

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

Regular Session

January 12, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Call to Order..... President Speakman

Pledge of Allegiance..... Mr. Hensler

Opening Prayer..... Mr. Brown

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 30, 2014 Regular Session

VISITORS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Utility – Brown, Elliott, and Foster
- Budget & Finance – Elliott, Hensler, and Brown
- Police, Fire, & Traffic – Kitchen, Queen, and Jones
- Service – (Street & Alley, Recreation, Buildings & Grounds) Foster, Queen, and Hensler
- City Auditor
- Law Director
- Mayor
- Service/Safety Director

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

CORRESPONDENCE

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes from
December 30, 2014
7:00 p.m.
Regular Session

Jackson City Council met in regular session on Monday, December 30, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at Jackson City Council Chambers. President Pro-Tem Eric Brown called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mrs. Jones. The Prayer was given by Mr. Brown.

Roll call was taken as follows:

- Mr. Brown-present
- Mr. Kitchen-present
- Mrs. Jones-present
- Mr. Hensler-present
- Mr. Queen-present
- Mr. Elliott-present
- Mr. Foster-present

Mr. Elliott made a motion to excuse President Ron Speakman from the meeting, seconded by Mr. Hensler. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Hensler made a motion to approve the minutes from December 8, 2014, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

VISITORS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

UTILITY- No report

BUDGET & FINANCE-No report

POLICE, FIRE, & TRAFFIC-No report

SERVICE –(STREET & ALLEY, RECREATION, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS)

Mr. Foster stated money was appropriated for curbs. Mr. Kitchen has a list of curbs that need worked on. Mr. Foster stated he wondered if money should be spent on the section of Main Street toward Bridge Street. If ODOT ever came in and removed the brick street and put in asphalt, they would probably do the curbs too. Mr. Brown stated he had never seen ODOT replace any curbs. Mr. Hensler verified if they leave the brick, they are still responsible for keeping up the curbs and sidewalks. Mr. Elliott was in agreement with Mr. Kitchen with keeping this section of Main Street on the list. Mr. Kitchen felt that section should be number one on the list. He said he doesn't care what they do first, but do something.

Mr. Elliott brought up a concern with some of the 2 and 4 way stops. The intersections of concern are Columbia and Pearl (2 way stop), Church & Pearl (4 way stop), and Harding & Pearl (2 way stop). They need to state on the sign which kind of stop it is. Drivers aren't sure when they need to stop. It is going to cause an accident. Mayor Heath said they will work on this problem.

CITY AUDITOR

Mr. Reed stated he did some research on bonds for the Memorial Building remodel. He said a \$2 million loan for 15 years, at right under 3% interest, the debt service is estimated at \$169,565 annually. On a \$1.5 million loan the debt service is estimated at \$127,430 annually. The City has a AA-3 rating. Mr. Reed stated most of the ordinances for this meeting are closing out the year.

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

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Regular Session

LAW DIRECTOR

Mr. Kirby said he had e-mailed AMP information to everyone. Mr. Kitchen said he read the information and understands what happened, but still has questions. He wanted to know why they didn't ever question AMP to change it to a gas fired plant instead of coal. Mr. Brown stated the reason they purchased the plant up north instead of trying to make the Meigs plant work was due to being about 85% done. It was quite a bit cheaper to buy the gas plant up north. It had a gas reservoir going right by it. The two main resources in this area are coal and logs. Delay in permits was a big factor on the failure of the plant.

MAYOR

Mayor Heath passed out a press release and wanted to welcome Taylor Lumber Worldwide to Jackson. He said the company originated in Scioto county. They ship lumber internationally. They will start by employing 25-75 employees, but could increase depending on how things progress. They liked the plant because of the rail line and the condition of the plant. This was a team effort involving a lot of people on the Local, Regional, and State levels. He thanked everyone for helping to make this possible. Mayor Heath felt there were three reasons this was possible. He stated the first reason was Plant Manager, Mr. John Lewis and his employees kept the building in great shape. The availability of dependable rail service was a big factor. Thanks to the Ohio South Central Railroad for letting the city have these new tools in attracting new jobs. Overall direction of our community at this time was a factor also. See attached letter for detailed information.

