator Matt Skaret as designated signatories at all financial institutions, checks, and other financial related matters as needed.**

### **BRENT WEIRES SIDEWALK REMOVAL REQUEST AT 714 NORTH SVERDRUP AVENUE**

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Skaret noted the email from Brent Weires that was distributed to the Mayor and City Councilmembers prior to the City Council meeting. He said Weires wanted to attend the City Council meeting but was unable to do so.

Skaret explained Weires lives at 714 North Sverdrup Avenue. He said Weires is requesting approval to eliminate a section of sidewalk along the north edge of his property. Skaret said the bordering street to Weires' property is North Highway. He said North Highway has a well-maintained sidewalk along the north side which creates a path from Highway 71 to the Sanford Medical Center. Skaret said the only section of sidewalk on the south side of North Highway is the section in front of Weires' property.

Skaret said Weires would like to have the section of sidewalk in front his property removed. He said Weires would remove the sidewalk on his own. Skaret said Weires doesn't think removing the sidewalk in front of his property would be noticed by pedestrians and it would help improve the appearance of his property. He said Weires also noted there were a couple of sections of concrete in the sidewalk that were destroyed while crews were installing the underground power lines. Skaret said according to Weires, this would be a great opportunity to remove the remaining sidewalk.

Skaret noted he also enclosed a few pictures of the sidewalk in front of Weires' property in the City Council's informational packets.

Cushman said he agrees with Weires' request. However, Cushman said he wants the City Council to be careful that going forward the City just doesn't open it up for anyone to remove sidewalks. He said Weires' request was kind of a unique situation. Cushman noted from Fourth Street all the way up to the Good Samaritan Center there's not a sidewalk on the south side of North Highway. He said this is a unique situation and thinks that's why the City Council is granting this request to remove a sidewalk. Cushman said he doesn't want the City Council to just open it up for citizens to remove sidewalks.

**FINCK/ANDERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Brent Weires' request to remove the sidewalk on the north side of his property located at 714 North Sverdrup Avenue.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 36-0920: APPROVING THE PRELIMINARY TAX LEVY FOR 2020 COLLECTIBLE IN 2021 AND SET TRUTH IN TAXATION HEARING FOR 6:30 P.M. ON DECEMBER 15, 2020**

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Skaret said the preliminary tax levy for 2020 collectible in 2021 was discussed quite extensively at the Finance Committee's September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Skaret explained the City is required to adopt a preliminary tax levy for the following year by September 30<sup>th</sup>. He noted the big thing to remember is once the City Council sets the tax levy, they can always lower it when they adopt the final levy in December but they cannot raise the levy any higher than what the preliminary tax levy was set at. Skaret said historically, the City's final levy has always come in lower than what the preliminary levy was set at. He referred to a sheet of information included in the City Council's informational packet that outlined the City's history going back to 2008 regarding levy increases. Skaret noted the information for the last couple of years indicates what the preliminary levy was and what the final levy was set at.

Skaret said the big thing with the City's budget is the great amount of uncertainty that we're faced with particularly with the Covid Pandemic. He noted the State of Minnesota went from a budget surplus to a budget deficient in basically the flip of the switch or blink of an eye due to Covid and the economic slowdown.

Skaret said the State is forecast to have a budget deficient for the rest of this fiscal year and then going into the next biennium. He said part of that would be where the Local Government Aid (LGA) comes from. Skaret reported the City gets about 40 percent of their General Fund Revenue from Local Government Aid. He said historically when the State gets into a fiscal crunch, one of the first things that gets cut is Local Government Aid. Skaret said that's a great unknown. He noted Local Government Aid has also been the last item to get funding restored after being cut. Skaret that's something all local governments are dealing with including school districts, counties and so forth.

Skaret said another uncertainty is wages and health insurance. He noted this is a union negotiations year. Skaret said the City will begin union negotiations shortly.

Skaret said the City will be receiving their health insurance rates in October as well.

Skaret said there's just a lot of uncertainty. He said the Finance Committee wanted to build some margin in the budget so in case there's a cut in Local Government Aid the City will be able to withstand that without having a significant impact in services.

Skaret said we're fortunate in that the City has some pretty strong reserves across the board. Skaret said he's pretty confident that the City's tax levy will come in lower than the 5.9 percent preliminary tax levy increase as the City typically has.

Skaret noted one of the things the City just started in the last few weeks is a major street project. He said the City just issued over five million dollars' worth of General Obligation Bonds. Skaret said the City will be starting debt service on that bond in 2021. He said the reason why the City picked 2020 to do a street project like this is because the City had debt come off the books the last couple of years.

