

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
JUNE 3, 2021  
6:00 P.M. - 8:12 P.M.

**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING - CITY HALL - #1 MUNICIPAL DRIVE**

The City Council of the City of Jacksonville, Arkansas met in a regular session on June 3, 2021 at the regular meeting place of the City Council. Council Member \_\_\_\_\_ delivered the invocation and Mayor Johnson led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag.

**ROLL CALL:** City Council Members: Dietz, Bolden, Blevins, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Smith, and Rains answered ROLL CALL. Mayor Johnson also answered ROLL CALL declaring a quorum. PRESENT TEN (10) ABSENT (0).

Others present for the meeting and by Zoom were: City Attorney Stephanie Friedman, Fire Chief Alan Laughy, Police Chief Brett Hibbs, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Public Works Director Jimmy Oakley, CDBG Director Theresa Watson, IT Director Emily Osment, Jim Moore, and Leader Reporter Rick Kron.

Council Member Sansing issued a reminder that City Council follows Robert's Rules of Order. He related that when someone is recognized to speak, that person has the floor, asking to show that person the courtesy not to speak over them. When we have a guest trying to speak, allow the guest to speak. He stated that he has been on the City Council since 1990 and has never seen anything like the last City Council meetings. He added that he cannot do anything about that except he will not be a part of Council meeting that devolves like the last one did. He stated that if a Council meeting devolves like that, he will not be a part of it, he will get up and walk out of the meeting. He added "I would ask that four like-minded members get up and walk out with me. Therefore, denying a quorum to who ever has decided that they want to disrupt the meeting; in which case the Mayor would have no choice but to shut the meeting down so that we do not have to listen to that." He stated that he would also ask the Mayor to feel free to use the gavel. He asked everyone to remember Robert's Rules of Order. He reiterated that the person who has the floor, do not interrupt them, let them speak.

**PRESENTATION OF MINUTES:** Mayor Johnson presented the minutes of the regular City Council meetings of February 25, 2021 and April 15, 2021 for approval and/or correction.

**APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:**

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Ray that the minutes of the regularly scheduled City Council meetings of 25 February 2021 and 15 April 2021 be APPROVED. MOTION CARRIED.

**CONSENT AGENDA: REGULAR MONTHLY REPORT/ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**

Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Dietz to approve the regular monthly report for May 2021.

**MAY**

**PERMITS/LICENSE ISSUED**

Building Permits 22  
Business Licenses

**INSPECTIONS PERFORMED**

Building Inspections 24  
Electrical 35  
Plumbing 28  
HVACR 20

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WATER DEPARTMENT:  
WASTEWATER DEPARTMENTS:  
FIRE DEPARTMENT:  
POLICE DEPARTMENT:  
STREET DEPARTMENT:  
SANITATION DEPARTMENT:  
PARKS & RECREATION:  
PLANNING COMMISSION:  
COMMITTEE(S):

GENERAL: a. Request to Accept Bid: Contract with Theresa Watson

Council Member Sansing moved, seconded by Council Member Ray to approve the bid to contract with Theresa Watson as CDBG consultant.

Council Member Blevins stated that he was going to ask to go into executive session prior to discussion.

Mayor Johnson pointed out that this is a contract, and they cannot go into executive session over a contract.

Council Member Blevins stated that his discussion is about a situation that happened well before this was a contract situation.

Mayor Johnson stated that it was always going to be under contract. He added that unless it is to do with an employee promotion, demotion, or firing we can not go into executive session.

Council Member Ray called for a question to the motion. Council Member Sansing seconded the call.

Mayor Johnson asked Council Member Blevins if his motion was to go into executive session.

Council Member Blevins answered that it was. He added that he has a statement to make regarding this situation.

Mayor Johnson stated all those in favor of executive session say AYE.

Council Member Blevins stated that he has withdrawn.

Mayor Johnson asked for his statement.

Council Member Blevins stated that he would make the statement as part of the discussion.

City Clerk Davitt clarified that there is call for a question to the motion on the floor.

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Mayor Johnson conferred and Council Member Ray declined to withdraw his call for a question to the motion. Council Member Sansing declined to withdraw.

It was clarified that the call for a question to the motion would end all discussion regarding the previous motion which was to accept the bid to contract with Theresa Watson as CDBG consultant.

**ROLL CALL: Council Members Dietz, Bolden, Sansing, Ray, voted AYE. Council Members Blevins, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Smith, Rains voted NAY. Call for a question to the motion FAILED.**

Mayor Johnson stated that he would entertain a motion to approve Theresa's contract and then we can discuss it.

It was clarified that there is already a motion on the floor to accept the bid to contract with Theresa Watson as a CDBG consultant.

Mayor Johnson opened the floor for discussion, offering a brief history going back to December 2020 when the City put out a request for bid as HUD had advised. He related that actually Theresa did not turn in a bid at that time. He stated that it was not sealed bids so the City went out recently and asked for sealed bids. He stated that the City received one sealed bid and that was from Theresa Watson for the dollar amount that is contract. He noted that the bid includes the back pay for two months that she worked without a contract.

Council Member Blevins stated that unless he is mistaken, this is the contract that was eluded to at the last City Council meeting by Council Member Rains, where you went to the Municipal League to try to get approved without the approval of the City Council, correct?

Mayor Johnson stated that he did not try to get anything approved at all with them. He stated that the only thing he went to Municipal League for was to find out what we could go to executive session for and then City Attorney Friedman told me.

Council Member Rains stated that she has a question on that.

Council Member Blevins relinquished his time to Council Member Rains.

Council Member Rains asked if she could get clarification regarding that, because there was correspondence made to the Municipal League. She added that if she is mistaken she would like to know where she was wrong.

Mayor Johnson stated that he does not know what she is asking. He stated that he did not ask Municipal League for him to approve the contract without City Council doing it. He added can we go to Executive Session to discuss a contract, it was either we were going to waive competitive bidding or we were going to have to put it out for sealed bids. That was the only two choices

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we had, so before it was going to be to waive competitive bidding and accept her contract or to put it out for sealed bids; which is what we did, and because she had not turned in her contract like she did we could not approve it anyway, which is my understanding. He asked City Attorney Friedman if that was correct.