Mr. Brown was pleased to see a lumber industry coming back to Jackson. It will help all of the sawmills and lumberyards in the area. Lumber is one of the 2 resources we have left. It will attract a lot of business.

Mayor Heath stated they are working on plans for the bike path again. He said they are looking at finishing the current bike path that starts at Eddie Jones Park and ends at the Appalachian Highway. A meeting was held and they decided that the best course of action right now is to extend the current bike path. They are looking to see if it would be possible through grants and other funding. He wanted to thank the Ohio Valley Conservation Coalition for stepping up to help with this project. Neal Hess will offer his expertise in the viability of the bike path. They are looking at extending the current bike path from where it stops and taking it to the east and west. Extend it to the east at the dead end of Longworth St. When going to the west it would take you to the YMCA. They are still considering possibly doing something out at Lake Hammertown, but there are a lot of things to take into consideration.

Mayor Heath said there is information on the creek cleaning in each council member's packet.

Mayor Heath informed citizens to call police if they see anything that doesn't look right. He said not to wait, call as soon as they see it happening.

SERVICE DIRECTOR-Absent

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCE NO. 72-14

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE ELECTRIC FUND:
ISSUANCE COST AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Third Reading

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

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Regular Session

Mr. Reed stated this is a bookkeeping thing for Administration for attorney's fees for the reissuance of the electric bonds. This is not spending additional money. It was already included.

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 72-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 80 -14

**AN ORDINANCE TRANSFERRING APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE GENERAL FUND:
TRANSFER OUT TO RECREATION FUND: TRANSFER IN AND DECLARING AN
EMERGENCY.**

First Reading

Mr. Elliott made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 80-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 81 -14

**AN ORDINANCE REDUCING APPROPRIATIONS IN VARIOUS FUNDS AND DECLARING AN
EMERGENCY.**

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes from
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7:00 p.m.
Regular Session

First Reading

Mrs. Jones made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mr. Elliott. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mrs. Sexton stated this is reducing funds from last year, taking funds back down so the appropriations do not exceed the revenue.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 81-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 82 -14

AN ORDINANCE TRANSFERRING APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE EDDIE JONES INVESTMENT FUND: TRANSFER OUT TO EDWIN JONES PARK FUND: TRANSFER IN AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

Mr. Hensler made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mr. Elliott. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Reed stated this is just moving interest back into the main fund.

Mr. Hensler made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Kitchen. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

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In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 82-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 83 -14

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE ISSUANCE COSTS
FUND AND PAYMENT TO REFUNDED BOND ESCROW FUND AND DECLARING AN
EMERGENCY.**

First Reading

Mr. Queen made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mr. Kitchen. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Reed stated this is just a bookkeeping thing.

Mr. Hensler made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Queen. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 83-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 84-14

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS TO THE RECREATION
FUND: TRANSFER OUT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

First Reading

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Mr. Kitchen made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mr. Hensler. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Reed stated this is cost allocations. This is transferring from the General Fund back into Recreation Fund.

Mr. Hensler made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 84-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 85 -14

AN ORDINANCE TRANSFERRING APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE LILLIAN JONES MUSEUM TRUST FUND: TRANSFER OUT TO LILLIAN JONES MUSEUM OPERATING FUND: TRANSFER IN AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

First Reading

Mr. Kitchen made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mr. Queen. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mrs. Sexton stated this is moving interest from the Trust Fund to the Operating Fund.

Mr. Hensler made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Elliott. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

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Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 85-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 86-14

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS TO THE RECREATION FUND: TRANSFER OUT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

Mr. Hensler made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

This is a companion ordinance.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Queen. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott- yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 86-14 duly adopted

ORDINANCE NO. 87 -14

AN ORDINANCE TRANSFERRING APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE SALARIES AND WAGES FUND TO REIMBURSEMENT SERVICES AND MATERIALS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

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Mr. Queen made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mrs. Sexton stated this is to make appropriations to match what the cost allocations are.

Mr. Queen made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Kitchen. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott- yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the ordinance, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Ordinance 87-14 duly adopted

RESOLUTION NO. 30-14

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND THANKING ANTHONY COYAN FOR HIS SERVICES TOWARDS THE RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE JAMES CEMETERY AND HIS SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OF JACKSON.