Skaret said the City had about \$15,000 per year in tax abatement from the AmericInn project and about \$70,000 per year come off the books with the 2011 refunding bonds related to the Sunset View addition. He explained that freed up some debt that allowed the City to take on a project of this magnitude without negatively affecting the tax levy. Skaret said we're basically filling one hole in the levy with another project. Skaret said that's one thing the Finance Committee really stressed as the financial planning for the street project was underway. He said the Finance Committee did not want the street project to result in a significant tax levy. Skaret said he thinks the City can still stand behind that today.

Skaret asked if there were any questions. He said there were a number of highlights in the budget in the City Council memo. Skaret said City Councilmembers can read through those.

Skaret explained the City is also trying to build up reserves to purchase Street Department equipment. He said the Street Department's equipment is very aged. Skaret said the City has gotten better in replacing old equipment and are working with Street Superintendent Phil Markman in developing a five-year plan on future equipment needs. He said there's a really good start on the five-year plan and how to fund it.

Regarding the Fire Department, Skaret said the City is continuing to set money aside for the purchase of future trucks, equipment and so forth.

Skaret asked if there were any questions.

Alderman Anderson said he thinks the Finance Committee did a great job last year. He noted they started with a 5.9 percent tax levy increase and got it down to 2.9 percent. Alderman Anderson said they will face a lot of challenges this year but he has all the faith in the world in the Finance Committee.

**ANDERSON/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 36-0920 approving the Preliminary Tax levy for 2020 collectible in 2021 at 5.9 percent and setting the Truth in Taxation hearing for 6:30 p.m. on December 15, 2020.**

## **UTILITY BILL DELINQUENT LATE FEES AND SHUT OFFS**

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Skaret noted the discussion on the utility bill delinquent late fees and shut offs has become a monthly ritual since March when the Covid pandemic struck. He said unfortunately he didn't have any immediate numbers available for the City Council regarding how many delinquencies the City has with utility bills being due on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Skaret said today (September 15<sup>th</sup>) was a busy day and a lot of utility bills got paid. He said the September 15<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting would be the Council's last opportunity before October for the Council to decide whether or not to extend the utility bill delinquent late fees and shut offs for another month.

Finck said he would still look at extending the program for another month especially based on the extra federal government support for unemployment ending at the end of September. He said it could definitely become challenging for individuals if the federal government support actually ends. Finck said he thinks it's probably still a good option to have available for the City.

Madden said the only worry would be if there was an excessive amount of people that have not been paying their utility bills and not being shut off since the beginning of March because the bills would just be building up. However, Madden noted that during the last months, the percentage of delinquent bills this year compared to last year is basically the same if not less. He said he really doesn't have any concerns.

Skaret pointed out utility customers are still required to pay something. He said utility customers are still required to sign an agreement where each month they have to pay a minimum of 25 percent of their balance due on their utility bill. Skaret noted the more months a utility customer is on that program, the more they have to pay because their balance due just keeps going up and up.

**MADDEN/CUSHMAN moved and it was unanimously carried to extend the utility bill delinquent late fees and shut offs policy for another month.**

## **REVOLVING LOAN PAYMENT DEFERMENTS**

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Skaret said the Revolving Loan Payment deferments is also related to the Covid pandemic.

Skaret said not every business is taking advantage of this program. He said there are many businesses that are still continuing to make their payments on a regular monthly basis but there are several businesses that the deferment program is benefiting.

Finck said the Revolving Loan Payment deferments really allows the City flexibility in how to handle things going forward. He said hats off to the community's citizens. Finck said the citizens have really handled this pandemic very well in what they've done by paying their bills.

Finck said it is nice for the City to have flexibility to be able to handle things without having special City Council meetings to do that.

Cushman concurred with Finck. He noted the City hasn't been taken advantage of and that's been the key. Cushman said that's been good to see and he would totally agree with extending the deferment programs another month.

**FINCK/ANDERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to extend the Revolving Loan Payment Deferments for another month.**

## **FIRE TRUCK EQUIPMENT QUOTES**

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Jackson Fire Department Chief Dave Bond thanked Mayor Walter and the City Council for the purchase of the new 2020 Fire Truck. He said the truck turned out awesome and thanked the City for everything in purchasing it.

Bond explained the Fire Department had to take some equipment off of one of their other fire trucks to install onto the new truck so they could put the new fire truck into service.

Bond said the Fire Department is purchasing some equipment to outfit the new fire truck so all three of the Department's trucks will be identically equipped and back where they should be as far as equipment.

Bond said there are three items that were discussed at the Fire Department's meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup>. He said one item would be an intake valve for large diameter intakes. Bond said the cost for that would be \$1,465.