City Attorney Friedman stated that to answer Council Member Rain's question; she has a copy of the email. She read an email from Lanny at the Municipal League in response. She stated that she did not receive this from Bob, that Bob sent this to two other Directors who then sent it to her. "Mayor, in a city of the First Class, the City Council may set the procedures for making purchases. However, this does not include requiring approval for agreements prior to the mayor entering into those agreements. This is because the mayor holds exclusive power to contract on behalf of the city. I have attached the A.G.'s opinion indicating that an ordinance which required prior approval of purchases, other than the budget, would violate a mayor's exclusive power to contract." She explained that when she read the email, she called Lanny and said I don't think you have gotten the full picture of this contract, this contract is over the \$25,000; which would require City Council's approval or an ordinance to waive the bidding process. Lanny said that he did not receive that full picture, that he felt like Bob may have been venue shopping, as he called it, he did not like the answer he got from me so Bob went to the Municipal League.

Mayor Johnson stated that what he was really asking Lanny if we can go to an executive session over contracts. He stated that is what he was trying to get the answer to, it's not what Lanny answered but that's okay. He stated that if it is over \$25,000, the City Council has to approve it or over \$20,000.

Council Member Blevins questioned if the \$61,200 is including the months of March and April? He explained that the only reason he asks is because this \$61,200 is, from what he understands when he spoke to the Finance Department, that it is \$6,600 each month for the remainder of the months and \$15,000 for doing the final contract. He related that when you tally from now it equals \$61,200.00, not including the two invoices submitted in March and April for the two months that she worked without getting paid.

Mayor Johnson asked Finance Director Cheryl Erkel to field the question.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that Mrs. Watson has submitted an invoice to cover the months of March and April; she added that she is not sure if the check has been issued yet or not. She stated that the City is going to pay her \$6,600.00 for each one of those months.

Mayor Johnson reminded the City Council that is less than the \$20,000.00 threshold. Finance Director Cheryl Erkel concurred.

Council Member Blevins stated that earlier the Mayor said that this contract did include those two months.

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Mayor Johnson stated that he knows she is getting paid for the two months, adding that he does not know what the contract was.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that this bid covers from June to the end of December. She concurred with Council Member Blevins that it does not include the months of March and April. She added that since she already worked, we went ahead and paid her according to this same rate for those two months that she actually worked.

Council Member Blevins questioned Mayor Johnson if when Mrs. Watson worked those two months, was he under the understanding that she was going to be making \$6,600.00 monthly for those two months.

Mayor Johnson stated that he never agreed to the contract that Mrs. Watson put in, adding that he did not know what Mrs. Watson was going to do because she did work, we ought to go ahead and pay her if this is what we are agreeing to the contract to pay that amount. He explained that he called Mrs. Watson the 1<sup>st</sup> of May and told her not to work anymore until we get the contract worked out.

Council Member Blevins asked if there was a contract submitted.

Mayor Johnson stated that Mrs. Watson had sent him one but he never signed the contract and never agreed to it.

Council Member Blevins stated that he is asking because he FOIA requested a copy of the contract and I was not given one because all that was said is that there is a submission of \$6,600.00 monthly plus the \$15,000.00 additional.

Mayor Johnson stated that there was not a signed contract, there was a request, a contract that she had sent in but no one signed it.

Council Member Traylor questioned Finance Director Cheryl Erkel if this is in the budget.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that her Department is not a budgeted fund. She then answered that the funds come from the Community Development Block Grant funds, which is Federal funds.

Council Member Traylor stated that if we have her under contract, we can not apply for those funds to pay her salary or can we.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel answered yes, it would come out of those same Federal funds.

Council Member Traylor questioned if the City could file for a grant to get reimbursed for the money that we pay for this contract.

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Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that we are allocated so many dollars a year and part of that is for administration expenses and the contract would come out of those administrative expenses.

Council Member Traylor stated that we are not getting those funds unless we have someone doing that job, correct?

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel concurred, because it takes an administrator in order to fill out the paperwork and the reports in order to get the funding.

Council Member Traylor stated so Mrs. Watson did not retire from the City of Jacksonville.

Mayor Johnson and Finance Director Cheryl Erkel answered, she did.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel clarified that she was a City employee, but all of her salary came out of those Federal funds, it did not come out of the General Fund.

Council Member Traylor stated that his only question would be; why did she retire to turn around and want the same job.

Mayor Johnson stated it was because we did not have anyone to do the job.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that Mrs. Watson offered to come in and work until we can find someone who can take her position as a full-time employee. She added that the position will be advertised for a full-time employee.

City Attorney Friedman questioned if that clause is in the contract?

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel answered that she does not know, adding that she is only aware that it was in discussion that when ever we hire a full-time person, then she is no longer under contract.

Mayor Johnson stated that she would have to train someone, saying that she will be under contract until the end of the year because it is going to take that long to train.

Council Member Traylor stated that since we are being asked to approve the contract, is there any opportunity for us to look at the contract?

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that she does not have a contract, saying that whenever they went out for sealed bids, what was turned in as a sealed bid was just the bid application with the amount at \$6,600.00 per month and the additional \$15,000.00 for annual report and the five-year plan along with the list of the duties that would be performed. She reiterated that she does not have an actual contract.

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Council Member Traylor stated that he would like to make a request that we pay her the \$6,600.00 for March and April, confirming with Finance Director Cheryl Erkel that she did not work in May, then asking if she worked in June?

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that Mrs. Watson is under the impression that this is going to be approved because she has some deadlines on some reports that need to be done; so according to what she presented it would start June 1, 2021 and since this is the first meeting that we have had that is the reason that it is coming now.

Council Member Traylor stated that he would like to approve March and April and pay her for the month of June and before we have our next meeting and we approve this, we get an opportunity to look at the contract that has a start date and an end date with what the responsibilities are and how much we are paying her monthly. He stated that he does not feel that is too much to ask.

Council Member Bolden asked if everyone understands that these funds are not coming from the City.

Council Member Traylor answered that he understands that but the City Council still needs to know when it ends ...

Mayor Johnson asked "are we going to have a contract with her?"

Council Member Traylor continued and what the responsibilities are.

Mayor Johnson asked again if there is going to be a contract?

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel answered that there needs to be a contract, adding that she does not have any expertise in contract writing. She then added that she is aware that Mrs. Watson had submitted a contract and that it does not apply now because the figure has changed.

Council Member Traylor stated that the agenda says Request to Accept Bid Contract with Theresa Watson, he continued saying that implies to him that there should be a contract.

Mayor Johnson asked if City Attorney Friedman would write a contract before the next City Council meeting? City Attorney Friedman concurred.

Council Member Traylor stated that he does not have a problem with paying her even through the end of the year, but the City Council needs some documentation as to what we are paying.

Mayor Johnson stated that he would like to clarify that Mrs. Watson, as a contract person, will not be driving the City truck, adding that you have to be a City employee to drive the City truck.

Council Member Blevins asked why two months without pay even happened.

