

**CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, ARKANSAS**  
**Advertising and Promotion Commission**



**A & P Commission**  
**Re-Scheduled Meeting**  
**September 23, 2019**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Jacksonville A & P Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission on Monday, September 23, 2019. Council Member/Chairman Ray called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He then delivered the invocation and led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance".

**ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Ray Patel, Andy Patel, David Bush, and Council Member Kenny Elliott answered roll call. Council Member/Chairman Reedie Ray also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (5), Absent (2) Commissioners Jim Hurley and Roger Sundermeier were absent.

Others present for the meeting included: Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, City Attorney Stephanie Friedman, Mayor Robert Johnson, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Marlo Jackson, Dr. Bob Price, Warren Dupree, LaConda Watson, Freddie Scott Sr., Patrick Thomas, Meghan Vandergriff, Terry Weatherford, Mark Goodsell, Brian Blevins, Rick Tilley, and Jeff Garner.

**MINUTES:**

**Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Council Member Kenny Elliott to approve the minutes from the August 28, 2019 meeting as presented. Motion Carried.**

**FINANCIALS:**

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel presented the financial report for August noting assets of \$776,027.00 which includes \$255,849.00 in investments. She reported \$37,144.00 in payables, explaining it is mostly an amount due to the City of Jacksonville (City) for the Parks Department. She noted revenues of \$508,343.00 and expenditures of \$404,479.00, with revenues exceeding expenditures in the amount of \$103,864.00. She provided projected revenues for 2019 of \$879,779.00 and expenditures of \$813,555.00 with a remaining balance of \$66,225.00 in unallocated funds.

Commissioner Andy Patel questioned the \$400,949.00 tourism and promotion amount asking if it is the total going to the City.

She explained the amount includes all of the funds expensed for activities and events along with the amount due to the City for the Parks Department.

Commissioner Andy Patel asked if the amount could be separated to show the amount due to the City for the Parks Department.

It was noted that the expenditures were detailed within the budgetary revenues and expenditures report on the next page of the financials.

Commissioner Andy Patel requested that a separate line item be included on the revenues and expenditures page of the report.

Director Erkel explained the budgetary revenues and expenditures report provides an itemized detail and includes a breakdown of the amount from the hotels/motels and the prepared foods due to the City.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated that he was not talking about that and reiterated his request to have the information included within the revenues and expenditures report.

Director Erkel stated that she would try to include it within the revenues and expenditures report.

Council Member/Chairman Ray asked Commissioner Andy Patel to clarify his request, saying the information was included on page four of the report.

Commissioner Andy Patel confirmed the amount reported on the revenues and expenditures report includes everything.

Director Erkel agreed, explaining the statement of revenues and expenditures lists the types of revenues and expenditures and the detail regarding each is provided within the budgetary revenues and expenditures on pages four and five of the financial report.

Discussion continued and she further explained the total includes all of the items listed under special projects within the budgetary and expenditures report.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated that it is not totaling anywhere and that is why he is a little confused regarding that item, saying he does not see the items on pages four and five totaling the amount listed.

Director Erkel stated if he would like for her to do that, she can possibly do it, explaining it would still be listed under tourism and promotion dash City due Parks.

Commissioner Andy Patel said that would work regarding this section, adding the amount listed is a large amount.

She reported July hotel/motel gross receipts of \$265,448.00, which is a 5% decrease regarding the year-to-date comparison and a 13% decrease regarding the current month comparison. She noted prepared food tax gross receipts of \$3,229,093.00, explaining this is a 2% decrease regarding the year-to-date comparison and an 8% decrease for the current month comparison. She reported overall gross receipts of \$3,494,541.00, which is a decrease of 3% regarding year-to-date comparison and an 8% decrease regarding the current month comparison.

In response to a question from Council Member Elliott, Director Erkel replied the projected revenues provided takes into consideration the decline in reported revenues.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Director Erkel replied the difference between the budgeted and projected revenues is approximately \$30,000.00.

**Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Commissioner Ray Patel to approve the financial report for August as presented. Motion Carried.**

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE QUARTERLY REPORT:**

Chamber of Commerce Board President Terry Weatherford noted that Director Dunn had submitted a written report to the Commission. He related Director Dunn is involved with the High School regarding a new initiative called the Ford NGL which is a change of curriculum for juniors and seniors, saying she is working with Dr. Duffie to try and set up a meeting with all of the area plant managers. He stated she also had some conversations with Dr. Price and the SBA and went to an economic development conference in Ft. Smith in August. He noted her attendance at the LRAFB leadership conference and sponsorship of the third quarter deployed spouses meeting at the LRAFB last month. He stated they are also providing some volunteers, including himself, for FestiVille.

