



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

5:30 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

SPECIAL CALLED NOMINATING & RULES COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 4:45 P.M.

PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 5:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR HAROLD COPENHAVER AT 5:30 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

3. ROLL CALL (ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE) INITIATED AND CONFIRMED BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

Present 12 - Brian Emison; Chris Moore; Chris Gibson; David McClain; Joe Hafner; Kevin Miller; Anthony Coleman; Janice Porter; John Street; Charles Coleman; LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

[COM-26:015](#)

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING TRANSIT APPRECIATION FOR JETS GOJO

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, well, good evening, council. It's always a privilege to stand before you, but this evening, as we recognize each year, our public transit system, last year we did an appreciation as well. But tonight, we're going to have a presentation by our new name, GoJo. But importantly, I want to recognize all the city employees with the transit public system. On behalf of the city, I'm proud to recognize and celebrate each of you on National Transit Employee Appreciation Day. Your dedication, professionalism, and commitment to public service play an essential role in keeping our community connected. And your teamwork is the heartbeat behind the community driven. Whether you are behind the wheel, dispatching routes, maintaining vehicles, or supporting operations behind the scenes, your work ensures that residents can reach jobs, schools, health care, and many opportunities that our city has to offer. Reliable transit is a cornerstone of a thriving community, and it would not be possible without your work and dedication. Public transit employees often work early mornings, late evenings, and through challenging conditions, such as inclement weather, to serve others. I appreciate that Lee. Your willingness to go the extra mile reflects the spirit of service that makes our city so strong, to help people get where they need to go in a safe way, and dependable and in doing so, you make a meaningful difference in countless lives within our community. So today, we pause to recognize and say thank you for the vital role that you play in Jonesboro. Please know that your efforts are supported not only today, but throughout the year. On behalf of our residents and city leadership, thank you for your commitment to excellence, and for the pride you bring to public transit service in Jonesboro. Thank you so much. We appreciate y'all. Director

of Jonesboro Economical Transportation System Lee Wells said, thank you sir. Mayor Copenhaver replied, you bet.

Read

[COM-26:016](#)

JETS BRANDING GOJO AND UPDATES

Attachments: [GOJO.pdf](#)

Director of Jonesboro Economical Transportation System Lee Wells said, good evening, Mayor and Councilmembers. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight about the rebrand of the city's public transit system. As we evaluated the future of transit in Jonesboro, one thing became very clear. Many people in our community were either not aware of the service or did not realize it is a resource available to the entire city by the city. Public transportation is not intended to serve only a small segment of the population. It is a public service meant to support the mobility, workforce access, and daily needs of our entire community. Because of that, we felt it was important to create a brand that was more visible, more recognizable, and more clearly connected to the city itself. The GOJO brand helps accomplish that by directly tying the system to Jonesboro, and creating a simple, memorable identity that encourages residents to Go Jonesboro. Our goal is to increase awareness so that when people see a bus, a shelter, or transit information, they may immediately recognize it as a service provided by the city. This rebrand also strengthens the identity of transit as a department of the city and helps ensure that the work being done by our team is more visible to the public we serve. By having a consistent and recognizable brand across vehicles, bus stops, shelters, and digital platforms, we can better communicate that this is a city service designed to benefit the entire community. Another important reason for this effort is modernization. As we continue to evaluate our routes, technology, and service delivery, the system must evolve to operate more efficiently and respond to how people move around the city today. A refreshed identity allows us to introduce improvements, whether those are operational changes, technology upgrades, or service adjustments, in a way that clearly signals progress and growth. This rebrand is not simply about a new name or a logo. It is about positioning the transit system for the future, expanding our reach, improving visibility, modernizing our operations, ensuring that public transportation continues to serve the residents of Jonesboro as effectively as possible. We do appreciate the council's continued support as we work to make transit a more visible, accessible, and valuable service for the entire community. Thank you. So I wanted to talk a little bit today about the new vision for public transit. So one of the things I handed out a while ago was our map. Our route map not only has our map for all of the different routes, but it also has inside that our mission statement. That mission statement clearly defines our goals. It talks about who we are and where we want to go. Also in there is our vision. That's there to help clearly define our direction and tell you how we're going to get there. We also wanted to make everything clear for how we operate. So included in your map is also a rules to ride, to help clearly understand what the expectations are whenever you ride public transit. This is not just an external objective. We're also working to bring these same ideas and goals to our department as a whole. With these goals, we have already begun to make some impactful improvements to our service. And one of those is our long-awaited app. And I'd like to bring Ryan up to discuss that, please.

Ryan Brasher, Marketing Coordinator for GoJo, said, good evening, Councilmembers, good evening, Mayor. Like Lee said, this has been long-awaited. But before I get into it, I would like to thank all of our beta testers that helped us develop this. Ann Williams was also one of those beta testers, so thank you very much. The app has

been long-awaited and long-needed. It's going to give us a new way, and our riders a new way, to look at live bus information and live stop information. All of the maps, you can clearly see where the buses are and what stops they'll get to next. It also has a plan-a-trip feature. That feature is going to allow new residents in Jonesboro or people who aren't quite as familiar with the transit system to put in their starting location and where they want to go. And that will tell them how far they need to walk to their closest bus stop, how long the ride is going to be, and whether or not they need to transfer buses at our transfer station. What being said, I also have a demo prepared for you guys so we can actually see how that app works instead of me just sitting here talking about it. So, introducing the Let's GoJo app. Whenever you enter the home screen, you'll be able to see the stop that's closest to your location and how long you're going to be waiting for that bus at that stop. If you click that and then click the more button, you'll actually be able to see the stop's entire schedule for the rest of the day. On this, you'll be able to see what routes hit that stop. So in this case, the municipal building, the blue route is going to be hitting it. And then you'll be able to see that it's hitting it about every hour. And now let's go check out the plan-a-trip section. So you hit the menu, you click plan-a-trip, and it will take you to the plan-a-trip home menu. You start by putting your starting location. So in this case, the municipal center. And then I put ASTATE and we're going to head over to the student union. You get to then choose some other options and details. Like if you want to leave by a certain time or you want to arrive by a certain time, you can click that. And then you can pick if you don't want to walk very far, we've got options for that because this is the public transit system, not the public walking system. Once you get everything situated and everything ready to go, you click the go button. Here you're going to see all the different options for the trips that you can take that will get you there at the time you specify. So some of them have more walking than others. Some of them will have different transfers. It just depends on the trip you are wanting to take. So I chose the first one. And, whenever you choose your trip, you're going to get a map that tells you the whole route that you're going to take. It will show you each stop, each route, if you need to transfer, all the information that you need. And then if you need some more direction, that's where the bottom half of the screen comes into play. And, we are going to look at it for a little bit longer, until we get to go look at our live route maps. So the same menu, you hit map. And when you click that, it will take you to all of our live maps. So you can see right now all of them are visible. But if you hit that little routes tab there on the side, you can filter the routes that you want to be shown. So I chose route, the green one. So now you get to see all of that specific route. You can pick any stop on it. You can look at the bus capacity, when it's due at the next bus stop, and then when it will hit that stop subsequently. So that's the Let's GoJo app. We think it's going to be a super impactful tool for our current and future riders. I don't see how having more information in this case is ever a bad thing. So once again, thank you, Ann Williams, for helping us beta test it. Thank you for the rest of our testers. And now I would like to talk about our social media a little bit. So with the rebranding, we have developed a new Facebook page. We are GoJo on Facebook, so we'd love it if you guys gave us a follow and checked out the content we're posting. This is going to be everything that JET was posting from route changes, closures, special events that we're hosting or helping out with. But also right now, we're still celebrating the rebrand. I mean, we're posting about how the new logo and the different aspects and what it means. So a lot of fun information coming out right now, and we hope everyone gives it a follow. We're also pushing the hashtag community-driven on it because we want to be more in the community. We want to have that community-driven aspect. In the past, we wanted to keep it in the present. We also want to keep driving our community forward. So we're pushing that hashtag, so if you're doing anything with GoJo, post something, put the hashtag on it, and we'll see it, and maybe share it in our story. And then our new social media campaign that we're starting up is Where Do You GoJo? If you're riding on a

GoJo bus, a transit van, or you're even at an event where we have one of our trolleys, take a picture, hashtag it, Where Do You GoJo, put the location. We'd love to see where people are riding our buses and spread the community even further. With that being said, I would like to also invite Rachel Cook up to talk about expansions.