Bond said the Fire Department would also like to purchase two new ventilation fans to put on the new fire truck. He explained right now all of the Fire Department's ventilation fans are gas powered. Bond said there are now new battery-operated fans available. He said a lot of fire departments are making use of the battery-operated ventilation fans and have had really good success with them.

Bond said the battery-operated ventilation fans are a lot lighter. He said it basically takes two people to carry the current gas-powered fans and get them in place. Bond said one person can carry and put a battery-operated fan in place.

Bond said the Fire Department is looking at purchasing one battery operated fan and one gas powered fan. He said the gas-powered fan costs \$1,991 and the battery-operated fan is \$4,225.

Bond said the total would be \$7,681 for the three pieces of equipment the Fire Department would like to purchase to install on the new fire truck.

Alderman Anderson asked Bond how many ventilation fans the Fire Department currently has.

Bond said the Fire Department has a total of six fans. He said they put two fans on each engine because you never know which truck may be going to a scene or if there's two fire calls at the same time. Bond said the Fire Department tries to keep all three of their trucks identical so that way they're all basically set-up the same.

Madden asked where the funding will come from for the new equipment requested by the Fire Department.

Skaret said the funding would come out of the Fire Department's regular budget. He said there is funding available in that budget.

**MADDEN/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the quotes from Heiman Fire Equipment of Ashton, Iowa for the purchase of a gas-powered ventilation fan for \$4,225, a battery power ventilation fan for \$1,991 and an intake valve for \$1,465 for the Jackson Fire Department.**

Skaret noted the Fire Department and the City are still working to get the old 1997 Fire Truck out to bid.

Skaret said there was one Fire Department that expressed interest in the old truck and offered \$14,000 for it. He said it's felt the 1997 truck is worth more than that. Skaret said how much more, we don't know.

Bond said the Fire Department members also talked about how much the 1997 truck would be worth at their meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup>. He said the Fire Department feels that \$25,000 would be the minimum.

Bond said the Fire Department is also working with the State Fire Marshal's Office who has a website. He said the Fire Department just needs to send them some pictures and specifications of the 1997 truck and the Fire Marshal's Office can send the information throughout the entire State of Minnesota.

Bond said there's another Fire Department that might be interested in the 1997 truck. He said that Fire Department is waiting to hear back to see where they are at with the purchase of a truck.

Madden asked Bond if the Fire Department is confident in getting \$25,000 for the 1997 truck.

Bond said he believes so. He said the Fire Department interested in the truck asked if the pump on the truck has been tested. Bond said the Fire Department just tested their three older trucks a week ago. He said all three trucks passed and is certified for another year which is a good thing. Bond noted that's quite a bit of money to have the pump certified and knowing that's it's ready to go.

#### **COMPANION STATE GRANT AND RESOLUTION NO. 37-0920 FOR AIP GRANT**

Skaret said the Companion State Grant and Resolution No. 37-0920 for the AIP Grant is for the paving project around the hangars at the airport. He noted the City Council approved the bids for the paving project at their meeting on August 18<sup>th</sup>.

Skaret explained the Companion State Grant and Resolution No. 37-0920 is the paperwork the City Council needs to execute in order for the City to receive their grant money for the paving project. He said a motion is needed to approve Resolution No. 37-0920 authorizing Mayor Walter and himself to sign the paperwork on the grant agreement.

City Attorney Brad Anderson noted that if the City accepts this grant money, the City has to keep the airport open for the next 20 years after the last grant payment is made. He said the grant amount totals over \$600,000. Attorney Anderson said the agreement doesn't talk about claw-back but the requirement to keep the airport open for the next 20 years after the last grant payment is stated in the grant agreement.

Mayor Walter said he doesn't think the City has a real choice. He said the City needs to keep the airport open.

Finck said there's no intentions of closing the airport.

Mayor Walter said the airport is one of those things a town the size of Jackson needs.

**ANDERSON/GAY moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 37-0920 for the AIP Grant.**

#### **MAYOR'S BICYCLE MONTH PROCLAMATION: SEPTEMBER 2020**

Mayor Walter said he had a proclamation declaring September 2020 as Bike Month in Jackson.