Council Member/Chairman Ray thanked him for the report, explaining the Chamber of Commerce provides a quarterly report to the Commission.

Commissioner Andy Patel offered that Director Dunn is doing a really good job.

**Commissioner David Bush moved, seconded by Council Member Elliott to approve the Chamber of Commerce quarterly report as presented. Motion Carried.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Presentation of the Wheelin and Healin Car Show**

Mr. Mark Goodsell, owner of Goodsell Truck Accessories, stated he wanted to provide a report regarding the 20<sup>th</sup> annual car show that was held on April 17<sup>th</sup>. He said it was amazing and was the largest show they have ever held. He stated he hoped some of the Commissioners were able to attend, noting attendance by Mayor Johnson. He noted attendance by several thousand, explaining the event was held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., saying people were parking everywhere they could find a place to park. He noted the Commission helped with advertising the event, noting they spent \$4,200.00 in advertising and the Commission provided \$2,500.00. He thanked the Commission for the funding. He noted they raised \$5,000.00 for the Jacksonville Animal Shelter Friends of the Animals which is huge, adding they can do so much with those funds. He explained the funds will go to offset vet bills and will keep animals from having to be euthanized. He noted the adoption of ten animals at the event. He related that people came to Jacksonville, ate in the restaurants and purchased gas and other items; adding that hopefully they stayed in some of the hotels. He related it was amazing and the weather was beautiful, explaining they had over two hundred show cars. He noted they were on six radio stations and in three newspapers with a live remote from 94.1 The Point which helped to bring in a good crowd as well. He stated the Arkansas Pontiac Association sponsors the car show, explaining they are already planning the next show to be held on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

He said it is a great show for a good cause, saying they will probably have proceeds to benefit the same charity next year because they really need it.

Council Member Elliott offered that he was unable to attend this year however; he heard several comments regarding how good it was.

Council Member Ray commented when he came through the area there was a traffic jam, saying that he “loved it”.

Commissioner Andy Patel thanked him for hosting the event, asking if it was possible to extend the event to two days or overnight to potentially help the hotels and other entities in town.

Mr. Goodsell stated he did not think that was possible, explaining they come to town and bring their cars and live within a hundred mile radius or less. He continued saying he did not know how they could make that work, explaining they bring their cars and are judged and trophies are given out at 3:30 p.m. and then everyone goes home. He stated that it is a one-day event but they are hoping to continue to grow the event, adding the event gets bigger every year.

Council Member Ray questioned if it would be possible to give a prize to the person coming from the farthest distance, explaining it would help to determine how far people are coming from.

Mr. Goodsell related they did not do it this year however; they have done it in the past.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Mr. Goodsell replied the Commission’s banner was on display at the event. He related there was a little bit of delay receiving the information however, they were able to modify the ad in The Leader and the Combat Airlifter to include the Commission’s logo. He related they would be “all over that” next time.

Council Member/Chairman Ray offered that he “channel hops” radio stations and heard the ad on a couple of stations.

Mr. Goodsell noted they received some free advertising, explaining they all went into the stations and provided some “live” discussion of the event.

**B. \$12,589.60 funding request eSports Event in partnership with War Memorial Stadium**

Mr. Brian Blevins related he is the former owner of The Gamestore on Main Street, explaining he sold the business at the beginning of the year. He offered at the time, it was the largest game store located in Arkansas. He stated on the weekends, he had hundreds to almost thousands of different people to come in to play in tournaments for the games that were going on; explaining most of the time they were in-person games where they play cards. He further explained for those who are unfamiliar, that it is like a chess tournament where everyone sits across from one another and plays, adding there are many different ways to play the game of chess. He stated he is present to seek funding for an eSports event, explaining eSports stands for electronic sports, which is the fastest growing activity in the world right now. He continued saying we live in a society right now where schools and other places have these events set up to reward the kids that are popular, athletic and the other kids that “fit it”.

He stated the kids who do not fit it, the shy ones, the ones that kind of stick to themselves, do not enjoy being in a situation like that. He continued saying the schools provide a bonus for kids that are popular and kids that are not. He offered that eSports is only of the only events that he is aware of, that has a level playing field across the board for everyone; explaining that it does not matter the age, gender, or in most situations if you are handicapable or not. He stated in some situations you do not even have to be in the same room to play, adding the event he is discussing would require participants to meet. He related the funds would go toward an event in conjunction and partnership with War Memorial, explaining they are looking to hold the event in December where they will host a big huge event as a proof of concept bringing in people from all over the State to play in this event. He related it would be War Memorial and Jacksonville hosting the event. He explained the funds he is looking for are for the City's part of the event. He stated when the event is complete with the proof of concept, War Memorial has said they would love to continue to partner with Jacksonville to possibly host and have a venue to continue to have championship level events and use the purchased product during the event to have preliminary events throughout the month in Jacksonville for all of the varied games which would bring different people for different games into the City to stay and play. He continued saying it would bring in families during the bigger events, the huge qualifying semi-final rounds and the finals would be held at War Memorial. He stated all of these people would be here to stay, play and qualify and that money, part of the rake of the entry fees, would go towards the City.