GoJo Field Operations Supervisor Rachel Cook said, Good evening, I handle most of the daily operations, if not all. First, I'd like to say we have worked very hard over the past few months to build a foundation that shows we are community-driven for expansion and for growth. We're working on building up our staff to do that. We are hiring CDL drivers. We are also hiring people that are looking to obtain their CDL or the required passenger endorsement that is needed to drive one of our buses. We do provide in-house training for the CDL and the required passenger endorsement. And while we do offer training, it does take some time. This isn't something that you just walk in and we put them in a bus. Our current service that we are running is four routes, Monday through Friday, 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and we currently have one trolley on campus that runs 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. We are expecting to have two trolleys on campus from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. by the end of second quarter. We currently have Red Wolf 1 and Route 17 that provide all-day service to the campus. In addition, the addition of Red Wolf 2 will provide an average wait time of 15 to 30 minutes on campus for students, faculty, and staff to utilize the ASTATE loop, that gets them from one end of campus to the other. We've also been in discussion of adding an extension to the Walmart Neighborhood Market on Creek Drive, which would give those that need it a direct route from campus to groceries or necessities. With the ASTATE route expanding, that gives us the ability to expand our other routes that do not have access to the fixed route service currently. Those routes will include 17, 27, 37, 43, and 53. We are still building, planning, and evaluating those routes to provide the most efficient service that we can. Expanding to five routes will allow for timing improvements, which will hopefully cut the wait time down to 30 minutes on average for each route. With those changes, Route 17 will no longer hit campus. It will then focus on Hilltop, which will take 53, who now covers Hilltop, and they'll focus on the Industrial District, which hit MLK, Race Street, and Phillips Drive. And that will cut down the wait time for individuals trying to get to work or get home from work. With those adjustments to Route 17, they still will hit the Walmart on Highland. These adjustments will provide decreased wait times for our passengers that in the past have had to wait up to an hour. These changes go hand in hand with getting our trolleys on campus full time, and we're aiming for the end of second quarter or early third quarter in getting all of our five routes and our two trolley routes. We're planning to expand and rearrange our routes to provide service to areas of Jonesboro that do not currently have easy access to public transit. We have added Greensboro Village on Hilltop, which gives those that live at the Landing access to the rest of the city, and also the other parts of town the ability to utilize businesses like The Social and the Malco Theater. We currently do not have a bus stop necessarily close to the Revenue Office on Southwest Drive. And, to remedy that we're expanding Route 43, which will hit Jonesboro High School, the Bark Park, and the Helping Hands Food Pantry on West Highland. Along with Route 43, Route 27 will be rerouted to travel down South Culberhouse and to Southwest Drive, which will provide more possibilities for our riders to access all the businesses down Southwest Drive. Route 27 will also extend down West Nettleton with a bus stop in front of Annie Camp. With those added stops on and around Southwest Drive, we are going to remove a bus stop at Church and Campus. And no one wants to hear that we're taking away a bus stop, but a lot of our passengers that utilize that stop are going to the Food Pantry, are going to the Revenue Office, or are going to Jonesboro High School. So we are eliminating our passengers having to cross Southwest Drive in order to get to those places. We are also relocating our bus stop at Monroe at Union Park.

Currently, it is on the Monroe side of Union Park, and it will move to the Union side of Union Park. Another addition that we are adding, hopefully, and very excited for, is our Parks Route. This proposed route will connect downtown to Craighead Forest Park. This will give students, tourists, residents a direct connection from downtown, the Entertainment District to our largest park. This route is still in development, so we're not sure yet on what the average wait time will be, but our goal is for a 30-minute wait time. We're projecting that this Parks Route will go live by fall. We want to make it very clear that we are always talking, always planning, always evaluating how we can be better and provide a better service for the city. And with that, there are always possibilities for extra, additional stops. And if you have no questions for me, I will hand it back to Lee to discuss more new items we have coming.

JET/GoJo Director Lee Wells said, so I wanted to take just a quick moment and talk about some of the items that we have already talked about previously and give you an update on where those are. So currently our shelter project is still currently, it's ongoing. We did order 45 shelters, two of which, well, we're putting 37 locations. Two of those, however, are going to be doubles. That means there are two shelters side-by-side. We are putting one of those at Parker Park and we have one of those at Bill's. This is giving us 27 locations that currently had shelters that are going to get that enhancement. This is also going to add 10 new locations to our service that were not sheltered previously. And then that will give us some spare shelters that we're going to be reviewing and looking at to see where we can utilize those in different areas. Of course, one of the steps that we have to do with this is the ADA improvements, if there are any needs for that in order to make sure that they are completely accessible and then also to get electricity ran to those locations for the upcoming enhancements that we're putting on that. We currently have six shelters left to place and we are reviewing additional locations for those six spare shelters that we have, one of which, of course, will be considered as Craighead Forest Park. With these new shelters comes some LED lighting for safety and security. As you can see on the picture here, they're very well lit, but they're also going to have some RGB lighting included in there. You can kind of see on the picture there is a color. That color signifies the bus that is approaching and then when the bus approaches, it becomes imminently approaching, it will pulse to let those riders at the bus stop and let people close by know that the bus is getting very close, they need to quickly get to the bus stop. Also with this is going to be the shelter signage. That shelter signage, you can see on here as well, that is going to show the arrival time of the next bus and also the time or what that bus is so that way you'll know in advance. There will be some accommodations and enhancements that will be put into the full shelters, one of which will be an ADA accommodation for text-to-speak if that is needed and then also some opportunities for additional languages like Spanish language if that is needed as well. Our Transfer Center is also going to get some enhancements during this project as well, so once we start putting all of those media boxes up, we will see some display signage go up at the Transfer Center as well for tracking. That tracking system will be similar to what you see at the airports, kind of letting you know what buses are out, what buses are running, what the timings are for them and when they'll arrive at the Transfer Center next. Those will also have those same enhancements to those. Another thing that we have going on that we did go through council recently was our digital fare collections. That's our tap-to-pay, swipe-to-pay process. Thank you all for approving that. We have that project starting at the beginning of April and what that will allow is for all of the buses to move away from a cash-only option to be able to go to be able to accept credit card payments, whether that be a customer from out of town who's swiping their credit card or if that's a customer who's a regular rider who wants to get a reloadable card that they can purchase and then fill up at their need. That will also allow them to not only fill that card here at City Hall, but also to be able to go to

some retail locations to add funds onto their card for use as well. And then one of the last things we have is some of our enhanced fleet. We do have one item on the agenda today for some vans, but we've also gone through for some buses. These new buses are a lower floor bus than what we've used before. One of the benefits of that is that there's no more steps going up into the vehicle. It is almost level with the curb and for any that do need it, there is a ramp as opposed to a lift to be able to get any mobility devices in or those that need that added assistance to give them an easy access. Another improvement on this is for driver safety. If you look at the image here, you can see the driver has room to exit the driver's seat into the vehicle as opposed to exiting out into traffic to walk around the vehicle to assist any people that may need assistance. That's just another increased safety piece that we're going to be able to do moving forward with that. And, that's all I've got and if anyone does have any questions, we would be happy to answer those. We do have some additional maps for anyone in the audience that may want one after the council meeting. And, then, of course, we have our scannable logo on the screen if you wanted to download the app. Does anyone have any questions? Mayor Copenhaver said, Lee, thank you very much and I appreciate your team and want to give you a round of applause for that presentation. Thank you.

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Mayor Copenhaver said, I also had a presentation that was going to be led this evening as well by our Engineering Department, but Craig's had to unfortunately step out for a funeral service to attend. And, so with that, I think, Councilman Moore, did you get your request on the roads? Councilmember Chris Moore responded, yes, I did. I appreciate that. I asked at the last meeting for a road list and Tracey gave it to me so I'm good to go. Mayor Copenhaver said, great, good deal. I think it is important too council, just real quick, Jim, if you would come forward and just kind of give us, we have meetings on Monday mornings with all of the Directors and they last quite a while, but I think it is important that the community realize, hey, we're kicking the season off and Jim, you have got a lot going on. So, just real quick, give us a real wrap up with things.