First Reading

Mr. Queen made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mr. Kitchen. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Kitchen said this is well deserved for Anthony Coyan.

Mr. Queen made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Elliott. In a roll call vote to suspend the rules, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott- yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the resolution, council voted as follows:

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Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-yes
Mr. Elliott-yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Resolution 30-14 duly adopted

RESOLUTION NO. 31-14

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF PARTICIPATING MEMBER SCHEDULE WITH AMERICAN MUNICIPAL POWER, INC. ("AMP") TO ENROLL IN THE AMP-ENERWISE DEMAND RESPONSE AND 1 CP PILOT PROGRAMS.

First Reading

Mr. Kitchen made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Brown stated AMP has come up with a program to cut rates through efficiency. If the highest users will cut back on usage at peak times, it will save everyone money. It is no cost to the city. They will educate them on how to save at peak times. The Mayor stated this is a completely voluntary program for industries. Mr. Hensler asked if the Utility committee should meet to discuss this further. Mr. Brown was in agreement with this suggestion. No meeting date was set yet.

RESOLUTION NO. 32-14

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF JACKSON TO ENTER INTO A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH THE JACKSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AN OHIO NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION, FOR THE LEASE AND MAINTENANCE OF THE JACKSON OHIO DEPOT LOCATED ON BROADWAY STREET AND OWNED BY THE CITY.

First Reading

Mr. Queen made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mr. Hensler. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mayor Heath stated many years ago the City entered into a lease agreement with the Railroad Historical Society. There are not many of the members still living. The Mayor was asked if it could be turned over to the Jackson Historical Society. The Jackson Historical Society has obtained some of the land beside it. They would take over the maintenance and improvement of the Depot and Caboose. Mr. Brown stated it was heading in a bad direction with whoever had it before. He would like to have some members of the Jackson Historical Society come to a council meeting to talk about where their funds are coming from and what their plans are.

Mr. Elliott stated there is land across from Eddie Jones Park that would not be in the flood plain that would be perfect for the Salt Lick project.

Mr. Kitchen thought the transfer had been delayed due to Administration. Mayor Heath said his Administration did not delay this in any way.

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Minutes from
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RESOLUTION NO. 33-14

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR PAYMENT TO BRENNTAG PURSUANT TO A "THEN AND NOW" CERTIFICATE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,057.10 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

Mr. Elliott made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mrs. Jones. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mrs. Sexton stated this is a "Then and Now" certificate request. What they think happened with the invoice was the original amount of the invoice was \$6,512.40. At the time the payment was made they thought the Purchase Order they had in place was enough to cover the full amount of the invoice. When the invoice came in to be paid, but things had been paid in the meantime which left the original Purchase Order being \$3,057.10 short. Since this amount is more than the Auditor can do, council has to approve it. Mr. Brown stated at least 50% or more of the "Then and Now" certificates have come from the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He would like to see something put in place to help prevent this. Mayor Heath stated they would get this resolved.

Mr. Kitchen made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Foster. In a roll call vote, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-no
Mr. Elliott- yes
Mr. Foster-yes

In a roll call vote to adopt the resolution, council voted as follows:

Mr. Brown-yes
Mr. Kitchen-yes
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes
Mr. Queen-no
Mr. Elliott- yes
Mr. Foster-yes

Resolution 33-14 duly adopted

CORRESPONDENCE

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Reed stated that the ordinance that council passed for AMP is a 2014 appropriation. That ordinance will not be used. Mr. Brown wanted to know if it will do anything to the city by not paying the payment this year. Mr. Reed stated he has no control over that. The money is in there for next year.

Mr. Kitchen stated the map was a welcomed addition. It shows how much private property there is versus what the city owns. It looks like the city owns quite a bit.

NEW BUSINESS-

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

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Mr. Queen stated someone contacted him about starting a business of renting storage containers. Mr. Reed asked if it is a commercial property and he said yes. They would not allow something setting in the yard.

Mrs. Jones stated Jennifer Jacobs is in attendance and thought she should be recognized for her help in getting the Merillat Building occupied again.