Council Member/Chairman Ray noted that War Memorial is located in Little Rock, questioning how much it would help Jacksonville.

Mr. Blevins responded by saying it opens the gateway to be on the foundation of this series of events that will probably go on, saying it is about to be the next big thing. He stated that Jacksonville gets to be on the ground floor to help support this event and will be the "go to" people to have all of the other events leading up to the finals that will take place at War Memorial.

Mayor Robert Johnson related the first event will not do anything for Jacksonville but it is to see if there is a need in the State, which there will be. He stated he did not understand this, adding he does not understand it all today, but his son plays games and he would want to be in the tournament. He stated that Marquette University was the first division one university to give athletic scholarships to eSports, saying all of the division two and three universities have been doing it for years. He asked the Commissioners to consider the March madness basketball tournament, explaining there will be a huge championship game held at War Memorial however, there will need to be playoffs to get to the championship game. He stated Jacksonville being on the ground floor will allow for hosting of the semifinals prior to the finals. He related there will be an entry fee to participate and there will also be league play which will qualify players for the tournament; saying a lot of that will come to Jacksonville. He stated at these regionals, people will have to travel to Jacksonville to play. He noted in the league, they do not always have to travel however; they will always have to pay so there are entry fees, judges, and referees', saying it is a tough concept for people his age. He stated for someone who is thirty, it is an easy concept; they grew up with it and have done it. He offered it is truly a growing thing, saying AT&T is putting a lot of money toward it. He noted AT&T has the fastest Internet at War Memorial explaining that it is State owned and not city owned.

He related they are going to need places to hold their regional play and Jacksonville will be first on the list to get to do that in the future. He said the first event is not going to do much but Jacksonville can form leagues with what is being purchased, can host events, and people will travel to Jacksonville to play. He offered it is worth the risk to try to get people to come, stay, and eat in Jacksonville; saying it is a big deal.

City Attorney Stephanie Friedman questioned what the funds will be used for.

Mr. Blevins replied the funds will be used to purchase consoles and monitors for the event.

She questioned if they will be kept in Jacksonville

Mr. Blevins responded they would be used at War Memorial but would be transferred over to Jacksonville ownership.

Mayor Johnson stated the Parks Department would own them and could start league play. He offered this is just a starting point, expressing his appreciation to the War Memorial representatives present, saying if the Commission would like to hear from them and their plans, he would be happy to have them to address the Commission. He stated this is something he does not understand but if you ask his son who was born in 1983, he can certainly tell the Commission all about it because he plays all of the games. He related with all of the different games, there is the potential to have up to eight different leagues that will go on for months prior to the finals at War Memorial. He stated it will be an ongoing thing that occurs throughout the week at the Community Center.

Mr. Blevins noted new games come out every year, explaining the games cycle through so there will always be something fresh without the same stagnant games being played where people will not want to come and play.

City Attorney Friedman stated she is understanding the game part and is fine with that aspect, expressing concern that the consoles will be purchased and will go to War Memorial and eventually come to Jacksonville.

Mayor Johnson noted the consoles would be loaned to War Memorial.

City Attorney Friedman said "okay", explaining she was thinking Jacksonville would have the semi-finals and then the consoles would go to War Memorial.

Mayor Johnson confirmed the consoles would come back to Jacksonville. He stated the players would be in the "press box" and the audience would fill up the other two levels and would be watching it on television. They would also be paying for admission, parking, and purchasing concessions at War Memorial which is well and good but what does it do for Jacksonville. He offered since Jacksonville would be hosting the semifinals, the City would be known as the e-Sports city.

Mr. Blevins offered when they advertise these events, they would say "hey check out Jacksonville".

City Attorney Friedman expressed her understanding, saying it was said the funds would be spent for consoles to be held at War Memorial and then Jacksonville would get them.

Mr. Blevins replied the consoles would remain in Jacksonville until the time they are needed for the finals.

Mayor Johnson stated for 340 days the consoles would be in Jacksonville and will be used at the ten to fifteen events held at War Memorial.

Council Member Elliott questioned if it would be a legitimate expense if the City maintains ownership of the equipment.