Parks & Recreation Director Jim Stearns said, well, we're in our slow season. We have youth basketball going on with third week. We have almost 1,000 kids signed up. We are playing 37 games every Saturday at the three community centers. We had a friendly soccer tournament this past weekend with about 14 teams that came to Jonesboro and played. We had 8-man tackle football this weekend out at Joe Mack Campbell on the turf field, semi-pro tackle football. Southside Softball had a most recent tournament, had 28 teams on the youth side and 6 teams on the adult side this past weekend at Southside. Many comments were made about Southside, this was the biggest crowd they have seen in years. This next weekend we have a high school team Friday and Saturday, high school tournament. 48 teams signed up at Southside. Shooting Sports Complex had the greatest weekend in a long time. We had an ATA Trap Tournament with 200 participants. We had a 3-D archery tournament with 38 participants. We had a 22 long rifle tournament with 20 participants this past weekend. So, just a short version on our slow season. In April, we are going to double all of that up. Mayor Copenhaver said, thanks Jim, appreciate it very much.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, to Approve the Consent Agenda. The motioned PASSED

Aye: 12 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

[MIN-26:021](#)

MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON MARCH 3, 2026

Attachments: [CC Minutes 03032026.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

[RES-26:017](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE JONESBORO CITY COUNCIL TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO ACCEPT A PERMANENT DRAINAGE EASEMENT FROM BRIDGE DISTRICT INVESTMENTS, LLC. FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSTRUCTING AND MAINTAINING DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Attachments: [Permanent Drainage Easement.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-039-2026

[RES-26:020](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE JONESBORO CITY COUNCIL TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH MEADOWS CONTRACTORS, LLC. FOR A CRAIGHEAD FOREST PARK ATV TRAIL REHAB PROJECT (ARDOT JOB NO. 101148 (2026:01)

Attachments: [Contract Documents 2026 01.pdf](#)
[Bid Tab.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-040-2026

[RES-26:021](#)

A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE BID AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF TWO VANS FOR THE TRANSIT DEPARTMENT (JET)

Attachments: [City of Jonesboro Braun Promaster quote 021126.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-041-2026

[RES-26:022](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 233 S. FISHER, PARCEL 01-144181-44700, OWNED BY MICHAEL KEVIN KELLY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,754.56

Attachments: [1.pdf](#)
 [2.pdf](#)
 [3.pdf](#)
 [4.pdf](#)
 [5.pdf](#)
 [6.pdf](#)
 [7.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-042-2026

[RES-26:023](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO ENTER INTO A 60 MONTH SERVICE LEASE CONTRACT FOR 12 COPY MACHINES

Attachments: [city of j'boro Replace & locations.doc](#)
 [Forrest Office Machines Lease.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-043-2026

[RES-26:025](#)

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE WILLINGNESS OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO AUTHORIZE THE GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA), FY2025 49 U.S.C SECTION 5339 FORMULA GRANTS FOR THE JONESBORO ECONOMICAL TRANSPORTATION (JET) SYSTEM

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-044-2026

[RES-26:026](#)

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE WILLINGNESS OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO AUTHORIZE THE GRANTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA), FY 2025 49 U.S.C SECTION 5307 FORMULA GRANTS FOR THE JONESBORO ECONOMICAL TRANSPORTATION (JET) SYSTEM

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-045-2026

[RES-26:027](#)

A RESOLUTION TO THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID AND ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO WILKINS ELECTRIC, LLC FOR THE HUNTINGTON AVENUE LIGHTING PROJECT (2026:02)

Attachments: [Bid Tabulation.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS APPROVED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-046-2026

RESOLUTIONS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

[RES-26:028](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO ENTER INTO A

CONTRACT TO LEASE OFFICE SPACE FOR E-911 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AND
AMEND THE FY2026 BUDGET

Attachments: [SKM_C300i26030410150 \(002\).pdf](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned to adopt. Mayor Harold Copenhaver asked, council, If I can before, I appreciate you removing that. I'd like to, if it is okay with council, go ahead and table this to the next meeting. We are looking into another possibility. Councilmember Street asked to withdraw his motion. Councilmember L.J. Bryant motioned, seconded by Councilmember David McClain, to Postpone Temporarily until next meeting. City Clerk April Leggett asked for clarification to the date. Mayor Copenhaver replied, to the next meeting. (The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is April 7, 2026.) Councilmember Chris Moore stated, I didn't hear the motion. Was it a motion to postpone temporary until the next meeting? City Attorney Carol Duncan said, yes. All voted aye.

A motion was made by Councilperson LJ Bryant, seconded by Councilperson David McClain, that this matter be Postponed Temporarily. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

[RES-26:018](#)

RESOLUTION REQUESTING FREE UTILITY SERVICES FROM CITY WATER AND
LIGHT FOR A TRAFFIC SIGNAL

Councilmember John Street asked to be recused from discussion and voting on RES-26:018 due to his membership on the CWL Board of Directors.

A motion was made by Councilperson Brian Emison, seconded by Councilperson Anthony Coleman, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Abstain: 1 - John Street

Enactment No: R-EN-047-2026

[RES-26:019](#)

RESOLUTION REQUESTING FREE UTILITY SERVICES FROM CITY WATER AND
LIGHT FOR BUS SHELTERS

Councilmember John Street asked to be recused from discussion and voting on RES-26:019 due to his membership on the CWL Board of Directors. Councilmember Joe Hafner said, can I ask a silly question? Is the U in there just because it's utilities? City Attorney Carol Duncan said, that's my question. Councilmember Hafner said, yeah, okay. Ms. Duncan said, I don't know. Councilmember Hafner said, I've never addressed a letter that way. Ms. Duncan replied, right. Councilmember John Street said, it's an address. Instead of a physical address for a building it's an utility address. Planning Director Derrel Smith said, City Water and Light requires that any utility that they serve, that they have a meter. So any of these transit stops will have a meter to run their electricity and so instead of giving it an actual address, you assign a U so that 9-1-1 emergency services know that it's a utility address and not an actual home address. Mayor Copenhaver said, okay, alright. Thank you Derrel. Ms. Duncan said, we all learned something tonight. Councilmember Hafner said, we learn something new every day.

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Abstain: 1 - John Street

Enactment No: R-EN-048-2026

[RES-26:024](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE JONESBORO CITY COUNCIL TO ACCEPT AN OFFER TO SETTLE EXISTING LIENS END DUAL LITIGATION EFFORTS BETWEEN THE CITY OF JONESBORO AND LAUREL PARK, LLC

Mr. Roger D. Rowe, Counsel hired for the city for litigation on the property, is on a Zoom call.

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, I just want to make certain that I get this and I was just writing down, and y'all can correct me if I'm wrong. We spent over \$3 million. The land is worth over \$300,000. We got an offer of \$110,000 for the land to remove the liens minus the attorney fees. Is that accurate, close? Councilmember David McClain said, has there been any, have they come back and said we want to maybe increase or this is their final? Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, we have legal on the phone. Mr. Rowe, would you like to answer that question? Mr. Rowe replied, so yes, this wasn't their first offer. This was negotiated. The plaintiff, Laurel Park, LLC, believes it has and has argued, it filed the appeal from the city's lien, that it is, it can defeat the lien. It's seeking to void the lien. It's making essentially two arguments. Broad brush, that one is they object to the legal description in the lien and the other is to the timing of the notice. We believe that the city can prevail, but nevertheless unless the city is going to develop this property at the end of the day the city is going to have to sell the property and by if through litigation a foreclosure sale or an execution sale one or the other given the pleadings that have been filed and we intend to file and so this was a negotiated settlement. Laurel Park is the natural buyer here for this property because it has already invested monies in the property and so this was a means of getting to the resolution sooner rather than later, I think is a fair characterization of the litigation and avoid additional litigation costs which would come out of the total amount the city could get again with an appraised amount of \$300,000 and then having to sell at a foreclosure or execution sale. I think most of us have seen those sales occur before and typically the appraised value is not what is bid in at one of those sales. Mayor Copenhaver asked, does that answer your question? Councilmember McClain said, well I was just curious have we had any more conversations? So no more conversations have been had? City Attorney Carol Duncan said, they have not made any more offers to my knowledge. Councilmember McClain replied, okay, okay, and Mr. Rowe, he's our legal counsel correct? Ms. Duncan said, Correct. Councilmember McClain continued, alright, in your experience have you seen this go to litigation and cities prevail since you said you feel that the city would prevail? Mr. Rowe replied, well, these cases are all going to turn on their facts and so what we have here is yes we have mapped out the arguments we think would prevail. However, the Laurel Parks attorney believes equally strongly that he can prevail and defeat the lien and so what you have is litigation risk. We can't ever take that away. I can't make any promises that you're going to win nor can he make any promises his client's going to win and so there is a meeting somewhere in the middle keeping in mind that the middle if the city prevails would not be in your typical case of a foreclosure or execution sale the amount of the appraised value. It's the amount somebody will bid when they show up that day.