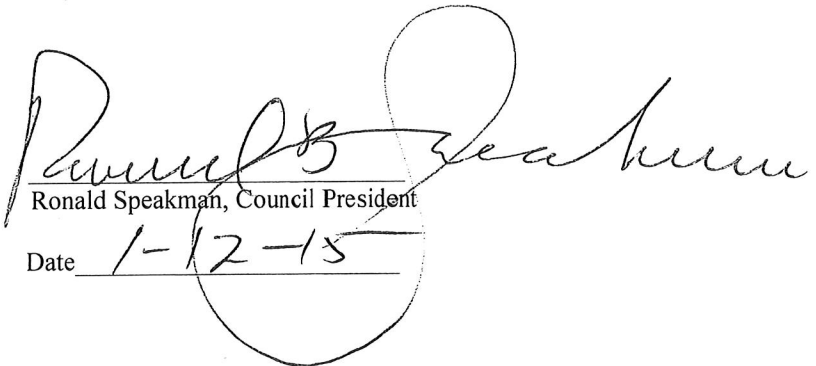
Mr. Hensler made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Elliott. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Council adjourned at 8:25 p.m.



Sherry Barr, Council Clerk

Date 1-12-15



Ronald Speakman, Council President

Date 1-12-15



RANDY R. HEATH, *Mayor*
WILLIAM R. SHEWARD, *Director of Public Service / Safety*

CITY OF JACKSON

MEMORIAL BUILDING 145 BROADWAY ST. JACKSON, OHIO 45640
(740) 286-3224 (740) 286-2201

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A staple of the Jackson industrial community for 35 years will come to life once again.

Sherwood 23 Holdings, LLC announced today the purchase of the former Merillat Cabinet factory on East Main Street in Jackson. The building became vacated last spring when Merillat ceased operations there after more than three decades.

The initial operator of the facility will be Taylor Lumber Worldwide, Inc., which has been in operation in various forms of the lumber industry since 1886. Although originating 125 years ago and based in Scioto County, they ship lumber internationally.

The primary use of the facility, initially, will be lumber related, although the exact use and future plans were not released.

They are hoping to employ somewhere between 25 and 75 employees initially at the Jackson location, depending on the exact use of the facility, but could grow larger if ancillary industries join them in the facility.

Taylor Lumber Worldwide was drawn to the site because of the size and location of the facility, nearby rail access and the prime condition of the building.

Operation is expected to begin sometime in 2015, although no official start-up date has been definitely determined.

Jackson County Apple Festival
Held Annually Third Full Week in September



BIKE PATH UPDATE

One of the projects we have been looking into this year to help enhance our community and recreational offerings has been an upgrade to our community's bike path program, which now consists of one path at Eddie Jones Park on Harding Avenue that dead ends into the Appalachian Highway.

These kinds of projects are very popular in other communities and many times are a positive sign to prospective business and industries as to a community's commitment to improving its quality of life and the overall health of the community, which is vital to those prospective businesses and industries.

As you might remember, the previous path was completed shortly before I became mayor. I know Mr. Kitchen was asking for the some of the paperwork surrounding that project, but we have not been able to locate that.

As always, we have tried to look at every avenue responsibly and make sure we do our due diligence to assure that whatever money is allocated is being spent toward the most cost effective, cost efficient project we can have.

Last April I reported to you that five others and myself took a trip around the entire perimeter of Hammertown Lake, a most educational journey for me. I learned a lot about the lake, including what natural beauty and values of nature exist.

At the same time, we also looked at possible new paths within the city limits, including the possibility of expanding the current path.

Two weeks ago I organized a meeting of the various stakeholders and others interested in such a project so we could review our efforts to date and work to determine what would be the best direction in going forward.

After a two-hour meeting which involved more than ten people, it was decided our best course of action right now was to concentrate on expansion of the existing path and study to see if such an expansion would be possible through grants and other funding.

One of the groups that have stepped forth to assist us with this is the Ohio Valley Conservation Coalition. This group has been able to secure several grants for their individual projects and they are very knowledgeable to grants and other funding that might be available, as our ultimate goal would be to expand the current path hopefully only using money that is currently earmarked for such projects by the state of Ohio and additional grant dollars.

But before we get our hopes too high, we must remember these grants we are seeking are very competitive and certainly are not guaranteed, which is why we are working to present the best possible projects.