City Attorney Friedman replied if it is open to the public, which it sounds like it is, and if the City maintains ownership of the equipment.

Mr. Blevins noted there is an entry fee to play.

Mayor Johnson noted there is an entry fee to play flag football.

City Attorney Freidman stated the entry fee does not concern her as long as you do not have to be a member of something and is open to the public.

Commissioner Bush questioned how many people would be playing.

Mayor Johnson stated during the discussion with War Memorial representatives, they are looking at doing Madden sports which might bring 500 people. He stated Jacksonville is looking to have several leagues for different games.

Mr. Blevins related when it moves to Jacksonville, when the proof of concept comes in, this money will go toward purchase of one of the three different types of game systems that are necessary. He stated there will be other systems that will need to be purchased but there will be money from the rake and a proof of concept in order to come back to request funds.

Mayor Johnson stated they may have their own money at that time so they would not have to request additional funds from the Commission, adding it depends on how well they can make it grow. He offered they are taking a chance to be on the cutting edge, saying Arkansas is the only state that is doing it. He noted there could be players playing remotely from Oregon who would have to come to Jacksonville to play in the semifinals and play in the finals at War Memorial. He continued saying there is no telling would could happen and it is not a huge sum of money, adding Jacksonville would still own them and could hold league play and would never lose money. He asked the Commissioners to go down to Martin Street and watch the kids who are playing games on the televisions donated by Mr. Blevins.

Council Member Ray noted that he started his children and now his grandchildren playing electronic games, saying when he was channel-surfing he came across War Games. He offered that he likes the concept but wants the Commissioners to know they are requesting \$12,589.60.

Council Member Elliott related he saw someone on television who won \$5 million dollars playing Fortnite.

Mr. Blevins corrected as \$3 million dollars.

In response to a question from Council Member Elliott, Mr. Blevins replied that he won the amount by playing tournaments, noting \$3 million dollars was just the first place prize. He related he in same tournament there was also a child playing who had a parent that was a sanitation worker who had found a 32" flat screen television and an old PlayStation console. The parent ended up getting the items fixed and saved up funds to purchase a controller for Christmas. He noted Fortnite is a free game that can be downloaded online. He stated the child was playing Fortnite using his neighbors Wi-Fi and ended up getting 68<sup>th</sup> place at this event. He related the child won enough money at this event to change the life of his family.

Mayor Johnson stated he purchased every system and quit at Super Mario 3 which maxed him out.

Mr. Blevins related he does not brag about what he does for the City and really does not like to discuss it but will say that he plays eSports professionally and is what he does for a living. He stated he sold his store and is doing it now, which has yielded him enough money so he can still help out the City as he sees fit. He continued saying it is the next wave and is real and not a fad. He offered it has been underground for all of these years but now that people are throwing millions of dollars on it, it is going to break the mainstream and Jacksonville needs to be the first to market it or will be left behind. He related previous discussion with Mayor Johnson who had stated the City did not have the funds however, on July 18<sup>th</sup>, Bentonville announced they wanted to do some eSports and Walmart gave them a \$5 million dollar grant to purchase equipment for their eSports league.

In response to a question from Council Member Elliott, Mr. Blevins replied he would be pushing the event and War Memorial would be hosting it.

It was noted the representatives from War Memorial are from a State agency.

Mayor Johnson related the State agency would be hosting the finals and Jacksonville will be partnering with them.

Mr. Blevins stated he would need to create an entity to have this event if it goes through.

Council Member/Chairman Ray questioned if the Commissioners were ready to vote on this item of business.

Commissioner Andy Patel questioned if the Commission needed to vote on the item of business, saying he does not completely understand what is being discussed.

Mayor Johnson stated the Commission is discussing the expenditure of \$12,589.60 for equipment.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated he was not talking about the money but eSports and doing something somewhere else utilizing taxpayer money and what is being promoted. He questioned how it will benefit Jacksonville.

Mayor Johnson related the first event is just to get it started so Jacksonville will have legitimacy in our league in the tournaments held here. He offered that it will provide a proof of concept which is basically what is being done. He stated that even if the event does not do well, Jacksonville can still have its' own leagues and the equipment can be used here.

Commissioner Andy Patel questioned if the event could be held in Jacksonville.

Mayor Johnson replied the War Memorial event could not be held in Jacksonville, saying Jacksonville will have huge events if this goes well. He offered his opinion that he thinks it will.

Commissioner Andy Patel questioned what is planned, if the event is successful, how it will be organized in Jacksonville.

