

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL
Regular Session
January 26, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order..... President Speakman
Pledge of Allegiance..... Mr. Queen
Opening Prayer..... Mr. Brown

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 12, 2015 Regular Session

VISITORS

Michael Stroth-Jackson Historical Society

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

January 12, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Regular Session

Jackson City Council met in regular session on Monday, January 12, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Jackson City Council Chambers. President Ron Speakman called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Hensler. 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 approve the minutes from December 30, 2014, seconded by Mr. Brown. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

VISITORS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

UTILITY- Mr. Brown stated the Utility Committee met on January 8th, 2015 with all committee members and council present. The meeting was to discuss Resolution 31-14. They recommended to bring the Resolution before council for passage.

Mr. Brown stated he had received a request from Carry Montgomery for installation of 3-phase electric on property located at 138 Watts Blevins Rd. Mr. Brown made a motion to accept the request, seconded by Mr. Elliott. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Brown also stated there was a request from Randy Ridge for electric service outside the city on State Route 788. This is for one of the 3 buildings he still owns. Mr. Brown made a motion to accept the request, seconded by Mr. Kitchen. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

BUDGET & FINANCE-No report

POLICE, FIRE, & TRAFFIC-No report

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

No report from Mr. Foster. Mr. Kitchen stated he feels the curbs on Main St. that were discussed at the last council meeting, should be the curbs and sidewalks that are fixed first. They are in really bad shape. Mr. Foster stated he will get with the Service Director in the Spring and they will see what they can do, since there is money put back for this.

CITY AUDITOR

LAW DIRECTOR

MAYOR

Mayor Heath gave his annual State of the City Address. (Attached)

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SERVICE DIRECTOR

Mr. Sheward stated they have received all of the salt that was ordered.

He stated there were a few reports in their packets for review, Fairmount Cemetery annual report, zoning permit report, and Fire Dept. report. If anyone has questions regarding them, please contact him.

Mr. Sheward stated there were a couple of events coming up he wanted to make council aware of. They will be bidding out the work for the work at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. This is estimated to be about \$5million. There will be loans and grants available for this project. The McCarty Lane sewer project, estimated at about \$2 million is the other project. There is grant and loan funding available for this also. These will be coming in about the next 4-6 weeks.

ORDINANCE NO 01-15

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AN ANTI-DISPLACEMENT AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF JACKSON AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

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

Mr. Sheward stated this is a requirement in order to be eligible for loans and grants from the state. It is required by the State. This is to make sure there is housing available to displaced occupants of a demolition of property.

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

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.

Second Reading

Mr. Brown 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-no
Mrs. Jones-yes
Mr. Hensler-yes

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Mr. Queen-no
Mr. Elliott- yes
Mr. Foster-yes

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.

Second Reading

Mr. Brown stated he had requested some members of the Jackson Historical Society come to tonight's meeting to explain their plans and where their funding is coming from for the Depot and Caboose. No members were present. Mr. Kitchen stated there is nobody to come at this time. Mr. Brown stated he is not opposed to this ordinance, he just wanted more information.

RESOLUTION NO. 01-15

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF JACKSON TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION PROGRAM FUNDING FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENTS, PHASE 1 PROJECT

First Reading

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

Mr. Sheward stated this is for funding for the Wastewater Treatment Plant project, Phase I. He said timing is very important.

Mr. Hensler made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Brown. 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 resolution, 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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Resolution 01-15 duly adopted

(FINAL) RESOLUTION 02-15

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MAYOR OF THE CITY OF JACKSON OR HIS DESIGNEE TO COOPERATE WITH THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE LITTLE SALT CREEK BRIDGE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

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

Mr. Sheward stated this is the final resolution for the Harding Avenue bridge project. Needs to be to them by February 6th.

Mrs. Jones made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Hensler. 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 resolution, 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

Resolution 02-15 duly adopted

RESOLUTION NO. 03-15

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF JACKSON, OR HIS DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE, TO FILE AN APPLICATION WITH THE OHIO

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SMALL CITY PROGRAM, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

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

Mr. Sheward stated this is a funding source they are trying to access through ODOT for repairing and paving McCarty Lane and Main St. hill. This is an 80%/20% funding.