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Mayor Johnson answered that it was because he did not ever read the contract, adding that he actually did not even know she was working but that is okay. He stated that there were reports that had to be filed so she did them.

Council Member Blevins asked Mayor Johnson if during the time that she was working and you did not know; was she driving the City truck?

Mayor Johnson stated that she hasn't driven it since she retired and will not drive it.

Council Member Blevins specified if it has been since December?

Mayor Johnson stated that he does not think she has driven it this year, adding that she was actually an employee until sometime in March.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that she is not certain but believes her last employment was in February. She added that the question would need to be referred to H.R.

Mayor Johnson offered that since she has not been getting a City pay check, she has not driven the truck.

Council Member Blevins concurred with Council Member Traylor that she should be paid the two months and the month of June and revisit this at the next City Council meeting.

Mayor Johnson asked City Attorney Friedman to draw up the contract for the next City Council meeting.

**Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Sansing to amend their motion to request that a contract for Theresa Watson as CDBG consultant be drafted by City Attorney Friedman and presented at the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting and approving payment for March, April and June.**

Council Member Rains asked for clarifications regarding procedures for contractors. She stated that she worked for the Federal Government and we had the stipulation of over \$25,000.00 for the fiscal year had to get a bid. She questioned, is this money that we are paying her for the three months included in the total amount.

Mayor Johnson stated the first two months will not be and the third month will be in the contract. He stated that the contract will be for June 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

Council Member Rains stated that if she understands then the three months is going to be included in the total amount that this contractor is receiving for the fiscal year and so we will have to vote on it.



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Mayor Johnson reiterated that June will be included in the contract but March and April will not.

Council Member Traylor stated that the way he had worded it was that June would not be included in the contract because we are going to pay her that whether we approve or not the contract.

In response to a question from Council Member Rains, Mayor Johnson answered that the fiscal year will be what is on the contract that she bid.

City Attorney Friedman stated that the way it is laid out now it is kind of bifurcated so we are paying her the separate three months and then we will start the contract in July.

Council Member Rains questioned if we are allowed to distinguish between the two if it is the same contractor?

City Attorney Friedman clarified that it is not the same contract but it is the same contractor. She stated that because the amount for the three months is not over \$25,000.00, but the contract will go over that amount so it will need to be approved at the next City Council meeting.

Council Member Rains stated that she follows that, adding that she has experience on the Federal end and it would include any vendor that we went to.

City Attorney Friedman stated that the State Statute does not break down the contractor or the specific contracts or the year. She concurred with Council Member Rains that it is per contract, not the amount that is spent with the contractor, adding that she would research for clarity.

Mayor Johnson stated someone could work an agreed amount and then we put them under contract and if the contract amount is over \$25,000.00, the City Council would have to approve the contract.

Council Member Blevins stated that the original amount of \$61,200.00 did not include the two months as previously stated by Mayor Johnson.

Mayor Johnson stated that he did not know what it included because Finance Director Cheryl Erkel opened the bid. He clarified that he had said that we are going to pay her for those two months, not that it was included, maybe he did but it does not include those two months.

Council Member Blevins confirmed that the contract to be presented at the next City Council meeting will actually start with July to the end of the year and include the \$15,000.00 for reports. He then asked if the March and April monies is coming out of the Federal monies or the General Fund.

Mayor Johnson answered Federal monies and Finance Director Cheryl Erkel concurred.

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Council Member Rains requested if City Attorney Friedman had found an answer to her previous question.

City Attorney Friedman stated that her internet is down, adding that she is working on it.

Mayor Johnson asked if the real question is - can we hire a contractor that goes over \$25,000.00 a year without them being under contract?

Council Member Rains clarified that her question is if that special funds, the special contract of paying her for those two months, is it included in the total amount that we are spending with this contractor. She explained that it is very particular on wording and of the actual statute itself, is that \$6,600.00 included for a fiscal year or is it per contract.

City Attorney Friedman stated that she is asking if City Council has to approve the two separate instances, so standard contracts in excess of \$25,000.00 or single purchase orders in excess of \$25,000.00. She confirmed that the City is fine.

Council Member Rains related that it had been mentioned that bids were received prior to the sealed bid process?

Mayor Johnson stated that the City had asked for bids but did not receive any. He then answered that Theresa Watson sent a contract but did not turn the bid in with the process.

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel stated that she believes Council Member Rains is referring to the ones that occurred back in November or December of last year? She went on to clarify that those were not really bids, they were qualifications, request for qualifications and no one submitted any qualifications.

Council Member Dietz stated regarding the CDBG job, if we do not have someone that is able to write grants, it means we do not get any HUD money. So, we would not have been able to help anyone with housing. He stated that Theresa was the only one qualified to do that, as Federally Funded Government money because of COVID. He noted that anyone that applied to get their rents paid. He stated that you have to have someone in that position who can write the grants to keep our city running that protects all of the citizens. He stated that Theresa is a viable asset to this City and has been for 30 plus years, adding that she helps those that no one else wants to help. He stated that without her, the City would not get any Federal Funds or COVID money. He thanked Ms. Watson for what she does for the City. He thanked others who volunteer in the City.

Council Member Bolden stated that he has always considered Theresa as the City's secret weapon, saying that he knows personally she has recruited teams from our Church to help her. He stated that he knows for a fact that she

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helps a lot of people. He related that she is an integral part of the City and we need her. He stated that even though she retired, she has a heart for the City and that is the only reason she is doing this.

Council Member Blevins stated that he does not believe Ms. Watson's job ability is in question, but feels that the only reason this needs to be questioned is because we have been burnt by unknown contracts that have been signed and agreed to and payments have been made under the guise that a contract was already agreed to, we have been told that contracts were not signed when they were signed, we have been handed letters of intent that were said they were not binding when we have had the real contract not provided to us. He stated that he believes Theresa Watson is incredible, explaining that he has spoken to her on multiple occasions. He stated that he feels the only reason this is happening is when he was told that she worked two months without being paid, which is completely unacceptable. He stated how do you not know that someone who has an integral part of the City, who is so important as Council Member Dietz just passionately stated, working for two months without being paid? He stated that we are asked to go into a contract that apparently does not exist or has been written and no one has seen and the City Council needs to do its due diligence regarding the contract.

Mayor Johnson stated that Council Member Traylor has made that motion and that is what we are voting on.

Council Member Dietz confirmed that any contract over \$25,000.00 is going to be brought to the City Council and City Attorney Friedman is going to have a copy of it. We expect that and the City deserves it and I know that you are willing to do that, adding he trust City Attorney Friedman.