Mr. Blevins explained if funds are approved and the money comes in, a certain amount of money will come back as the rake (money made) from the event. He stated that money, the systems and everything, to have the Parks Department to create a league (like they do for kickball or volleyball) where players pay an entry fee to play in the league. He continued saying it will be a league just like anything else but whereas look at the system that is being used as the field the game is played on, all of the different games in eSports can be played on that field, so from then on all that will need to be done is to purchase the new games; adding there are new games released every three months to kind of help keep it fresh, that will utilize the same equipment so it is a very small upkeep, it is just a large upfront cost. He stated with every event there are different people that play that genre of game. He related for example, there are people who play Madden sports to begin with, saying Council Member Elliott mentioned Fortnite which is a first person shooter game. He stated there is also Smash Bros which is a fighting game played against people. He related there is also Mortal Combat which is another game played. He continued saying all of the different games have entry fees associated with them and have a rake for the City and all of the events can be run in the store and the City. He related that multiple events can be held; explaining some games can only be played on the Nintendo Switch, while others on the PlayStation 4 and Xbox. He stated all three can be run concurrently with three different entry fees if the City wanted. He noted they offer money to the City and a prize to winner. He continued saying each one will eventually end up yielding a championship that will be held at War Memorial.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Mr. Blevins replied he has held tournaments at his store.

It was noted that this is the first time that it has been offered by the state.

Mr. Blevins offered that it has been underground, noting he has hosted the Arc Fighting Championship events for five years.

He stated there were thousands of people who attended on a three-day weekend. He related the event was held in his store and was not a City or state sponsored event.

Mayor Johnson noted this is a chance to reach other youths in the City who may not play traditional sports. He related his son did not play sports but had every game known to man.

In response to a question from Council Member Elliott, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House replied that from everything he has read and looked into, eSports is the next big thing. He said he has discussed this with Mayor Johnson, explaining he is from the era to get kids outside, noting they have to change as a Department regarding their outlook on eSports because it is the fastest growing sport in the nation.

Mayor Johnson added that people spend money to do it, play it, and travel to it.

Commissioner Andy Patel commented it is a technology era, it is everywhere.

Council Member Elliott offered he could see the benefit, adding you never know but he could see where it could be because it is in other states, he has heard a lot about it, and it is really growing.

Mayor Johnson stated when universities are giving athletic scholarships for eSports, it is real.

Council Member Elliott noted the City would have ownership.

Commissioner Andy Patel questioned since Mr. Blevins has held several events, why could it not be organized here with some sponsorship there too. He stated he would like the money to stay in Jacksonville.

Mr. Blevins replied this is what the event is all about. He stated, speaking frankly, he has done this for a living for the past twenty-one years running a game store, and is present because he wants Jacksonville to be a part of this. He related if the Commission declines the request, he is going to proceed on his own. He offered he is not trying to sound negative but the money is there. He continued saying he has run the numbers and has had the conversations, he has done all of this and has sought out all of these people without the City's help. He stated he wants Jacksonville to be successful and if anyone knows him at all, that has always been his plan. He continued saying this is the Commission's chance to be part of the next big thing, this is the chance to be part of this; adding he has done nothing but promote the City for the time he has lived in Jacksonville. He stated he has engaged and done everything that has been asked and some things that have not been asked of him. He offered this is Jacksonville's way of getting involved and having a part of this income and stuff that is coming into play.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Mr. Blevins replied the partnership would be between Jacksonville and War Memorial, adding he has not considered talking to anyone else. He said frankly, he really does not need to, adding that it is something he has done on his own and can do again but wants Jacksonville to be a part of it.

Mayor Johnson offered they want it to be open to Jacksonville citizens and not have to be part of a group and would like it to be held at the Community Center. He continued if it can grow like they think it can grow, the restaurants and hotels will be full on playoff weekends. He asked the Commissioners to consider the March madness tournament, saying the women played in one in North Little Rock and it was full. He asked the Commission to consider that type of activity that Jacksonville would be a part of at the start-up.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Mr. Blevins replied they are looking at December for the War Memorial event, saying a date has not been set due to meeting setbacks.

Mayor Johnson noted the Commission would be included in the event advertising.

Mr. Blevins stated league play could begin as early as February 2020. He noted the event will be one day or possibly two days depending on the number of players. He explained if there are more than 500 people, then the event will have to be a two day event for War Memorial. He stated the league play will be held on the day they come to play, explaining it will be held on the day the Parks Department determines for league play.

Mayor Johnson noted the semifinals could take up to three days depending on the number of players.

Mr. Blevins replied this is a local after school event to begin with.

Mayor Johnson stated it would then be built to where Jacksonville is the host and all of the other little places that get done would come here to play and then move onto War Memorial.