Councilmember L.J. Bryant said, Mr. Rowe and I think the city attorney sort of briefed us on this and I can't get the terminology right the unjustly enriched or whatever the terminology is that we might have an argument that we made this property more valuable by taking down the building. Could you walk us through that a little bit? Mr. Rowe replied, yes, so the appeal that was filed is an appeal from the lien that the city approved last year and then your council approved last year and then subsequently the city filed. What we have in draft, haven't completed it because these discussions started and so there was an opportunity to resolve this before litigation is carried all the way through and the city incurs additional fees. And in our draft counterclaim we have an unjust enrichment claim. The unjust enrichment claim is in the alternative to the lien itself and it, depending upon how the court wants to give a remedy for that claim if the court feels we proved it in that the city paid to remove that seven story or thereabout structure on the property that was a hazard and it cost \$3.2 million therefore the land itself was improved. Then, the question, there are two questions that arise from that. We anticipate that the attorney for Laurel Park is going to argue that the improvement can't exceed the value, the appraised value of the property simply because it cost more than that to remove that building and that will be for the court to decide. If the city prevails and it gets a judgment against Laurel Park or the property for \$3.2 million, you still would presumably be left or you would be left with what is the value of that land. That's the only source of collection that I am aware of, the real estate itself, in the case of the lien or Laurel Park by all the research we've done and I think this has been confirmed by council is that this is its property, its sole property there. So I certainly by the time litigation is over wouldn't expect that Laurel Park would be owning \$3.2 million of other property. It seems to have been formed for the purpose of holding this single piece of property and therefore what we're looking at is the same ultimate recovery which has to come from the property that you would have through the lien. Ms. Duncan said, which is the \$300,000. Mr. Rowe continued, which is the maximum \$300,000 appraised value to be sold then at a foreclosure or execution sale.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, Mayor I have a question. I may have forgotten some stuff so please forgive me. Is this the only parcel of land that Laurel Park owns? Ms. Duncan said, no. Councilmember Hafner continued, they own more parcels on that property right? Ms. Duncan said, they do own a couple of other parcels on that property, yes. I don't know which ones off the top of my head. Councilmember Hafner asked, do we have any idea what the total value of that property is? Mayor Copenhagen replied, the original amount when they asked us to litigate for all three pieces purchased, that was what, \$750,000. Councilmember Hafner replied, \$750,000, here's what I'm thinking and I understand the city is never going to get the \$3.2 million fully paid, but the way I look at it is if that building was still there that property would not be sellable at all because no one was going to buy that property and tear down that building and put that, I don't think so. I mean there's a part of me and I was the one that said hey let's see what they settle for and let's get moving and get that thing developed, but if they were willing to sell us that for \$750,000 and I mean there's a part of me that would love them to say, you know, if we spent \$3.2 million to make their property sellable, I don't think it's unreasonable and I know this, I don't think it's unreasonable for them to pay us the \$300,000. They still get \$450,000 because their land is now sellable. If that building was still there, this property would not be sellable at all. I mean I don't think \$300,000 is out of the question to get this thing moving. As much as I want to see this gone, I'm really struggling with us only getting \$100,000 for \$87,000 whatever it is after legal fees when we made that property sellable. It's not like they're giving us \$300,000 and they don't get, they don't have anything left to sell. They're still going to net something plus \$3.2 million.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, well the flip side of that is we can litigate it for the next four years like we have the Ice House which is roughly the time period that it's taken for the Ice House. We could spend another undetermined amount of money in that litigation and lose in that and have nothing. So it's not like we can ask them and litigate it and then if we lose still tell them ok we're going to take the original offer. It's going to be an all or nothing. I mean we're facing a maximum recovery of the appraised value of that property down there at \$309,000. We have an offer for a little over \$100,000. I mean it's a bad situation all the way around, but in that four year period that property could also sell and be developed and turn back into a revenue stream from the use taxes on it. So, it's a lot more than just, I mean the Ice House is sitting over, not only with four years of litigation, but we've lost any and all proceeds we may have gained from that if it had been developed four years ago. And, that could be a considerable chunk of money there. It probably would exceed the difference in the \$100,000 offer and the \$300,000 offer that you're talking about Mr. Hafner.

Councilmember Hafner replied, yeah I know. It's not an easy situation. Councilmember Moore said, it's not easy. As Marty Lilly, the esteemed lawyer told me today, sometimes you've got to forget the cheese and get out of the trap and right now we're in a trap down there. Councilmember John Street said, with what Joe says, ideally we'd get \$3.2 million and recover our money, but that's not going to happen. I think it's more realistic what Chris said. I know from dealing with the Ice House. We've got a lot invested in it. We sure don't want it to come out losing. This is a lose-lose. You hear a win-win. This is a lose-lose any way we go and there's definitely a possibility of spending enough money to make it wash for that. So, I think I'd rather see it developed and bring some revenue to downtown and enhance downtown. Mayor Copenhagen said, well this is the importance of having this discussion. We've got to remember it was just a month or two ago we were at \$55,000. So, Mr. Rowe, with litigation, has been able to bring it up a little bit. You know, I think it's one of those things too council you've got to look at diminishing returns. So we need to go ahead.

A motion was made by Councilperson John Street, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 8 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;Kevin Miller;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman and Ann Williams

Nay: 4 - David McClain;Joe Hafner;Anthony Coleman and LJ Bryant

Enactment No: R-EN-049-2026

RESOLUTIONS TO BE INTRODUCED

[RES-26:030](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT TO SELL 1025 HOPE AVENUE and 405 McDANIEL STREET TO CLINT JACKSON

Attachments: [Real Estate Contract \(Jackson - McDaniel and Hope\).pdf](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Janice Porter, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Enactment No: R-EN-050-2026

6. NEW BUSINESS[COM-26:013](#)

REQUEST TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING TO REVIEW THE APPLICATION BY GUSTAVO FLORES-CABRERA TO ESTABLISH A TAXICAB SERVICE

Attachments: [Taxicab Operator Application_Redacted](#)
 [Request Letter for Taxi Express](#)
 [Publication Receipt](#)

City Clerk April Leggett said, we can set that public hearing for April the 7th at 5:25 p.m. This is an unusual case. We don't get a lot of taxicabs. It's been about 10 years since we've had one. City Attorney Carol Duncan said, right, there's not really anything to vote on tonight. It's just a communication request to set a public hearing for a new taxicab service and you said what date April? Ms. Leggett responded, April 7th, that should be our first meeting in April at 5:25 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING SET FOR 4/7/2026 AT 5:25 P.M.