Mayor Johnson apologized, saying that he thought Theresa Watson had turned in a contract.

**At this time, MOTION CARRIED.**

**b. PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE 1662 (#12-21)**

**AN ORDINANCE VACATING ALLEY ADJACENT TO LOTS 1, 2, & 12, BLOCK 2, GALLOWAY ADDITION WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF JACKSONVILLE, ARKANSAS; AND, FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

Council Member Blevins moved, seconded by Council Member Rains to place Ordinance 1662 on **FIRST READING. ROLL CALL:** Council Member Dietz, Bolden, Blevins, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Smith, and Rains voted AYE. (0) voted NAY. **MOTION CARRIED.** Whereupon City Attorney Friedman read the heading of Ordinance 1662.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley related that the alley is located close to the intersection of Graham Road and Oak Street; adding that it is a long-time vacant lot. He reviewed that this would allow to build closer to the build line for those lots adjacent to the alley. He stated that the City will retain a utility easement.

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Council Member Traylor request that an address be included in the Ordinance, explaining that he is terrible at reading legal descriptions.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that he is not sure the property has been addressed because it has been vacant for decades.

Council Member Traylor stated that even a close proximity would help them know where the property is located.

City Attorney Friedman answered that the adjacent property owners would become the owners of the abandoned property.

Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Sansing to approve Ordinance 1662 on **FIRST READING** and **SUSPEND THE RULES** to place Ordinance 1662 on **SECOND READING**. **ROLL CALL:** Council Member Dietz, Bolden, Blevins, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Smith and Rains voted AYE. (0) voted NAY. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Sansing to approve on **SECOND READING** and further **SUSPEND THE RULES** and place Ordinance 1662 on **THIRD AND FINAL READING**. **ROLL CALL:** Council Member Dietz, Bolden, Blevins, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Smith, and Rains voted AYE. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Sansing to **APPROVE AND ADOPT** Ordinance 1662 in its entirety. **ROLL CALL:** Council Member Dietz, Bolden, Blevins, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Smith, and Rains voted AYE. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**ORDINANCE 1662 (#12-2021) APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 3<sup>rd</sup> DAY OF JUNE, 2021.**

**c. DISCUSSION: Litter-Plan to clean-up Jacksonville**

Council Member Smith stated that there have been many conversations about litter and everyone is aware there is a litter problem. She questioned if the City has anything planned for a City-wide clean-up or are there employees that can pick up litter, can we utilize the Pathfinder; asking if they have contract employees that typically do clean-ups.

Mayor Johnson concurred, asking Public Works Director Jim Oakley to address the item.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that the Street and Sanitation Departments has been the ones to clean the roadways for the last couple of years. He reiterated that the Street Department picks up on roadways where it is undeveloped properties, there is nobody there that owns it to pick it up. He continued saying that they do not have the staffing... stating that at one time through a previous judicial administration, we were getting seven or eight community service people every day; adding that if we had four to five community service people every day-five days a week, we could keep up the

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litter. He stated that by the time you pick up the town one time and make the rounds of the undeveloped properties, in about three weeks it is time to start over and you couldn't even tell you been there. He said that it is not going to be a one-day event or two-day event; it has got to be every day-five days a week.

Council Member Smith questioned if anyone has communicated with Judge Bailey to see how we can get people who owe community service.

Mayor Johnson stated that they have requested numerous times from her, adding that because they have not been holding court it makes it difficult.

City Attorney Friedman related that they have held court and Judge Bailey has been assigning community service.

Mayor Johnson concurred that the City has gotten more community service people lately.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley explained that he is about the only Department to use them and he mainly uses them for litter control. He stated that they are really relaxed on community punishment and he only does what the court allows the City to do and now they allow that if they work one day, we give them two days credit. He stated that it is hard to work a program under those circumstances. He stated that there is one full-time City employee that supervises them in a truck and equipment, which runs the City about \$50,000.00 annually. He stated that to hire full-time staffing to run litter control would be about an additional \$200,000.00 a year. He agreed that there is a need.

Council Member Smith stated that she has noticed that a lot of the litter is coming from dumpsters; citing the dumpster at the Valero gas station and asking if the commercial business could be held accountable for keeping those areas clean.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley noted that there is an ordinance that requires all dumpsters to be screened, which prevents the escape of litter.

Chief Hibbs offered that it can be addressed through Code Enforcement.

Council Member Bolden asked City Attorney Friedman to let Judge Bailey know that the City needs more people to pick up trash.

City Attorney Friedman stated that the issue with defendants if they go the route of community service vs. paying the fine, if they work during the week, the Judge will send them to Pulaski County because Pulaski County is open on the weekends. She then added that if they do not work during the week, she sends them to City Engineering.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the logistics of having City personnel work over the weekend to supervise weekend community service workers.

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City Attorney Friedman related that the Court can not enforce how the oversight goes for community service. She stated that Public Works Director Jim Oakley has the opportunity to give credit, double or not, or to assign a certain time they need to be there.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that from his understanding the Court has given the liberty to those subjects that they are told that they have so many days and they are allowed to pick their days. He stated that what the previous Judge did was if sentenced 10 days or less, they were sent to Jacksonville instead of to the County. He added that if we did not have enough, then if it was 20 days or less they would stay in Jacksonville and we had plenty of people. He stated that they are very relaxed from what he is use to.

City Attorney Friedman stated that if there are certain days that you would prefer for them to report then we can let them know in Court.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated certainly, Monday through Friday, 8 hours a day-five days a week.

Council Member Traylor stated that the problem is if you tell them Monday through Friday, Public Works Director Jim Oakley does know if they are going to be there on Monday or when.

City Attorney Friedman stated that they are sent to Engineering and we assume that Engineering is giving them the schedule. She added that once they are gone to Engineering we don't control what time they show up.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley explained that when they are sentenced the Court tell them to come to see me for community service. When they come in we have them sign a release regarding liability. He then answered that the Court does not notify them that anyone is coming to community service. He stated that they give the person they sentenced the time to the paperwork.

City Attorney Friedman stated that it is on the defendant to schedule the time.

Council Member Traylor pointed out that is the problem, they show up when they want.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley concurred, adding that they may or may not even show up.

Police Chief Hibbs added that under the former Judge Batton, we had numerous trustees and Public Works Director Jim Oakley had plenty of people every day. He stated that under the current administration it is rare that any one shows up. He noted that it is hard for them to get grounds keeping done at the Police Department, we had litter crews, which we do not have anymore.