Mr. Blevins stated when he owned his store he had people coming from Benton, Bryant, and Alexander to play. He added he also had people coming from as far away as Hot Springs to play. He related there are people who live in Jacksonville who travel to Hot Springs to play. He stated they are trying to keep people in town.

Commissioner Andy Patel questioned how often the event would be held.

Mr. Blevins replied that it has a three month cycle, explaining in February games one and two would begin league play and in March games three and four would begin league play, in April games five and six would begin, and in May games seven and eight would begin. In June the cycle would start over with games one and two. He stated during that timeframe all of the games and qualifiers would be taking place to where the finals would kick off on the weekends. He related there comes a point to where a championship would be played at the same time a new cycle begins in the same week.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Mr. Blevins replied if the Commission does not provide funding, he will still hold the events but they will probably be held at a different location. He stated he will have to figure that out, explaining he has not thought that far because he has been focusing on Jacksonville being involved.

It was noted that the funds will be the City's portion to be involved.

Council Member Elliott noted the Parks Department would have ownership of the equipment and can use it for other eSports activities.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated since this event is away from Jacksonville, he would like to see the second event right away, adding when it is brought to Jacksonville the Commission can do something about that. He continued saying he is in that favor and is not opposing the event that is being proposed now. He stated Mr. Blevins previously said he will move forward if funding is not approved.

Mr. Blevins clarified he wants Jacksonville to be involved, if on the point the Commission does not want to be involved, it is still going to happen; Jacksonville will just not be a part of it.

It was further clarified for Commissioner Andy Patel, that Mr. Blevins would seek sponsorship elsewhere if the Commission does not approve funding.

Council Member Elliott noted that equipment for the Parks Department is a legitimate expense.

Mr. Blevins offered there is two parts of the equipment that needs to happen, he asked the Commission to consider a lock and key approach. He is asking the Commission to purchase the key as it already has the lock and once it is purchased, it opens up for this big event to happen. He continued saying if the Commission decides it does not want to purchase the key, he will purchase the key.

Mayor Johnson related the reason he is at the podium is because he wants the City to be on the ground level. He stated he can see, and it may be a couple of years before the City is hosting events, where there are three hundred people in town spending a couple of nights but we have to start somewhere. He noted the Parks Department will always own it and will always be able to have its own league if nothing else.

Council Member Elliott offered another way of looking at it is the Commission is purchasing the equipment for the Parks Department's use which is a legitimate expenditure of the Commission's funds.

Council Member/Chairman Ray called for a motion.

**Council Member Elliott moved, seconded by Commissioner Bush to approve the expenditure of \$12,589.60 for the gaming consoles. Motion Carried with Commissioner Andy Patel abstaining.**

At this time, Council Member/Chairman Ray skipped down to item E on the agenda.

**E. \$1,000.00 funding request 913<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group Family Day**

Mayor Johnson related a recent meeting with representatives from the 913<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group, explaining the Air Force reserves are hosting a family day in October on the Base. He stated the event is for all of the reservists throughout the State, saying he will be taken on a C-130 flight.

He thought it would be nice if the City supported them, saying he did not know if it would be t-shirts or what, but they would certainly get the Commission's logo placed on any advertising placed for the event.

**Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Commissioner Bush to approve the expenditure of \$1,000.00 for the 913<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group Family Day event. Motion Carried.**

**D. \$18,700.00 funding request Central Arkansas Sports Complex Economic Study**

Mayor Johnson related that he is trying to develop four baseball and ten soccer field on the City owned land on Interstate 440 to host events. He explained the need to complete a feasibility economic impact study so they can begin to put the business plan together for the Governor's review for funding.

Commissioner Andy Patel questioned the timeline for completion.

Mayor Johnson replied he hoped to have a completed study within two to three weeks, explaining they have already started gathering information and putting it together; adding all he needs is the ability to pay them. He said they have been working on it already.

Council Member/Chairman Ray noted many years ago, the City had the University of Little Rock (UALR) to complete a feasibility study, saying they do a good job.

Dr. Bob Price clarified it is the University of Arkansas' Economic Development Institute at UALR that is headed by Dr. Mike Pakko, who is leading the team completing the study. He related he has met with them five times, saying Mayor Johnson is right when he stated they are within two to three weeks from being finished.

It was noted the State will not provide funding without an impact study.

Mayor Johnson stated Jacksonville could not build enough hotels to host a large tournament. He related the real benefit is that during the week it can be used for league play, saying Jacksonville will have the best league fields in Arkansas. He stated they will all be turf fields, so league play on Monday through Thursday will be held there. He continued saying concessions will be sold, and the gate will have an entry fee which will help with money coming into the City.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Mayor Johnson replied the study is not complete but it is being worked on; adding he wants to be able to pay them once it is completed.