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

[ORD-26:011](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, ARTICLE III, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM C-2 TO C-3 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2005 EAST HIGHLAND DRIVE

Attachments: [Application](#)
 [plat](#)
 [Deed](#)
 [EAAAA - Certified Mail Receipts](#)
 [Staff Summary](#)
 [MAPC Minutes 03.10.26](#)
 [AE.pdf](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Brian Emison, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-26:011 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

[ORD-26:006](#)

AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO PLACE VARIOUS TRAFFIC SIGNS AT DESIGNATED LOCATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE TRAFFIC CONTROL COMMITTEE

Held at second reading

ORDINANCES ON THIRD READING

[ORD-26:005](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO VACATE AND ABANDON A DRAINAGE EASEMENT LOCATED IN LOT 5R OF THE SECOND ADDITION OF BLOCK C, SOUTHERN HILLS, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS:

Attachments: [Drainage Abandonment Exhibit](#)
 [Approval Letters](#)
 [Petition](#)
 [Receipt](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Enactment No: O-EN-012-2026

[ORD-26:007](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-1 TO RS-6 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 900 N. CARAWAY ROAD AS REQUESTED BY KLAUS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LLC

Attachments: [Application](#)
 [Notifications](#)
 [Plat](#)
 [Staff Summary RZ_26-03](#)
 [MAPC Minutes 02.10.26](#)
 [Publication Receipt](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson John Street, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Enactment No: O-EN-013-2026

8. MAYOR'S REPORTS

Mayor Harold Copenhaver reported on the following:

All right, Council, we'll move on to Mayor's comments. And I kind of want to get started this evening. We'll go through this pretty quickly, but I want to make a statement first of all, and I want to kind of bring an update from my side of things on the Jonesboro Christmas Parade that was brought up at the last City Council meeting. In 2024, I was made aware of the Foundation of Arts would not be serving as the primary sponsor or organizer of the Jonesboro Annual Christmas Parade. Understanding how important this tradition is to the community, I remember it as a child that's been around obviously for a long time. And it's helpful to the downtown businesses as well. The City started an effort to find someone to step up and take over those duties. It didn't take long to see that Heather Talley was the best person to do so. She quickly assembled

a support group and began taking steps necessary for a successful and safe event. There was a challenge on how the parade could process entry fees, and it was likely too short of a time window to create a non-profit. After the last City Council meeting, I asked staff for information about the non-profit selection process of the parade. In August of 2024, City staff and Ms. Talley met at City Hall to discuss options. Ultimately, the City Stars non-profit was suggested and seemed like a good fit, assuming the respective committees saw no issues. The parade committee requested a separate account to keep a clear line of separation between parade funds and City Stars non-profit funds. We can ask Steve Purtee if there's any questions regarding that. The City's role in the parade was similar to any other special event. Police and Fire worked with organizers on safety plans. Streets and Parks and Sanitation worked on road closures and cleanup. Organizing events of this size requires significant attention by the City staff, and this was the case in the Christmas parade. That's from my understanding. Entry fees and parade money were not processed through any of City of Jonesboro accounts other than a \$500 contribution by the Jonesboro A&P Commission. As Mayor, I would have made the same efforts for Veterans Parade, the MLK Parade, or any other event that's important to our community in danger of ending. I do want to express my appreciation for all the parade organizers that make the parade happen. It's a lot of work, and there are outstanding individuals that shouldn't be seen in a negative light for something they have no control over. Without their efforts, this event would have likely ended in 2024. I also would like to have Dewayne come forward. I would like Dewayne to make a statement on progress of what we're doing on behalf of the City, and if Carol needs to make any additional comments, she can, and then I'll continue with my mayor's comments. Dewayne?

Human Resources Director Dewayne Douglas said, good evening, Council. I've been asked to make a statement, and once I was given approval to begin our own investigation, I conducted an internal investigation of City employees of Parks Department on whether they had ever witnessed any wrongdoing or received cash from Danny Kapales. Those staff interviews determined that a small number of the staff received cash, not exceeding \$500 around the Christmas holidays. They all believed it was a personal gift from Danny. After a thorough review of the matter and careful consideration of all the information and interviews I conducted, the investigation found no evidence, my investigation found no evidence, of intentional wrongdoing or misconduct by any current City employee. So, based on my investigation, no disciplinary action was necessary, and the results of that investigation are now a part of the employee personnel file. Mayor Copenhaver said, okay, Dwayne. Thank you for your comments.

All right. Good evening, Council, and I'm just going to continue with the Mayor's comments. You know, last time we met, I shared the State of the City address with updates for the entire year of 2025. There is a bound booklet for each of you with project highlights and photos in each department. It's on the table up here by Brian. For those of you who did not collect it last time, please feel free to get that. A few of you received that, and it's available for you at any time to pick up. You know, I can't say enough the next day how much I was pleased to have a large crowd. Well over 500 people at the Chamber of Commerce State of the City event. I believe we had three City Council members present. Some of you in this room were also present. We're grateful to the partner for the Chamber of Commerce and the event of that capacity, and I appreciate Embassy Suites for providing the wonderful venue. During the event presentation, I was happy to present Joanne Alley. I don't know if any of you know her, but if you don't, you need to. With a key to the City, her extraordinary career and lifelong dedication to early childhood education has shaped opportunities for children, families, and educators across Arkansas for over 50 years. As the leader of Arkansas

State University Childhood Services, she grew a small outreach effort into a program that now impacts communities across the state. It was my honor to present her a key to the City as her life work continued to make an everlasting impression within our state. It's important that we continue to support efforts for advancing education. We also revealed and launched the brand new State of the City JET System logo, which y'all saw earlier this evening. GoJo. Go Jonesboro. Moving Jonesboro forward, GoJo's brand new shares the community driven mission in a fresh way. So download the app. Share it with people in the community. Also, the Plan Jonesboro Input Survey was also shared at the Chamber's State of the City event, engaging hundreds in building the blueprint for a 30-year comprehensive plan. With focus group meetings ongoing, such as we had one this past week. Derrel, you in the room? Yeah, we had a pretty good meeting last week or this last Thursday. (Derrel Smith responded in the audience, last Thursday.) That's correct. And we've got one this week, 5 to 7, March 19th at His Way Holiness Church. Now, Council, if you haven't participated, I'd ask you to do so. Your input is much advised for the future of our community. We're also going to host a design week at the end of the month. Design week is a lifelong of focused meetings with specific groups, including an open house meeting from 5:30 to 7:30 on Monday, March 30th and April 2nd at the Jonesboro Youth Community Center, located at 1421 West Nettleton Avenue. So please come and join us.

So with a lot of conversations and recommendations from some of you here at Council, we've also started the monthly city department reports with the first report for both January and February included. Each department is given an overview of projects and initiatives worked throughout the month. Keep in mind many of these projects are ongoing. The monthly reports should keep you up to date on the process. They're also available to pick up the desk right down there by Brian. So the first two months of the year are ready to go, and then we'll be fastly approaching the end of March.

March and February had community cleanups at the city's Lacy Drive location, totaling 4.19 tons of trash and 68 tires collected. The upcoming neighborhood cleanup is scheduled for April 11th behind First United Methodist Church on Union Street. All residents are encouraged to drop off your bulky junk and recycling items. It's important to keep our city clean, green, and beautiful.

Now the Parks Department's been busy, with spring comes up a plethora of events. So we've got a full calendar. Jim responded to that earlier. With that, keep in mind the seasonal positions are now open. Groundskeeping crews and lifeguard positions will be needed soon. Check out the employment opportunities on the city's website and get your application as soon as possible. The park rangers have been out in the parks and soon festival season picks up, so they'll be out at all those events. They opened seven cases in just last week alone, helping our city parks be safe and more engaging to the public.

Our Grants Department has been busy working on the process of eight new house rehabs with the CDBG program, as well as RTP and TAP grants. Their hard work serves the community in many ways, helping with securing outside funding for the general budget.

The Fire Department kicked off the Citizen's Fire Academy last night with their third class. Approximately what, Chief, did you have about 20? Is he over in the corner? Yeah. Okay, full house. That's awesome. It's important that they learn what goes on behind the scenes as a firefighter. They're some of our bravest in the community, and we're grateful for the residents who want to learn about what they do and serve for our community.

Just to make you all aware, the flagpole on the municipal building appears to be bent. I think Ronnie's in the back room. We're having someone from Wisconsin come in to inspect it. Many thanks to Ronnie Shavers and the Facilities team for their top-notch care that they continue to provide for all our city buildings.

Also, please take note of a fraudulent email scam. Emails impersonating the Planning Department are seeking payment to finalize zoning and various applications through wire transfer and include fake invoices. Stay alert and remember, all city email addresses end in @jonesboroar.gov. Do not send money or provide financial information. Do not respond to the sender. Contact the City of Jonesboro's Planning Department to verify any request. If you receive a suspicious message claiming to be part of the city's Planning Department, we encourage you to report them to the Jonesboro Police Department.