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City Attorney Friedman stated that she believes the Court's stance is if we say report Monday 8 to 5 and there is nothing for them to do, then they are sitting at City Hall with nothing to do.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that he would be willing to hire a person to supervise them five days a week; 40 hours a week. He added that if he has enough for Saturday, he would hire someone to supervise on Saturday.

Council Member Smith asked Mayor Johnson and City Attorney Friedman to meet with Judge Bailey to come up with a plan.

Mayor Johnson stated that he has asked her to send people, and City Attorney Friedman will continue to ask.

City Attorney Friedman stated that she would see the Judge on Tuesday and she would ask.

Council Member Rains stated that Chris Erkel has started a program that he named "Unity in the Community". She explained that one of the things that he is trying to address is the litter problem. Last year he did several videos of him cleaning up abandoned lots and mowing the expressways. She stated that she feels this is something that is needed and she thanked him for his contributions. She stated that this has been a wonderful example of how somebody can add in 30 minutes of enrichment of doing something for their community.

Council Member Smith related that the NAACP has two clean-ups annually and they do a fantastic job on certain parts of the community but we need this City-wide.

Council Member Rains reminded everyone of the "Adopt-a-Street" program that many Civic groups participate in.

**d. ORDINANCE 1661 (#11-2021)**

**AN ORDINANCE TO PERMIT THE SELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM EACH WARD TO BE VOTED ON BY ONLY THE CITIZENS OF THE WARD IN WHICH THEY SERVE; AND, FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

Member Blevins moved, seconded by Council Member Smith to place Ordinance 1661 on **FIRST READING. ROLL CALL:** Council Member Dietz, Blevins, Traylor, Twitty, Smith, and Rains voted AYE. Council Member Bolden, Sansing, Ray, and Mashburn voted NAY. **MOTION CARRIED.** Whereupon City Attorney Friedman read the heading of Ordinance 1661.

Council Member Ray stated that City Council was created as a ten-member board so that everyone in the community would have a chance to vote and be represented in their neighborhood, which is why they went to a ten-member board. He stated that if we do it for individual wards, there will be a lot of people in the neighborhood that will not get a chance to represent their

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City or ward and it could present a lawsuit of discrimination. That is why we did this so the City would not be a part of any discrimination lawsuit. This is the same thing that some of the cities are doing now to change the voting rights law and allow certain parties to have all the votes.

Council Member Traylor clarified that it is to not have At Large Alderman; it is to only be able to vote in the Ward that you live in not vote for all five Alderman that are running. He added that we do not have At Large Alderman; you have to live in the Ward that you represent and our town is not big enough that we have to worry about some one doing something just for their area. We all need to work for all of our town, saying that he would be opposed to having Ward voting.

Council Member Sansing noted that back in 1990 this was a topic of discussion; cautioning that if an Alderman is representing their Ward they will do whatever needs to be done to work for their Ward and will no longer want to serve the entire City of Jacksonville. He stated that when he ran for office he stated that he wanted to serve the entire City but resided in Ward 2. He stated that we are a small enough city that it is not a problem to politic in the entire city, otherwise it is a disservice to the citizens of Jacksonville because you only want to represent this smaller group of people. He noted that there could be fighting over monies for each Ward. Jacksonville is a small enough town that the interest of one is the interest of all; and that is the way it should be.

Council Member Bolden stated that in a community such as Jacksonville; we work as a team. He noted that from his previous experience working on the Pulaski County Special School District; and because it was by Ward, one Ward would get most of the money while other Wards suffered.

Council Member Blevins stated that we should be thinking of the City as a whole, and if someone is already of the mindset that someone could take money for their Ward then it will end up being a self-filling prophecy. He stated that this is about having the people of that Ward that wants a candidate in there. He noted that there have been multiple situations in past voting where the person who is voted to watch over a certain Ward; all the votes came from another Ward completely. We need to make sure that the person that is watching over the Ward is voted for the people, by the people of that Ward.

Council Member Twitty expressed her belief that all Council Members work for the entire City.

Council Member Rains stated that she would like to see Jacksonville join our fellow 1<sup>st</sup> Class cities of Pulaski County and rule out At Large voting once and for all. Fewer and fewer cities across the Country practice At Large voting because courts and other decision makers long have recognized the discriminatory methods of elections such as At Large voting enhancing discrimination of marginalize communities by taking advantage of social economic and other disparities. Such disparities are one of the things that



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inspired Martin Luther King, Jr. to lead his march to Montgomery, which inspired Lyndon B. Johnson to sign in the voting rights act of 1965 and since 1965, districts, counties, cities and school districts have been tasked with revoking discriminatory methods in their dated voting laws. Some communities who went without action by local municipalities faced time consuming and costly litigation. Dallas vs. Crenshaw County, Alabama was one that resulted in 183 jurisdictions throughout Alabama to ultimately abandon At Large methods of elections. More recently, we had Georgia State Conference of the NAACP vs. Fayette County Board of Commissioners. Not only do we have to worry about potential costly litigations from community members or civic organizations; we also have to worry about the United States itself, because we as a Country have roughly 40 cases to enforce Section 2 of the voting rights act. The most recent one was in 2020 against a school district, adding that our Country has been active in enforcing this. In 2017, we had the United States of America as the plaintiff vs. the City of Eastpoint City Council, Suzan Pixley in her official capacity as Mayor of Eastpoint, along with the City Council and City Clerk in their official capacities. She stated that a vote for this ordinance is a step toward allowing our citizens to take part in making history and a vote against will delay history being made until someone or some entity comes to hold us accountable. She related that she has a visual demonstration prepared to help contextualize how At Large voting deludes the voting pool.

Council Member Sansing reiterated that the City of Jacksonville typically has three to four thousand voters in the entire City, we are a small City and asking someone who wants to be on the Council to work the entire City and pledge to support the entire City instead of just a small area is not too much to ask.

Council Member Bolden stated that At Large voting is great for Jacksonville because all of the Council Members work for the entire City; citing teamwork. He referenced her history of Martin Luther King, Jr.; noting that he can remember when his parents had to pay a poll tax to be able to vote as an African American. He stated that At Large voting is no way racist; and if some one says that, they do not know racism. At Large voting is making the candidates work the entire community whether you are black, white, Hispanic, Asian, or whatever and get to know everybody.

Council Member Blevins stated that he does not feel that ending At Large voting translates into a Council Member not being able to help the entire City. He questioned how the surrounding cities vote.

Mayor Johnson noted that Cabot is At Large and Little Rock is split part At Large and part by Ward.

Council Member Dietz supported At Large voting.

Council Member Rains stated that in Pulaski County, Jacksonville is one of the last 1<sup>st</sup> Class cities that practice At Large voting.