One of the assets the Ohio Valley Conservation Coalition can provide is the expertise of a gentleman named Neal Hess. Neal is a graduate of Jackson High School and currently works with CT Consultants in Akron. He is still very much devoted to his home town and his job with CT Consultants is to work with communities in the state of Ohio to determine the viability of bike and walking paths for their communities, so his insight will be invaluable and will help us very much to make sure we will be getting the best project possible.

Right now, we are looking at extending the current bike path at its termination at the base of the Appalachian Highway to both the east and the west.

To the east, we would extend the current path to the blacktop section that is the dead end portion of Longworth Street, or old U. S. 35. Then those using the path could make an approximate 2.5 mile circle by circling around on Longworth Street to Triumph Street and back to Harding Avenue and the park. This should not cause any disruption to the residents on Triumph Street and its limited traffic makes it ideal for such a route.

To have the best chance at grant funding, it is much more advisable to have destinations for your paths, and that is one reason why having the circular path is critical.

When going to the ~~east~~^{west}, we will look at bringing it back to have an entrance from Veteran's Drive as well as Eddie Jones Park, and hopefully extending it to the YMCA, which would bring it near the vicinity of Manpower Park, which means you could start at Manpower Park, go across the street to the YMCA and have a path all the way to the intersection of Broadway Street and U. S. 35.

One of our keys will be the utilization of the state-earmarked money for the bike path that was garnered through the state capital bill and I am sure with the assistance of then state senator John Carey. The city still has \$75,000 of the initial \$200,000 that was available, and since we can only spend that money once, I have waited to make sure we got the best benefit possible, and I believe this project will give us just that.

As for a potential path around Hammertown Lake, there are still a number of concerns that must be addressed before any determination is made on any project at the lake.

There are a number of people who utilize the wonderful natural setting of our lake now, horse riders on the horse trails, hunters, bow hunters and others. In matter of fact, we learned in the meeting horse riders from three different states come here to utilize our trails which certainly helps to support our economy.

The Ohio Valley Conservation Coalition is going to see if there is a feasibility study grant available to determine if it is even feasible to do any project at the lake, as there are legitimate concerns that all must be addressed.

But I want to make it clear, any project we might do is only going to be done if it compliments what is already there and does not disturb our lake, our water shed. It would only compliment the horse trails and those who hunt, not interfere.

And as with our proposed project to extend the current bike path, the land will all belong to the city, we are not giving land to anyone or anything like that. Our only goal, as it is every day, is to look into every potential project and see if it fits and benefits our community, if it does, great, if it doesn't, we look someplace else.

We will probably have to have a couple of resolutions in the future as we finalize exactly what we need to do, but I know the current bike path is used quite a bit, and many have asked if someday we could make it better, and right now since it is totally cost prohibitive to go under the highway, this seems like the best direction and as always, if you or any citizen has any question concerning this or any project, please, please let me know.

AMP GS PAYMENT INFORMATION

At the last council meeting, council passed on third reading a measure that would authorize the city to pay a portion of what is the city's cost in its partnership in what was a proposed power plant that was to be built in neighboring Meigs County by the partner communities who are members of American Municipal Power.

Since there was very little discussion on the matter during the council meetings except for the detailed explanations given by Auditor Reed specific to the financial obligation, and those voting against the measure did not publicly indicate their concern or ask any detailed questions of the administration or auditor prior to the vote, there could be those in the community, and possible even on council, that might have forgotten, never realized or clearly understood how we arrived at this point since it has truly been over a decade in the making.

The facts are that for more than 20 years, one source of our city's electric power, among many, was provided by a coal-fired power generating plant near Marietta on Route 7 called the Gorsuch Power Plant. For at least two decades, it provided some of the most cost efficient power the city utilized.

In the early 2000s, it was determined the Gorsuch plant was no longer a cost effective power producer due to age plus other factors and would have to be taken off line. Communities such as Jackson thus had to find an alternative source of power to replace the power being lost when Gorsuch would close.

Of course, to best provide our community with sufficient available electric power, Jackson partners with 129 other communities in eight states to either produce or buy power in such a quantity that the volume allows the city to hopefully gain the cheapest power possible for our customers.

It also hopefully allows us to provide the most reliable and steady price of power possible for our customers. If the city had to rely solely on purchasing power on the open market, sure, there might be some days it might be a little cheaper, but there could also be times where within five minutes the price of power could rise by 10 times, and no one could afford their electric if they never knew if their electric bill was going to be 10 times higher from one month to the next.