Now, City of Jonesboro we've set up and I'm going to have Jason make a comment here a little bit later about a new website. It's called officials@jonesboroar.gov email address for the public to connect with all elected officials. We're also looking at a council@jonesboroar.gov or councildirect@jonesboroar.gov email address for city council only. I never heard back on the preference from council so we'll look on the move on that quickly and with council direct email address unless we hear otherwise by the end of tomorrow.

And on a happy note, a huge congratulations to Coach Dezz and the Arkansas State women's basketball team on their invitation to the WNIT. We hope to be cheering them on here at home for a few games and get your Red Wolf tickets. We need to fill up the seats. Also, this is pretty cool, the men's baseball is nationally ranked. 22nd in the United States. It's the first time in our lifetime, even Dr. Coleman's lifetime.

9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Brian Emison said, the only thing I've got is just a little bit of information. I was going back and reflecting over past agenda items when it came to police pay and I noticed it was back about two years, over two and a half years ago since we've looked into that and I think that whenever we had ran everything through Finance in the past that we said in a two or three year period that we'd come back around and look at that. So, I just wanted to let everybody know that I had a brief conversation with Chief today and we're going to start going back and look at any cross comparison numbers between Jonesboro Police Department and other agencies just to make sure that we've got police pay dialed in where it needs to be. Thank you.

Councilmember Dr. Charles Coleman commented, the older the better.

Councilmember Chris Moore said, Mr. Mayor, I know we used to have an Employee Rep Committee that was chaired by Larry Jackson and I know Larry Jackson retired. Have we got somebody that replaced him? I know he used to make a report to us and I don't know if the new rep will come and make a report to us on a yearly basis or however. Mayor Copenhaver said, Tony, would you like to come forward? I know that some of the city staff's been in communications with the Employee Rep Committee. Councilmember Moore said, I saw Larry Jackson go down the road this week and it reminded me of that. Chief Operations Officer Tony Thomas said, yeah, we are actively, that group has actively met on a monthly basis when members are present. Herbert Ogles (Herbie) is our chair or president of that group. We've had some recent

meetings in regards to just how that group is represented not only before the Mayor and administration but also before the City Council and we've been kind of working through that. I anticipate that you'll see some language in an upcoming handbook revision that we have that sort of outlines that as well just so that those parameters are there and understood and readily available for employees to reference. Councilmember Moore replied, okay, good deal. Well, I know Larry used to make a report about once or twice a year to the council. I guess occasionally when had an issue so maybe we'll see Herbert at the same frequency. Thank you, Mayor, that's all. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you, Councilman.

Councilmember Ann Williams said, yes, in light of the tragic death of Mike Dixon, the pedestrian crossing at Washington, there has been a lot of concern among why a group of people in Jonesboro in regard to what measures can be taken to prevent another tragedy like that and so I spoke to Craig Light today at the MPO meeting and asked him and he mentioned this all-stop system which might be a good thing for us to be looking at and I know he can't, Craig couldn't be here tonight, but I talked to Brian about it as far as explaining that and what the city is doing aggressively to implement that system. Mayor Copenhagen said, absolutely. Well, and I think it's a gainful reminder that these accidents can happen anywhere in our community and I think some of you know how close Mike was to my family. Councilmember Williams said, he was a classmate of Tonya's. Mayor Copenhagen continued, yeah, yeah. So with that, Craig again, he was going to make a short presentation on that this evening so at the next city council meeting we'll explain that to you. Councilmember Williams said, I wonder if we could mention, I asked him if there could be some explanation just so that people are aware of what we're talking about. Mayor Copenhagen said, Brian, you want to come? Yeah, you can. Chief Administrative Officer Brian Richardson said, sure, so currently when you press the walk button at most intersections, the ones downtown, you get the little guy that says walk. However, in this case that we're talking about, the walk light was on, however, you know there's still a left-hand green and so that's a, that's a obviously a recipe for, you know, some unintended consequences of that system and so our Engineering Department is constantly looking at possible safety of resident intersections and we actually have a couple of them right now that are all-stop condition. They're just not necessarily branded that way. Those are over on the Marion Berry Overpass, but essentially what it would do is when you press the button, there are no green lights in any direction until the pedestrians are clear from the intersection. You know, we actually, I think that we shared a video with the Connectivity Committee. It's called a pedestrian scramble. I think, I'm sure they're called a lot of different things, but I'm happy to send around to council so that they can kind of see in real time what that system looks like, but it would definitely halt all traffic going in any directions. Of course, those would have to be signed properly and there's some equipment upgrades that are going to be necessary. Engineering is looking into that. As with anything, any opportunity we have to make our roads, not just downtown, but across the entire city safer, we're going to look into and, you know, just kind of like the HAWK signal. I'm not so sure people truly understand how many people that helps on a daily basis. Councilmember Williams said, Craig mentioned at the MPO meeting that about the new one on North Church and that he saw a woman with pushing a child in a stroller crossing and he said that makes it worthwhile. Mr. Richardson replied, yeah, there's been tens of thousands of button pushes on that thing over the past year. Cliff Nash, our traffic guru, I guess you would call him, he studies that pretty constantly and you know, he's passionate about public safety and about pedestrian safety as well. So it keeps a compliance count on that. He's constantly looking at ways to improve and, you know, it's inarguable when you look at the number of button pushes and just truthfully, the traffic slowdown from just such a big obstacle in your way even if somebody's not using it right. No doubt, you know, it

has an impact on pedestrian safety right there. Councilmember Williams said, well, I told him I saw, after the one installed on Johnson, a woman pushing a stroller and with two kids, young children walking and I thought, wow, that's what why we do it. Mr. Richardson replied, it's far cry from what we were a few years ago out there. Councilmember Williams said, oh, yes. Mayor Copenhaver said, and I think Councilman, too, with the input of our camera systems throughout the city, we're able to address the ones by the schools. We're seeing a lot of near misses by Jonesboro High School and other schools and so we have to prioritize them. Councilmember Williams replied, Brian had mentioned that there's a possibility of maybe there at Highland, was it at Highland and Southwest Drive? Mayor Copenhaver said, yes. Councilmember Williams continued, doing an all-stop. Mayor Copenhaver stated, that's a critical one. That's critical. We've seen almost. Councilmember Williams said, well, it'd be good if everyone could see the video that you sent me. That'd be good. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you, Councilman.

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, somewhat along those same lines, there was some discussion here a while back about one lane-ing Main Street from Washington down to Burke. Can we get an update on where we're at on those conversations to make it more pedestrian friendly as well? CAO Brian Richardson said, sure, that was actually sent to EDG Environmental Design Group Engineering to look at a striping plan and actually place some hard armoring. You know, there's been some discussion about that just kind of go out and do it. And, truthfully, the last thing that I think anyone of us want to have our hands on or vote on is something that's not really been looked at by a professional traffic engineer when you're talking about a major traffic pattern. I actually got an email from Martin Smith just earlier today, walking down to the council. Him and Craig have been talking and they're hoping, they were hoping to have that proposal by the end of last week, certainly hoping by the end of this week. I know there was some discussion about how you're going to mark the stoppage lane or the delivery lane. And so, I really hope that we get that by the end of this week. So yes, conversations are ongoing. We're looking at maybe hoping on a call Thursday, just to iron out the final proposal and make sure that it's very clear and concise because, you know, there's going to be money involved, and that's going to be brought to a resolution to approve that funding to this council. So we definitely wanted not only to be very clear, but also for y'all to feel comfortable that this has been looked at by an outside independent engineering firm to make sure that we're not doing anything that might accidentally increase, you know, any kind of pedestrian liabilities or concerns. Councilmember Gibson said, I was just curious. Thank you, that's all I have. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you, Councilman.