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Council Member Traylor stated that he feels we need to clarify what is At Large voting because the lawsuit that Council Member Rains referenced; there is a big difference between electing people At Large, for example, you have an election and the top five are elected, that is At Large.

Council Member Rains stated that is a method.

Council Member Traylor stated that is what you read; in the case you used as an example that is what that was about.

Council Member Rains concurred that the Alabama and Georgia cases, yes. She continued saying that the Eastpoint case...

Council Member Traylor stated that is where the unfairness comes from; is when you could have five people living on the same street representing on the same board; we do not do that, you have to live in the Ward that you represent and you are not elected by getting 300 people to vote for you. He pointed out that it takes more than that to get elected, adding that he does not see anything wrong with that. We are one city, but you have to live in the area so we have a wide representation from across the City on the City Council.

Council Member Blevins moved, seconded by Council Member Rains to **APPROVE** Ordinance 1661 on **FIRST READING** and **SUSPEND THE RULES** and place Ordinance 1661 on **SECOND READING**. **ROLL CALL:** Council Member Blevins and Rains voted AYE. Council Member Dietz, Bolden, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, and Smith voted NAY. **MOTION FAILED.**

**e. DISCUSSION Inevitable Fee Increase and needs of the Recycling Center**

Council Member Blevins stated that he was contacted by citizens asking when the curbside recycling would resume, they were under the impression that curbside ended due to COVID. He stated that after speaking with Public Works Director Jim Oakley he learned that was not the case; that curbside recycling was ended completely due to factors such as the bailer being on its last legs, and the truck needed to be replaced. He stated that he began looking into this and the first number he was given showed that the Recycling Center was costing the City \$20,000, losing \$20,000 monthly for having the Recycling Center open. He stated that he went to City Attorney Friedman to have an ordinance drafted to close the Recycling Center and then see about bringing in a third party to handle all of the recycling issues. He then noted that since then the number has been revised and we are only losing \$12,300 monthly. He stated that the truth of the matter is that the City has been absorbing all the raises in fees but we have not been trickling it down to the citizens. He pointed out that there has not been a fee raise in ten years, but there have been multiple raises in landfill fees and employees. He stated that we are at the point now where we need to decide to either get a new truck, fix the bailer or close the Recycling Center to hire a third party. We are at critical mass as to what the City can absorb.

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Mayor Johnson asked Public Works Director Jim Oakley how many homes typically in a week recycle and is the Recycling Center currently being used at a decent volume.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley concurred that the numbers offered by Council Member Blevins were accurate. He then addressed the Mayor's question, saying that he believes curbside recycling was around 17% participation for the last 20 years with the Department performing two annual surveys. He stated that they did a survey right before COVID because they are getting strapped financially and were needing to purchase some new equipment. He explained that the survey asked residents if they would be willing to pay more to keep curbside, 54 respondents were collected and the majority did not want to pay more, while 10% said they would pay more. He noted that they are still operating the drop-off center and it is approximately 50/50 he stated that while the trend was going down before COVID, it went down a quarter of a percent. He then explained that they began collection glass which was funded through our solid waste district as a pilot program. He reiterated that the equipment and trucks need to be replaced.

Mayor Johnson asked if the City were to return to curbside, how much would we have to raise every one's water rates along with the potential because sanitation costs are going up; and if we were to hire Waste Management, how much would they charge to do single-stream recycling.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that he could do an estimation with the Finance Director and have that available at a later time.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that returning to the way the City collected before would not work because its antiquated, pointing out that they were doing source separated at curbside and citizens did not like that, they want to comingle it. He stated that they could not do that in-house, adding that it would have to sub-contracted out. He then related that Waste Management charges approximately \$5.00 monthly added to the water bill whether you recycle or not.

Council Member Bolden stated that if someone is not recycling he does not feel that they would want to pay the increased fees, noting that gas prices are also rising.

Council Member Bolden pointed out that in those conversations with Public Works Director Jim Oakley, he had mentioned that the City could possible absorb \$1.00 of that \$5.00 increase possibly.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley explained that the City bills approximately \$2.25 per household of the \$15.50 collected. He stated that half of that was used to do curbside, further explaining that the City has absorbed that half when they added another truck and route to pick up bulky waste. He stated that was done when we stopped doing curbside recycling so that basically absorbed that \$1.00. He then noted that left \$1.25 collected that they were

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using to work the drop-off. He noted that the program has an employee and a half, electricity, equipment, and materials. He stated that to use the dollar and a half for curbside, they would have to stop the drop-off. Close the recycling center drop-off and just do curbside only. He went on to say that is what most cities are doing and the City of Jacksonville could join that contract with Little Rock, North Little Rock, Sherwood, and rural Pulaski County is in the contract with Waste Management. He stated that most people are paying the \$15.50, \$17.00 plus, and they are in the \$22.00 a month range. The City of Jacksonville is at \$15.50 a month.

Council Member Traylor asked about having the dumpsters outside the recycling center for after hours drop-off.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that it is because of contamination, explaining that the level of contamination was to a point it was too expensive, it was cheaper to throw it away than it was to try and sort it out. He related that people would throw stuff they could not handle, it could be oil, gas, TVs; it's everything because it is unmanned. He then concurred that the Recycling Center is open on Saturday.

Council Member Sansing stated that he abhors the idea of raising rates on the citizens, adding that going to a Waste Management type system would put too big a jump on rates. He related that he likes that the City of Jacksonville owns its own recycling center and he does not have a problem with the drop-off. He surmised that surely we can come up with some information that does not raise the rate almost \$6.00 a month, reiterating that he abhors that idea. He suggested keeping the drop-off service and only raising the regular trash rates a very minimum amount would be less expensive to the citizens. He insisted that the citizens do not need the burden of higher annual rates, asking Public Works Director Jim Oakley to go back to the drawing board about keeping the regular services as is.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that Jacksonville is the cheapest in Central Arkansas.

Council Member Blevins stated that he understands about not raising citizen fees but pointed out that others are adding fees to the City.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley agreed that one day in the near future, we will have to raise rates or the General Fund will have to absorb the losses.

Council Member Bolden stated that the City has a history of trying to absorb such costs without passing them onto the citizens.

Council Member Traylor cautioned that you have to be careful not to wait until instead of 1% you need 6%.

In response to a question from Council Member Blevins, Public Works Director Jim Oakley responded that he tries to keep at least \$400,000 in reserves for

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the repair and replacement of expensive equipment and a truck. He stated that while we are keeping our heads above water, it's getting tighter and tighter. He then noted that given the equipment, he should have approximately \$600,000 in depreciate of equipment and vehicles.