And neither could any business or industry, which provides our jobs.

Thus, this allows our customers throughout the year to hopefully have a general idea as to their average price of power that is going to be more predictable and in a vast majority of instances lower on average than the open market.

An example of the dramatic fluctuation in an energy cost is evident today with the price of gasoline. It might be \$2 a gallon now, but do you want to guess what it will be in May or a year from now?

The partnership I previously referenced of 130 communities, serving 650,000 customers in eight states is what we refer to as American Municipal Power, or more commonly referred to as AMP. For those who have not understood exactly who or what AMP is, AMP is us, Jackson and the other 129 communities and 650,000 customers who make it up. It is not some private company we contract with, but it is us, where all the decisions are ultimately made by the communities who belong to and are directly involved in the projects of AMP.

When Jackson and our partner communities looked in the early 2000s at possible sources of power to replace what was being lost by the Gorsuch plant closing, the partners of AMP continued to look more closely at producing its own power rather than just being a middle man, or broker, of power being produced by someone else.

There are three very logical reasons why such a direction would receive such strong consideration.

First, more power generating facilities are being taken off line in today's world than being constructed. Theoretically, there could be a point where maybe there was no power available to be purchased because the demand would exceed the supply, and the price of buying that power in such a scenario could be astronomical because you would be at the mercy of those who had the limited supply available.

Second, if the communities banded together to produce its own power, there would be the savings of not having to pay a middle man or a retail price, thus lowering the cost.

Thirdly, it could guarantee a community a dedicated source of power. A community would not be dependent on someone else and could assure businesses and industries looking at your community you will have power available and hopefully not be subjected to the rolling blackouts other areas of the country have experienced.

This is absolutely critical to a community's economy. Between 75 and 80 percent of the power we use in the city of Jackson is used by non-residential customers. The business and industries are the heart of our system, and as a result help to keep the price lower for residents.

Clearly, taking a step toward more involvement in generating your own power is going to create some risk, but it is also clear what the dire consequences would be if no power was available to be purchased.

This is a primary reason why when every day you hear our nationally elected leaders argue and bicker over energy, it is not only costly to us, those who use electric, but jeopardizes our future for every day that our nation does not have a dedicated plan that can address what our country's energy needs are going to be not only for tomorrow, but 10, 20 and 30 years ahead.

This uncertainty and constant change, I am sure, is one of the reasons why we are faced with this situation today concerning this proposed plant.

When this project in Meigs County was approved to move forward, there was a different administration in Washington, D. C. and the views on coal were totally different. We all know the opposition to coal some in Washington have today. But we also saw the television ads prior to the November election from the elected leaders in Kentucky and West Virginia vowing to change it.

And what if in two years the new president decided that coal is just fine, but fracking for natural gas should be illegal, then everything is turned upside down again and everyone who has invested in natural gas is in the same situation that those who invested in coal are today.

It is no wonder no one wants to make a 50-year investment into a power generating facility when in 50 days, everything could change. And if more plants are closed than are opened, and the supply dwindles and demand increases, then everyone's electric bills will soar and there isn't a single thing any of us can do about it.

In that scenario, we are just the low man on the totem pole. I don't think we want to be in a situation where we have to be in a bidding war just to turn our lights on, but it could happen and be totally out of our control if we do not have ourselves positioned to guarantee we have power available when it is required.

While there are very few win-win scenarios in life, and seemingly even fewer in government, it is always imperative and only fair to fully judge the rewards of any situation when calculating the risks that might be involved.

Our electrical distribution system, for example, has not only been an anchor for our community, but in many ways a financial savior. And due to prudent management over the years, the rewards earned have far, far overshadowed any risks that have been incurred such as this.

An example would be each year our general fund is the benefactor of more than \$1.2 million that does not require one extra penny from the residents through the kilowatt hour tax collection mandated by the state and the rents and right of way allocations, of which more than 75 percent is generated through the city's non-residential users.

When people talk about getting a grant for this and that, where else are you going to get \$1.2 million each year? So even if we could ultimately incur this \$500,000 loss, the money the city secured this year from the state-mandated kilowatt hour tax alone more than covers any loss, one of the primary reasons the state allows these communities to retain this tax.