Discussion ensued with Commissioner Andy Patel offering his support saying it can benefit Jacksonville and surrounding areas.

Mayor Johnson noted the gate will charge sales tax and the City will get its two percent on the gate fee and the Parks Department will get half of the gate fee.

He continued saying it will be the same with the concessions and everything else, adding the City will get its fair share. He said people will be coming to Jacksonville to stay, explaining with these tournaments the hotels will be full.

Discussion ensued regarding management of the facility with Mayor Johnson saying that CAS will be moving their aluminum bat manufacturing facility to Jacksonville which will bring eighty jobs.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Mayor Johnson replied he hoped to be turning dirt in the spring if not before depending on how quickly the funds can be raised.

Director House noted Jacksonville needs to be first, saying a lot of work has been done on this project but they need the study to continue moving forward.

Discussion ensued.

Council Member Elliott noted this is a very good legitimate Commission expenditure.

Dr. Price offered he has looked at larger consulting firms who could provide this type of study, saying the estimated cost was \$50,000.00-100,000.00 dollars. He stated he went to UALR because he knew they would do it reasonably, explaining he met with Dr. Pakko who knew the City was financially strapped and agreed to complete the study for a reduced cost. He said this is the type of study that can cost three to four times as much.

**Council Member Elliott moved, seconded by Commissioner Bush to approve the expenditure of \$18,700.000 for the Central Arkansas Sports Complex Economic Impact Study. Motion Carried.**

**D. \$15,000.00 funding request Boys and Girls Club “Empowering Bright Futures” event**

LaConda Watson, Jacksonville Boys and Girls Club CEO, related the funding request is for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Boys and Girls Club (Club) serving Jacksonville. She stated they are really excited about it because they have managed to secure someone from the Razorback camp to be a part of this event, saying they have already begun some promotional filming to mark the endeavor as well as securing Secretary Key from the Arkansas Department of Education along with Colonel Floyd from the LRAFB. She related they are engaged with Meghan Holcomb Partners (MHP) marketing firm, explaining they have had some conversations with them regarding how to ensure they have a statewide appeal and to bring in the crowd they would like to see to celebrate the youths of Jacksonville and Central Arkansas. She noted the Club not only represents Jacksonville but has over seventy thousand kids in the State. She offered this is more than a statewide appeal because they are looking at others coming to the State for this event just like they did last year. She stated last year’s event was very successful when they hosted the First Lady Susan Hutchinson. She related their excitement regarding the Razorbacks’ representative and would like some additional support to go out professionally to ensure they are hitting the mark regarding airways, newspapers, and television advertising and ensuring they make their campaign funding goal of \$50,000.00. She offered to answer any questions, saying they are behind the mark.

She offered that MHP is presently working on their logo treatment because they want to make sure it is a good look and is really professional and bringing in the crowd. She noted the event will be held in Jacksonville on December 20<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center beginning at 6:00 p.m.; saying she has contacted the high schools as well as the junior ROTC. The Natural State Choir, which is a state awarded choir, will be performing as they did last year as well as the Classic Gold Ensemble jazz group. She stated she believes in celebrating the youths as well as highlighting the talent in Jacksonville.

Jacksonville Boys and Girls Club Treasurer Freddie Scott Sr. related that a big facet going forward is to reach out to stakeholders, community leadership, and business owners, to find out what they can provide to help assist the Club to put the appeal out and to share their story. He stated he is aware of one significant story regarding a family member or loved one that was part of the Club, saying they do have those success stories they can relate to. He continued saying they are excited to reach out to the Commission to be a part of this story, which is not just about the Club but the community as well.

City Attorney Friedman clarified the \$15,000.00 requested was going solely for advertising.

CEO Watson replied everything being discussed is solely for advertising and promotion. She noted the Commission's logo would be included on all of the marketing materials.

Council Member Elliott asked City Attorney Friedman if the Commission would need an itemization regarding the expenditures, adding the Commission could not give a flat amount.

City Attorney Friedman agreed.

CEO Watson noted it was included within the submitted proposal; she then touched on each item contained within the proposal.

Treasurer Scott Sr. noted there is a major Razorback event on the Saturday following the event, saying they will be able to leverage their presence on both days.

Council Member Elliott stated it is a great event, expressing uncertainty and reservations regarding the giving of a flat amount.

It was noted the \$15,000.00 would be given to MHP.

CEO Watson stated she used her owned videographer to shoot some of the promo in Fayetteville that will be used.