Mayor Johnson asked Public Works Director Jim Oakley if we keep everything as is, could we make it at least two more years without raising citizen's rates.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley responded that he would have to study it further before commenting.

In response to a question from Council Member Rains, Public Works Director Jim Oakley responded that the City is sort of legally responsible for providing recycling. He related that in 1987 or 89, the State passed some mandates that all cities needed to reduce their solid waste by 40%. He stated that they met that in the first two years they started the program, noting that up to that point they had landfilled the yard waste. He then related that just pulling out yard waste is about 40% of the total annual waste collected. He related that they submit the tonnage to ADEQ and they do get some grant monies through them on a regular basis.

Council Member Rains related that in the Environmental Committee they are working on finding alternative methods for reducing the costs of public works. She then related that one of her suggestions is an anerobic digester, which would then be able to create an alternative energy source for the community that would offset the cost and hopefully to offset the recycling program.

**f. DISCUSSION Salaries/Staffing of the City**

Council Member Blevins stated that the Finance Department is trying to come up with \$188,000 to finance the six EMTs for the Unity Health Hospital ambulance that we are getting in January. He recalled that during the last City Council meeting it was said that this was not a binding agreement. He then noted that the costs would be \$377,000 in the 2022 budget for these EMTs. He reiterated that it was not supposed to be binding but yet they are trying to find the money to hire them immediately and get them prepared for next year. He asked if we are trying to find the money to hire these six EMTs now, we probably need to go ahead and agree now that we are going to fund those six EMTs next year at \$377,000 annually.

Mayor Johnson asked Chief Laughey to address the need for EMTs with or without Unity Health, or with or without an ambulance.

Chief Laughey stated that he feels he had covered in detail the need for the EMTs and Paramedics, saying it depends what exactly is the question.

Mayor Johnson stated that he had told the Chief numerous times in next year's budget, he would like to add the EMTs you wanted whether or not we had a new

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ambulance, we would use the old one because we need four ambulances running in the City. He stated that this ambulance is not specifically for Unity Health, noting that Chief Laughy is working out other agreements with other ambulance services to provide that non-emergency transportation.

Chief Laughy concurred, saying that is the plan.

Mayor Johnson related that Chief Laughy needs those EMTs today because your ambulances are just too busy. He then asked if there is ever a time that we do not have an ambulance to get someone when they call in?

Chief Laughy responded that there have been some times when all of the ambulances have been out and we have had additional EMS calls and we could not fulfill those obligations and, in those cases, we will send an engine company and they will do the best that they can with the crew onboard with an EMS jump bag; but they are literally on scene waiting for an ambulance. He answered that has happened on numerous occasions.

Council Member Sansing noted that Chief Laughy had stated at a previous meeting that we have 70% more calls now then we did a few years ago and that currently we do not have enough ambulances to fulfill the needs of the City. He stated that the lucky part is we do not have to pay for an ambulance we need; but we do absolutely need to fund the personnel to protect our citizens.

Chief Laughy concurred, adding that he is not sure he understands exactly what Council Member Blevins is wanting to ask.

Council Member Blevins stated that after speaking with Chief Laughy he knows that the general progression of the plan was to do step motions to make it happen. He stated that when the actual contract was signed back in December, it was not discussed that we would need to fund people during this budget because there was plenty of time for them to add it to the budget for this year. Obviously, we do not have that in the budget, so we are having to pull \$188,000 out of thin air to hire these six people. He added that he understands that the reason is so they can get into school and be trained for next year. He stated that his question was not for Chief Laughy, but for the City Council. He explained that the City Council did not know that the six EMT hiring was going to need to be done because no one had seen the contract and no one even knew that any of this was coming, so now we have to act immediately for positions that we haven't even decided that we are going to fill next year. He stated that is what he wanted the discussion to be about for the salaries. He added that he knows the Fire Department needs these people and that Chief Laughy had a plan but unfortunately that was derailed due to circumstances.

Chief Laughy concurred, saying that in our discussion he used the football analogy that we are in the fourth quarter and it is 4<sup>th</sup> and 20 and we are not going to argue in the huddle about how we got here.

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Council Member Blevins stated that if we are going to fund this with what Finance Director Cheryl Erkel and Human Resource Director Nelson are looking at doing, we need to go ahead and lock in now that we are going to fund that \$377,000 next year.

Council Member Traylor stated that he would believe that would be done in the budget process when it comes before the City Council.

Mayor Johnson stated that the City Council can cut out of the budget, which they have done before, positions and things they do not want funded. He noted that is the prerogative of the City Council.

Council Member Blevins stated that the City Council needs to be on board now that we are not going to cut that from the budget.

Council Member Traylor stated that there is no way to say what we are going to keep or cut out of the budget until we see the budget.

Mayor Johnson stated that the City Council will be asked to do that but they have not been asked yet.

Chief Laughey stated that he can help with a point of clarity, there is a provision in the personnel policy manual that allows over hiring in special circumstances. He stated that the special circumstance in this case is that we have an ambulance that will arrive in the first quarter in 2022, we have a collective perceived obligation that somewhere on or about the month of May that there is going to be an emergency department and there is going to be an obligation for the City of Jacksonville to provide non-emergency transports. He added that it is his responsibility to come up with a plan to make sure he has personnel on those ambulances, so there were time frames involved in that. He explained that if he starts over hiring now, he can get two individuals ready and on the street in April. He stated that if he starts in July or August those personnel will not be ready until the summertime. He continued saying that if he waits to hire and look at this as a black and white monetary issue and wait for the fiscal year; it would be the third week in October before that ambulance would be staffed if the City Council approves the hiring. He stated that his question would be, do we want that brand-new ambulance sitting in a bay for nearly a year not staffed, so that is why we back it up to get these individuals in school. So, my answer to Council Member Blevins is if we start the over hiring process now, in order to have the correct personnel to be able to staff throughout the year that ambulance, and we start funding that. These firefighters are going to lose their jobs next year if we don't say today, if I understand what you are saying, if we don't say today.

Council Member Blevins stated that he wanted City Council to be aware that it is going to eventually be presented for us to pay for those six people now for this job for next year that we have not yet agreed to. He added that he does not want it to happen that we get these people trained and set up and then them not have a job next year. He stated that it would be \$377,000 in

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the next budget and it is going to be something that we are not going to be able to take off or people that we have already invested money into are going to lose their jobs.

Chief Laughy stated that he feels it is a fair question, but added that he does not want to put any of City Council in a position of strong arming them into making promise that these six positions are going to be available next year.