And what about the cost of our electric to the customers? As you know, a survey by the *Columbus Dispatch* revealed that the average cost of our electric was less than American Electric Power and Buckeye Rural Co-Operative.

And what about reliability? When our new upgrades are completed, we will have a modern, even more reliable system that will serve our community for years, if not decades and make our community much more inviting to business and industry, which means jobs for our people.

And who can forget the derecho a couple of summers ago? When communities such as neighboring Wellston were out of electric for as much as seven days, almost all of our electric within the city was back on within seven hours!

Not only was this a blessing for our residents, who got to preserve their food in the freezers and have air conditioning, but saved businesses and industries hundreds of thousands of dollars and how many thousands didn't lose their jobs for days as a result?

Our electric system is our greatest asset. It is not something to be taken for granted, it is certainly not something to be politicized, it is never something to be taken lightly and must be respected for the responsibility it brings, for if any other considerations ever override being totally responsible for all of our customers, the consequences can be catastrophic.

It is certainly not anyone's fault in Jackson, or any of the other 80 communities that this project did not go to fruition, certainly every step was taken to ensure its success to maximize the rewards and minimize the risks. But there are no certain guarantees in today's world of energy production, and whether it was the actions of the EPA, the calculations of Bechtel Jacobs, or something else even more technical and hidden, one fact remains clear.

The community of Jackson gave its word, through a resolution by council, done in good faith, with the best intentions and using all the information available, that it would be a faithful partner with its fellow AMP communities. And while Jackson gave its word to those 80 communities, those same communities gave their word to us they would solemnly stand by the project.

The city of Jackson has given its word to AMP communities on many occasions, and has reaped the rewards as those communities have as well. Tragically, this time the shoe was on the other foot, but that should never alter any outcome when the city of Jackson gives its word.

Not only did the city give its word to its member AMP communities, it made a commitment to meet its financial obligations to this project, thick or thin, to the state auditor's office of Ohio, who officially considers this a financial obligation that must be paid if we are to be considered a financially responsible governmental entity.

Regardless of any court case or outcome, this is a financial obligation incurred by our city that must be paid. As Mr. Sheward made clear at the last meeting, if the courts do rule in AMP's favor, a portion of this money could be returned, but that can never be assumed.

Thus, regardless of how one might feel about the failure of the project or the disappointment of the situation, every elected official has a solemn responsibility to protect the name of the community and live up to its responsibilities.

Failure to do so could have very adverse effects.

If there should come a time when this obligation was not paid in full, the city could be declared to be in default of a loan of \$500,000 by the state auditor's office.

This absolutely could negatively impact the city's credit rating and down grade it from the perfect rating I am told the city has now.

Clearly, the better the credit rating a city has, the lower the interest rate would be when borrowing money, and when considering the city might have to borrow large sums of money for its utilities and for the renovation of the Memorial Building, a higher interest rate due to a downgraded credit rating could cost the city thousands of dollars in additional interest.

It could also affect the city's ability to receive governmental low interest or no interest loans.

It could also create a lack of confidence from fellow AMP communities to ask Jackson to participate in projects which could save our customers on their electric costs in the future because those communities would not know if they could trust Jackson if the project was not a total success, possibly forcing the city into having to purchase more expensive power at a later date.

Maybe most important, I am told our city is losing money every day we do not pay this obligation. We are paying interest on this money, and the interest we are paying is higher than any interest we are gaining. In simple terminology, every day we do not make this payment, money that could go to a beneficial cause in our city, such as fixing the Memorial Building, is being wasted on an unnecessary interest payment.

Our city's good name, one that has been developed with diligence over decades, is on the line. Not paying our obligation, waiting until someone forces us to pay our financial obligations or using this to make some kind of statement that is really unrelated to the matter at hand only harms our community.

For someone like me, who charges no expenses to the city so we can save every penny, and uses a lot of my own time in the spring and summer working with the recreation so we can save the nearly \$100,000 a year I am told we use to take from the general fund, this breaks my heart. I would do anything if we would not have to pay it.

But we do. This is a required payment, by law. This is not some arbitrary spending decision so a statement of alleged blame can be made. This is required of us.

We gave our word, and that word should mean everything to us.