Councilmember David McClain said, yes, Mayor, so last council meeting, I raised some questions and some of them were answered tonight, partially, but I was trying to figure out when we would receive, the council would receive a follow up to that email because I haven't received one. I don't know if everyone else or anyone else has received one, but I was curious when we could expect to hear from you. Then, I've got a couple of questions I'd like to follow up with from the Dewayne's comments. Mayor Copenhaver said, okay. All right. You know, Council, I'd really like you to listen to what I've got to say. I think it's really important. And Councilman McClain, I do appreciate your questions. I wrote some notes down this afternoon and I want to respond to you. Council, I've done my very best to be professional and respectful at all times as the Mayor of Jonesboro. We've answered questions to the best of my ability and I think we really need to get down to the bottom line here or what are the questions you really want? And what are you asking? So I'm just going to say it. Did I steal money? No. Did I knowingly turn my back so theft could occur? No. And the questions continue to arise. I requested that City Stars do an independent audit from a reputable firm. Did I

trust Mr. Kapales? Yes, I trusted him like I trust every director and employee in this room. There will be an appropriate time for us to discuss this, and that's when we all know the actual facts. Right now, we're all speculating. At this time, we can sit down and review what we could have done better at that time. Excuse me. We can sit down and review what we could have done better, what I could have done better and how we can make improvements if there's any wrongdoing. As Mayor, I get that whatever a city employee does, either as an employee or in any other capacity reflects on the city and ultimately me. If the theft allegations are true, then they should be prosecuted. My job as Mayor is to work for the community. Council, with all due respect, starting now, I tend to fully rededicate my time to doing just that and let the investigators handle the investigation. Until the process is complete, I'm moving on and will have no more comments on City Stars, not because it's not important, because until we know the facts, it's just speculating and taking away from what we should be focusing on and that's all the residents of Jonesboro. So I appreciate you allowing me to say my opinion. I believe you said you had another question. Councilmember McClain said, yeah, I have a couple of other questions. And again, I think respectfully, we are old in answering. If we have questions, we should be able to ask these questions. This is a big deal. This is a huge investigation going on in our community. And if we all wait, we can ask questions now. There's nothing that says we can't. There's nothing from the Federal Bureau of Investigations that said we cannot ask questions. To me, it goes beyond our relationship. It goes to the public trust. If the public has questions, we should be able to ask because they're going to bring them to us. Their trust is vital, and to me, the most important thing, because without it, we're not going to be able to move forward when we talk about the police facilities or we talk about new things going on in our community. If the public doesn't trust us, then none of that, none of that stuff is going to happen. And so to me, if we have questions, we should be able to ask them. We should ask them until we get an answer. That's where I am on it. So a couple of questions. Dewayne, you mentioned you investigated some employees. How many employees do you know of were paid? And what were they paid for? You said they were given money around Christmas time. What was that for? What was it for just because? Did they say? City Attorney Carol Duncan said, they expressed that they believed that that was sort of a Christmas gift. It was like a Christmas bonus. They didn't call it a bonus. They believed it was a Christmas gift from their supervisor. From him personally, not from the City of Jonesboro or any other entity, from him personally. That's what they expressed. Councilmember McClain said, so it was not, it wasn't, hey, I appreciate you working this weekend for this event. Ms. Duncan said, no, that was one of our concerns. Is, are we going to find out that money was received after a particular tournament or after a particular working overtime? And that is not what we what we determined or what HR determined when they did their interviewing. It was that it was believed to be a Christmas gift from their, their direct supervisor, just thanking them for their hard work that they do for him. Councilmember McClain asked, how many, how many employees are we talking? Ms. Duncan replied, I don't know exactly because I don't have it in front of me, but I want to say six or seven, something like that. Now, I don't know if we've gotten every single person. Some have left the city, you know, some no longer work here. So, but that's my understanding. Councilmember McClain said, okay, that's all I've got.

Councilmember Joe Hafner said, yes, I do have one thing. It's hard to believe, but it's, it'll be a year ago tomorrow that we passed ORD-25:005 that amended the sidewalk ordinance and allowed companies in the industrial park to pay a in lieu of fee. I think we've had, we had two companies, maybe more, but I think it's two that have been operating under a Temp CO. City Planners have tried to contact them and have been unsuccessful. So, here we are a year later and we still haven't paid the in lieu of fees. So, my question is, is what other avenues do we have available to us to get our fees? I

don't know if municipal liens can be used for in lieu of fees, but I mean... City Attorney Carol Duncan said, I'd have to do some research on that part. I mean I think we always have an opportunity to cite people for a violation of city code, but let me look into the lien question. I'm not sure about that. Councilmember Hafner said, I mean, they're operating under a Temp CO, so those should have an expiration point. Ms. Duncan said, we could also revoke a Temp CO potentially. Councilmember Hafner said, I mean, some have been out there operating under that for four or five years. So, it would just be nice to enforce the ordinance to get our money collected. Ms. Duncan replied, I will get with Derrel and we will look at what options we might have. Councilmember Hafner continued, so, I'd appreciate any help. Thank you.

Councilmember L.J. Bryant said, yeah, a few things. I mean, I think the Mayor wants to make this out like only a few people have questions and when you look at FOIA's, the FOIA's from Matt Modelsky, who's was a Copenhagen donor and supporter, Matt Daniel, who's a Copenhagen supporter, he won't answer their questions either. He won't answer the community's questions. And this week, we learned he got copies of our emails in real time. He read the council's incoming emails in real time to make sure he controlled every bit of information. We know, I mean, from the packets from Jerry Morgan and Matt Modelsky and Matt Daniel and other people, we know he was well aware of the allegations against Danny, and yet he's nominating him for tourism person of the year or whatever the award is. So, don't be fooled by this deception. Don't be fooled by the fact that he won't answer questions. I think the reality is he's scared of what's happening in Boone County. I would look up pretty carefully there, and that's all I'll say about that. Mayor Copenhagen stated, I will make a comment. You know, I think in reflection, you know, I think it's, I think a comment's been made that we, the administration, are spying. And I think this is something that all the aldermen were very aware of. Councilmember Bryant says, not true. Mayor Copenhagen continues, this has been going on since 2004. It's an alderman bulk email. Here are over the last year, over a dozen emails that you all have been cc'd in on. I've responded to the alderman email. Carol Duncan's responded. Brian Richardson. And so it's clearly, we're not hiding anything. It's a bulk email. And the FOIA laws allow anybody to have access in the State of Arkansas. Councilmember Bryant said, then give us a copy of yours in real time. Mayor Copenhagen said, That's fine. Councilmember Bryant said, good, tell your IT person, we want your email, every single one of them in real time. I want it done tomorrow. Will you commit to that Mayor? Mayor Copenhagen replied, again, for you to say that we were spying on you is incorrect. Incorrect. Okay.

Councilmember John Street said, I just want to follow up on what Ann talked about. At the MPO meeting Today, Craig's not here, but the HAWK was installed a lot quicker than the one on Johnson. That took years. It was well worth the effort, especially now before swimming season starts, for a lot of people to be crossing at Parker Park. Hopefully we can get some more in some other high traffic areas. But that is, Craig was very impressed that because of the one on Johnson, it was being utilized and has been used quite a bit already. So I'm very pleased that that's up before. Councilmember Williams said, they have the data and Brian has indicated it's pretty phenomenal. Councilmember Street continued, there are a lot of construction projects going on. Shane Wood, the District 10 engineer, covered most of those. I mean, they're still distant. A lot of this utility relocation stuff, but there will be a lot of considerable construction going on at most of the major intersections and peripheral areas of the city. So just something people need to be aware of and plan accordingly when you have to be somewhere. But it's all good and hopefully in a few years we'll reap some good benefits from that money that we finally got.

Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you for your comments. Jason, if you would, I'd like you

to come forward and kind of present your findings. I think it was something was responded to earlier in the week that we were using an app, a signal app. Can you respond to that, please? Information Technology Director Jason Ratliff said, sure, so Councilmember L.J. Bryant asked or has had some concerns about some unauthorized software that may be on desktops or city cell phones. As far as the desktops go, you would have to have a local administrator password and only IT has that. So it would have to be approved by us. As far as city cell phones go, we don't have the management capabilities as we do on the desktops. So Councilmember Bryant has asked me to do a review of all the city cell phones. We are still ongoing with that review, about halfway done. So far, no signals app or any other messenger app. We found a few police officers that do use that for police investigations on that part. But again, the review is still going on. We're about halfway through. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you, Jason. I appreciate it. I forgot that earlier. Thank you.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Heather Talley, 805 West Jefferson, said, well my name's already been brought up. I'm Heather Talley and I am the Jonesboro Christmas Parade Coordinator. It kind of still feels strange to say that because it's not just my effort. There's an amazing committee that worked extremely hard in 2024 and 2025 to put on what I think was a heck of a parade both years. After visiting with the committee and, you know, there's a lot going around right now. There's a lot of information. There's some misinformation, some speculation, just public comments and questions. We felt it would be in the best idea of transparency with the public and the council to just prepare a statement. And I'd love to share that with you. I thank the Mayor for his statement today to clarify some of those questions. So this is a statement from the Jonesboro Christmas Parade Planning Committee. For the record, I would like to read a prepared statement on behalf of the Jonesboro Christmas Parade Planning Committee. In 2024, when the previous leadership of the Jonesboro Christmas Parade stepped down, a citizen-led planning committee assumed responsibility for organizing the event with the support and cooperation of the City of Jonesboro. An initial meeting was held at City Hall in July of 2024 with the parade coordinator, city employees, and a representative of City Stars, who at the time was also a city employee, to establish the administrative structure for the parade. During that meeting, it was suggested and agreed that the parade would utilize City Stars as an existing non-profit organization as the administrative non-profit for the event. In August of 2024, the planning committee was formed and held its first meeting at City Hall. In October of 2024, a designated bank account was established for the parade. All parade funds, including registration fees, donations, and sponsorships, were deposited into that bank account and were not deposited into or commingled with any City Stars accounts. The planning committee organized the parade and maintained control of its finances. The committee considered that after expenses were satisfied and if funds remained, a donation could be made to a local non-profit organization. The committee voted to designate City Stars as the recipient of any such donation. The Jonesboro Christmas Parade serves the citizens and businesses of Jonesboro and is organized by a planning committee of local business owners, professionals, and civic participants. The continued success of the Jonesboro Christmas Parade depends on participation from local businesses, organizations, and residents. And personal insertion here, we can't do this without you guys. It has hurt our sponsorship already, what's gone around and been speculated. So I hope that that won't impede progress this year and it won't stop people from wanting to participate and wanting to sponsor and donate. Lastly, because this matter involves an ongoing investigation, the committee won't comment on that process, but we do appreciate your support and look forward to a successful parade this year. Mayor Copenhagen said, Ms. Talley, thank you very much.

Donna Malone, 1208 Haven Street, said, some of you might remember me from having worked here at one time. I retired on March 4th. Just saying, if you don't remember me, I'm sorry about that. I want to talk about FOIA. FOIA is, quite frankly, why I left. It's a monster. I have worked on FOIA for 50 years. 50 years. I was young when I started. I was only 12, not really. We start learning about FOIA very early when you're in communications and you're intending on going into media because you're on the other side of it. You want to get the documentation for stories. So, that's why I learned about FOIA. On the other side of it, it looks a lot different, I can assure you. But, also, think about the difference in what documentation and city documents and all government documents look like. The volume from 50 years ago to now. Think about what difference it made from 10 years ago to now. Think about your own email boxes. How many more emails you're getting today than you did 10 years ago. It's humongous. It's oceans of it. With all due respect, Mr. Bryant, I don't think you could read every email that he got. There's no way that I could have redacted them all. We ran into this on a, I ran into this on a daily basis. There's so much more information. In fact, I read a statistic not long ago that the generation before us received the amount of information in their lifetime that we receive in one day. We are bombarded with information. So, these FOIA requests are supposed to be for documents that exist, not documents that have to be created. Is this correct Carol, that we are not required. In fact, it would not be right. It would be wrong of the city government or any of you, because you could be FOIA'd too. You should not create documents to fulfill a FOIA. They should be documents that exist. If you're creating something just to fill a FOIA, you're not giving documentation. You're giving what your opinion is of what that person wants. You know, there's something called, and I think it used to be a legal term anyway, called the reasonable person theory. You know, you have to be a reasonable person in legal matters. Later, because of the documentation nightmare that everyone that works with FOIA is going through, a man named Brandolini, I think is his name, Brandolini. He's Italian. He said that really the lie, that the misinformation spreads like wildfire and the real information does not. So, it behooves us to not spread misinformation. In fact, what you do is you damage the city, you damage yourselves, you damage all of the people who are innocent of anything, and you clog up the works. Anyone, and I'm talking anybody, if I did it, now that I am Citizen Donna, if I FOIA'd every one of you, I would be clogging up the works of what can be done for the city. If I FOIA'd the Mayor all the time, I would be stopping his progress on other projects that he needs to be working on. I'm not saying don't FOIA. I would never say don't FOIA. I'm saying be specific, be credible, do not use FOIA as a weapon, please. Don't use it as a personal grudge. Use it to help the city. Use it to help our, let's be public servants. Well, I'm not anymore. I'm one that you are serving now, actually, now that I think about it and I am making a little bit of a sarcastic remark there. But I think it's really important that we look at ourselves. I did. I looked at myself as a public servant. You look at yourselves as public servants. The Mayor does as well. All of these people over here who are Directors are public servants. And when our work is impeded by asking for tons of emails that we'll never read from the public, that the public will never look at, please be reasonable. Everyone who can hear my voice, please be reasonable in your FOIA requests. Don't pay attention to lies. Do ask questions, but be smart about your FOIA requests. That's all I have to say. Thank you very much for the time. I'm out of time. I never thought I would do that, but I am that person. Thank you for your time. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you, Ms. Malone.

Jeremy Terrell, 909 Pinecrest, said, I didn't plan to come here and actually say anything tonight, but I'm going to tell you. I am speculating here, but FOIA is a must. Period. FOIA 100% is you guys communicating with us, and it's our only checks and balance from the citizens. So, I'm sorry that there's a lot of FOIA's that have gone on.

That's for a reason, and the reason is because the amount of trust that has been lost. Now, people are taking this personal, and that is fine. Take it personal. Don't take it personal. Whatever. The fact of the matter is that we have an investigation. There is evidence that people have known or speculated for years, and we want answers, and we deserve answers. Period. And for anybody to say that we don't or be careful or whatever, that's just plain ridiculous. Now, I'm sorry that there's more work for everybody involved. That does suck, too. But if we didn't lose our confidence in what's going on, then there wouldn't be, all these FOIAs. And for instance, a FOIA that I got here recently on a request is an email on that audit done, where in that, the question is asked, what accusations have been made so that I can make my testing defend those? That was from the person that did the audit. I sent it to every one of you guys. I didn't send it to you. That came from an FOIA. At the end of that, it said, my goal is to make sure that at the end of this, that you'll be able to present that no money is missing. That was from an FOIA that was lied about. I'm so sick and tired of you guys having to defend yourself each and every week. You know, with all do respect Heather, you didn't even apologize. You brought her name up, you threw her under the bus, and there's still no apology. There was no, I am sorry. And that's happened two or three times over the last several months. It's not taking accountability that we are frustrated about. This entire thing about the whole investigation should have been, man, this is the worst thing that we could have experienced at this point in time. It's definitely in your capacity as a mayor, and under my duty, I'll make sure that something like this never happens again, and I take full responsibility that this happened under my watch. This would have been done. There wouldn't have been all these FOIA's. They may not even have been in an investigation. And that's just the truth. So we keep losing what we believe to have been on the up and up. We are now losing that. And that's just the process that has happened. And you guys do bear responsibility in that loss of trust. Period. So if you've got to hire another person to do FOIA's so that everybody else isn't burdened, that's just what you've got to do to make sure that the people are represented and they get to know what in the world is going on within their city government. Because it is their city government. It's theirs, with all due respect. It's our government that you serve, and you serve the people. And so at the end of the day, the FOIA is our way to find out what's happening. Because there is, unfortunately, with emails like this, things that we don't get to know, that are hidden from us. Not by you specifically, but by people that you are coming to find out and probably shouldn't have trusted. So, at some point in time, City Council, I sent you guys this. Two people answered that. I think it's 100% an appropriate question that I asked on there is that do we have the confidence in that company to continue to do audits when they send somebody like that and say that kind of questioning before they did their audit. And, I would like a response from you guys, 100%. I have confidence in the majority of you guys, but I do want you to do better, please. Thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, all right, we have reached the maximum time. We will move on to the next agenda item and that's adjournment.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this meeting be Adjourned. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 12 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant and Ann Williams

Harold Copenhaver, Mayor

Date: _____

Attest:

April Leggett, City Clerk

Date: _____