Council Member Traylor stated that Council Member Blevins wants to make us aware that there could possibly be six more people in the budget next year, basically.

Council Member Dietz stated that the City get reimbursed for some of this money from the call and runs. He stated that we are expecting to get \$200,000 to \$240,000 back. We are going to find the money, we need the ambulance, we need Unity Hospital and we need to serve the people of Jacksonville and that is what we are here to do.

Council Member Bolden stated the it is long-range planning, when the vision is there and you have the people you need, that is why you research to try and come up with the funding.

Council Member Traylor asked how much the City writes off every year for ambulance runs?

Chief Laughy answered that Nikki handles that, saying that he would have to ask her.

Council Member Traylor and Chief Laughy agreed that it is a large number. Council Member Traylor asked if we have looked at, maybe trying a little harder to get it.

Chief Laughy stated that the process is vetted extensively by Nikki.

Council Member Traylor stated that he is not sure of the costs to have it turned over to outside source when it gets to that point and would we get more than what it costs us.

Chief Laughy stated that he has been talking with Nikki about a third-party vendor and different types of software to answer your question.

Council Member Blevins stated that he wanted to reiterate that he is not against hiring six new people. Adding, I just want everyone to be aware that this debt has an attachment to it that we are doing right now.

Council Member Rains supported the over-hiring the sooner the better.



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**g. DISCUSSION Hiring of Economic Developer**

Council Member Blevins noted that during the 2018 election; one of the premises with the Mayor who won was this epic program and the first item was to hire an Economic Developer. He related that while he has been very vocal about the Chamber of Commerce, noting that other cities are actually hiring city economic developers. He stated that we have a full time CEO of the Chamber of Commerce that is also getting paid by the A&P Commission to handle some economic development items. He stated that taking all of this into consideration and seeing that we do not have a full-time economic developer, adding that he would like to discuss the idea of hiring Courtney Dunn as the City's full-time economic developer. That way we would have someone that knows both parts and having them work with the new CEO of the Chamber. He noted the accolades with economic development and she had done a lot more schooling that she had done to get accredited that maybe she has outgrown the idea of being CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and should be presented as a full-time economic developer for the City.

Mayor Johnson related that we have had an Economic Developer in the past, paid by the City, but they paid it to the Chamber; adding he believes that is the way Cabot and Sherwood both do it. He clarified that those cities give money from their General Funds to the Chamber.

Council Member Blevins stated that the Cabot Economic Developer is an employee of the city and it is not through the Chamber anymore; they made that decision. We can see how well that has treated them. He going back and looking he feels economic development is for her forte, noting that it is easier to hire a CEO for the Chamber than it is to hire an Economic Developer. He noted that she has done all the classes to be a full-time Economic Developer for the City.

Mayor Johnson stated that could be considered.

Council Member Sansing stated that we were just talking about funding for EMTs; we are already getting Ms. Courtney Dunn, who has excellent credentials and runs the Chamber. He stated that he is saying if it isn't broke; don't fix it. Don't spend any more money than we have already talked about that we need to, adding that maybe in the future we can look at this. He added that it is not a bad idea, but added that he does not think we need to spend the extra money right now.

Council Member Blevins noted that the contract that is done through the A&P Commission would pay almost half of the salary so the City would only need to fund approximately \$40,000.00 to have a full-time Economic Developer.

Council Member Bolden stated that it is a good idea but it cost money and anything that cost money does not need to be considered at this time.

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Council Member Rains stated that she is grateful for the service that Courtney provides to the City and to the Chamber but does not feel that at this time it would be a wise decision for the City Council to make.

**h. RESOLUTION 807 (#6-2021)**

**A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE WILLINGNESS OF THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC WORKS TO UTILIZE FEDERAL AID TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM FUNDS TO DEVELOP OR IMPROVE MILITARY ROAD, PHASE III SIDEWALK; AND, FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Mashburn to read Resolution 807 (#6-2021). MOTION CARRIED. Whereupon City Attorney Friedman read the heading of Resolution 807.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley stated that this was brought before the City Council two years ago, noting that they applied for a grant and the City pledge to spend 20% for the projects. He stated that one is for the sidewalk to pick up from Crooked Creek Subdivision on General Samuels and go down to the new Elementary School. He stated that the other is phase III, noting that we have already had two grants approved for Military Road. Phase I was from Woodbriar up to Park and then Phase II was from Park with a design all the way to Hwy. 161. He then noted that the funding was cut between 2 and 3 hundred thousand, saying that it will probably be more of a \$500,000 project, so we want to apply to finish that phase.

Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Mashburn to approve and adopt Resolution 807 (#6-2021) in its entirety. MOTION CARRIED.

**i. RESOLUTION 808 (#7-2021)**

**A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE WILLINGNESS OF THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC WORKS TO UTILIZE FEDERAL AID TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM FUNDS TO DEVELOP OR IMPROVE GENERAL SAMUELS ROAD SIDEWALK; AND, FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Mashburn to read Resolution 808 (#7-2021). MOTION CARRIED. Whereupon City Attorney Friedman read the heading of Resolution 808.

It was noted that was the General Samuels sidewalk project to the Elementary School.

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Mashburn to approve and adopt Resolution 808 (#7-2021) in its entirety. MOTION CARRIED.

**j. Point of preference**

Mayor Johnson pointed out that the transcription he provided says "We (the Hospital Board) took the appraisal records from the County". He stated that that is all he is going to say about that.

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
JUNE 3, 2021  
6:00 P.M. - 8:12 P.M.

**APPOINTMENTS: CENTRAL ARKANSAS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

Council Member Sansing moved, seconded by Rains to appoint Jennifer Jamison to the Central Arkansas Library System. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Ms. Cindy Powell of the Nixon Library has passed and donations are being directed to "Thevan.org" her favorite non-profit.

The White House sent a letter out recognizing that June is Pride Month; a celebration for the LGBT community.

Mr. Timothy Hibbs voiced concerns for the problem oriented policing philosophy as approaching problem solving. He stated that there is a problem with speeding on Warren Street, asking for a speed bump. He stated that this is the second time this problem has been before the City Council.

Public Works Director Jim Oakley related that process for obtaining a speed bump noting that a speed study is part of the process and that is being done now.

Chief Hibbs addressed this issue as well as other areas that have been using the speed sign. He stated that the speed sign would be moved to this neighborhood tomorrow for the speed study.

Council Member Bolden congratulated Council Member Mashburn regarding her efforts and the ribbon cutting with the Historical Society.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Without objection, Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:12 p.m. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully,

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Susan L. Davitt  
City Clerk-Treasurer

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MAYOR BOB JOHNSON