Mayor Walter read the ***Mayor's Bike Month Proclamation:***

***Whereas, Jackson is proud and honored to be designated as a "Bicycle Friendly Community" by BikeMN; and***

***Whereas, bicycling is an economical, healthy, convenient, and environmentally sound form of transportation and an excellent tool for recreation and enjoyment of Jackson's scenic beauty; and***

***Whereas, throughout the month of September, the residents of Jackson and visitors will experience the enjoyment of bicycling through educational programs, races, community events, charity events, or by simply getting out and going for a ride; and***

***Whereas, Jackson's road and trail system attracts numerous bicyclists each year, providing an added benefit to the local economy; and***

***Whereas, creating a bicycling-friendly community has been shown to improve citizens' health, well-being, and quality of life, improve traffic safety, have educational benefits, reduce pollution, congestion, and wear and tear on our streets and roads; and***

***Whereas,** Jackson County Friends of the Trails, the League of American Bicyclists, schools, parks and recreation departments, law enforcement departments, public health districts, hospitals, businesses and civic groups across the country will be promoting bicycling during the month of September 2020; and*

***Whereas,** these partners are also promoting bicycle tourism year-round to attract more visitors to enjoy our local restaurants, hotels, retail establishments, and cultural and scenic attractions; and*

***Whereas,** these partners are also promoting greater public awareness of bicycle operation and safety education in an effort to reduce collisions, injuries, and fatalities and improve health and safety for motorists and pedestrians; and*

***Now, therefore, I,** Wayne Walter, Mayor of Jackson, Minnesota, do hereby proclaim September 2020 as Bike Month in Jackson, Minnesota, and I urge all residents to join me commemorating national bicycle month.*

*Signed this 15<sup>th</sup> day of September 2020.*

Signed Wayne Walter, Mayor.

**Other:**

**Alderman Dave Cushman regarding the Preliminary Tax Levy**

Cushman noted the discussion earlier in the meeting regarding the Preliminary Tax Levy. He said he appreciated Alderman Anderson's comments about the Finance Committee but future discussions regarding the levy will be up to all the Councilmembers and everyone will have to pitch in.

Cushman said it's going to be a tough year coming up. He said he thinks the Councilmembers will have to be thick-skinned and be able to say the word "no". Cushman said that starts not just from setting the levy, but that's every meeting after that. He said all next year is going to be a challenge for each and every one of us. Cushman said he appreciates the faith in the Finance Committee, but we're all in this together.

## **Alderman Larry Anderson**

Anderson said he just wanted to remind everyone that the Ashley Park Shelter House ribbon cutting will be held on Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30 p.m. He said if anyone wants to attend, they're more than welcome to do so.

## **City Administrator Matt Skaret**

### **North Highway Project Update**

City Administrator Matt Skaret said he spoke with Engineer Greg Mitchell of Bolton and Menk before the Council meeting.

Skaret said the North Highway project is going very well. He reported work is underway on connecting water and sewer services. Skaret said Mitchell anticipates that by the end of the week, that portion of North Highway from Sayles Drive up to Hospital that's torn up now could be back to gravel. He said that would allow for better access to the driveways for residents.

Skaret said the contractor is working in some very favorable soils, very sandy soil which is going to save the City a little bit of money. He explained the contractor is not having to bring in as much extra fill for the base. Skaret said it's something that's working in the City's favor. He can't say if the soils will be like that for the rest of the project, but in that particular area of North Highway there's some good sandy soils and it's definitely helping.

### **Sanitary Sewer River Crossing**

Skaret reported the Sanitary Sewer Extension river crossing that was approved at the September 1<sup>st</sup> Council meeting has been completed. He said the contractors were able to make it across the river with the pipe. Skaret said overall it went very well. He said the contractors are still doing some clean-up work at the river. Skaret said they are trying to get the rest of the sewer pipe installed all the way to Highway 71. He said they had about 325 feet to go. Skaret said the contractor was confident they would get the rest of the sewer line installed. He said that project is going very well.

## **Street Superintendent Phil Markman North Highway Update**

Markman said he could provide some additional information about the North Highway Project. He said the contractor will be bringing their reclaimer to mill up the existing pavement between the Pines and the Hospital on the hill down to Dewey Street. Markman explained the contractor is going to lay-in that material for now. He said a sub-contractor has been hired by the general contractor to grade right behind them.

Markman said Bolton and Menk was on site on September 15<sup>th</sup> doing staking and the contractor is going to start doing the grading and cuts and getting the underdrains installed on the north end of the project.

Markman said there's a lot of stuff going on. He said there are three houses left to hook up sewer and water services. Markman said the soil conditions are very favorable and the weather has been cooperative. He said the project has been going well.

Finck asked when the contractor would start pouring the curb and gutter.

Markman said it depends on how the grading goes. He said he didn't know if the contractor is going to get all the grading completed so they can pour the curb and gutter all at once. Markman said if everything keeps progressing as it is, it will be soon.

Finck thanked Markman for the information.

Mayor Walter also thanked Markman.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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**With no further business, ANDERSON/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the City Council meeting at 7:22 p.m.**

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**David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary**

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**Wayne Walter, Mayor**