City Attorney Friedman clarified what Council Member Elliott is trying to say is the Statute expressly states the Commission cannot give a general subsidy, explaining by giving a flat \$15,000.00 it almost gives the appearance that it is a general subsidy.

Discussion ensued.

Council Member/Chairman Ray expressed his support of the Club, saying \$15,000.00 is just a "drop in the bucket" to keep the Club going and a very good investment.

Commissioner Andy Patel noted presently the Commission is \$30,000.00 behind in its budget, questioning with the already funded expenditures what is the Commission expecting. He questioned if the amount is going to be helpful or would justify that the Commission is promoting Jacksonville.

Council Member/Chairman Ray replied “yes” because it is the Jacksonville Boys and Girls Club, noting the City owns the building. He continued saying whatever is done there is going to promote Jacksonville, saying ninety percent of the kids there are from Jacksonville.

Treasurer Scott Sr. stated \$15,000.00 compared to the value associated with the marketing piece, not just what is represented here but also what is not represented, is the fact that the Arkansas Department of Education is supportive of this effort, the military is supportive of this effort, and the Razorback family will be coming down and the potential sponsors are coming to the Jacksonville Community Center. He noted they maxed out at last year’s event and they hope to do the same this year in a bigger way. He stated they wanted to highlight what is going on now and in the last fifty years in Jacksonville.

Commissioner Andy Patel expressed his understanding that A & P Commissions’ are not in the charity business, saying taxpayer money is being used to promote the City. He continued saying there are a lot of entities needing money but that does not mean the funds come through the Commission. He offered his appreciation for what they are doing for Jacksonville but funding needs to be obtained somewhere else. He related if the City is supposed to support them he does not see a problem with that but the Commission’s funds are strictly to promote and help Jacksonville to bring more money into Jacksonville which is his understanding.

Treasurer Scott Sr. questioned if there was something included within the proposal that leads Commissioner Andy Patel to believe they are not promoting Jacksonville.

Commissioner Andy Patel asked what is meant by promoting, answering it is money well spent to make the town better or something that attracts more people, which is what the Commission is looking for.

Treasurer Scott Sr. replied there is a transition going on and in order to bring about the economic development that has already been addressed previously, economic development is strictly tied to businesses saying “yes” to the City. He continued saying correlated to that would be what is happening within the education system so that is one of the reasons they are looking at serving students and not just during recreation but also learning. He stated they are working with the school system and they have a good understanding of the intel level, proficiency level, of each of the children they are serving. He said they know where they are in literacy and math and the children are spending time in programs that can better students when they go back to school. He related ultimately it deals with character as well, explaining in an after school program they are not on the streets getting into trouble. He stated ultimately their hope is that the kids they are serving at the Club will be great for the City, great in character and there are more companies that will want to come to Jacksonville so their kids can attend school here.

Council Member/Chairman Ray stated the Club touches every child in the City, explaining when a tournament is held at the Club, ninety percent of them are going to go to a fast food restaurant and purchase something which is supporting Jacksonville. He related the Club is there to help the local children, adding that his son grew up in the Club.

City Attorney Friedman stated what the Club is doing is fabulous and no one on the Commission is disagreeing with that, the Commission cannot be a general subsidy for the Club. Legally speaking, if funding is needed for advertising, it is the same thing as a 5K coming in to request funding; the Commission can certainly do that if documentation can be provided to show some type of tourist attraction or economic development. She continued as far as their actual mission that is beyond the Commission's scope.

Council Member Elliott offered that he has supported the for years and has been involved in many fund raisers and is all for it but when the Commission is paying to create a logo for the Club that is not for the Commission to do. He continued saying it would be easier to do out of the City's budget instead of the Commission's budget but the creation of a logo for the Club is not for the Commission.

CEO Watson stated one of the things that really disturbs her is that they are supporting Jacksonville. She said she traveled to Fayetteville and won a person over to come to Jacksonville to do an event to promote Jacksonville, saying they have never been to Jacksonville. She stated this is an opportunity for Jacksonville to get some major spotlight.

City Attorney Friedman stated funding for advertising is acceptable however, funding for general subsidy for marketing is legally questionable.

Council Member/Chairman Ray questioned if any part of the request could be funded.

Council Member Elliott reiterated he does not mind the parts that are legitimate expressing concern regarding funding for a logo and that kind of stuff.

Discussion ensued with Council Member Elliott expressing his understanding that funding of a logo and associated items expressly for the Club are not legitimate Commission expenditures.

**Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Council Member Elliott to table this item of business to the next meeting. Motion Carried.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Recording Secretary Wilmoth read an announcement regarding the upcoming FestiVille event.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business, Councilman/Chairman Ray adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.