Mr. Henser asked if the Declaring an Emergency clause is not in there and they suspend the rules, will it process just as quickly. The response was it has to wait 30 days.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Brown. 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 resolution, 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

Resolution 03-15 duly adopted

RESOLUTION NO. 4-15

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF JACKSON TO FILE AN APPLICATION WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE RECREATIONAL TRAILS AND/OR THE CLEAN OHIO TRAILS PROGRAMS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

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

Mayor Heath stated this is for funding for the bike trail extension. It is to apply for funds from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for the Recreational Trails and/or the Clean Ohio Trails Programs. It is looking like about a \$500,000 project. They still have \$75,000 left from the State Capital money they had before. Any money they would need for the

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match would be voted on by council. This is due the end of the month or beginning of next month.

Mr. Foster made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Mr. Elliott. In a voice 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 resolution, 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

Resolution 04-15 duly adopted

CORRESPONDENCE-None

OLD BUSINESS-None

NEW BUSINESS-

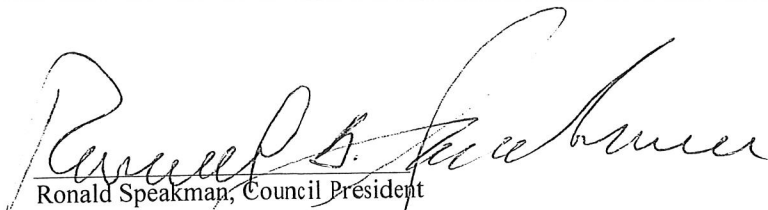
Mr. Kitchen stated he is all for the bike path, but he wondered why all council members can't be included in planning sessions. He feels like there are certain members who are excluded from things. He said the next time he would appreciate it if they would consider including all council members in the meetings. Mr. Queen stated he had a few citizens come to him and told him they would have liked to be included in the bike path meeting also. Mayor Heath stated he has never excluded anyone from meetings. He took offense to Mr. Kitchen's statement.

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

Council adjourned at 7:47 p.m.


Sherry Barr, Council Clerk

Date 1-26-15


Ronald Speakman, Council President

Date 1/26/15

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS JANUARY 12, 2015

Mr. President, members of Jackson City Council, my fellow citizens,

At this time, it is my great honor, as required by the laws of the state of Ohio, to report to you on the state of our community, the greatest privilege I have.

As I did one year ago, I humbly report our community continues to move forward, continues to operate in a financially responsible manner, continues to improve every day, growing the promise of tomorrow while continuing to daily serve our citizens well.

In matter of fact, the light at the end of the tunnel truly does seem brighter than ever. The challenges do remain huge, but we are better positioned to attack those challenges than at any time since I took this office seven years ago.

When I look at the road our city has traveled in these seven years, I see many things.

I see a city that was in financial chaos and headed toward despair seven years ago, spending funds toward bankruptcy with more glitz than responsibility.

I see a city now, though, that is financially responsible, that is financially stable, yet one that still has tremendous challenges in making sure its general fund can provide for the needs of the community both for today and in the future. This is our biggest hurdle.

I see a city that has financial and other limitations, but a vision for the many things that can be accomplished within those limitations.

I see a city where the citizens are absolutely worthy of being investing in, worthy of being kept safe and healthy, worthy of a government that works every day, every minute to do its best to make sure every investment by the people is getting an equal or greater return, and preventing the pitfalls that can result in those investments being squandered.

I see a government structure that faces unique financial limitations like no other city in Ohio, being the only city out of 244 without a municipal income tax or a property tax for its police. I see a city that has lost over \$5 million of potential general fund income since I become mayor due to the interest rate collapse and cuts in local government funding.

But I see a city that has been remarkable in the face of adversities, one that has been proven to have spent its investments well when you compare the potential Jackson has to offer now with other cities in Ohio.

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Yes, we might not have some of the fancy digs an urban suburb of Cincinnati, Cleveland or Columbus might have, but we are a child and a product of Appalachia, a very proud product of Appalachia who has made it work to the point where our community is once again recognized as a community of progress, and not one in decline.

For those who disbelieve, the evidence is in the monetary investment, that being the income gained by the additional employment now and in the future, and that is what we sell to the world.

We have a new shopping mall with ten more retail outlets, many of them national chains that only invest in communities that are moving forward.

Clearly, the end of the year brought even more good news with the announcement the former Merillat Cabinet Factory has a new owner with a new vision for a natural resource which blesses southern Ohio, lumber.

As with any venture, it will take time to grow to its greatest potential, but potential surely lies within. In addition, there is now a cleared area of prime real estate where the former Goodyear plant once stood. The growth in this area now already demonstrated is a tremendous asset for the redevelopment of this site as well.

But all of this might not have been possible without the vision we have resonated as a city, as a government to be pro-active and be prepared for such growth.

We continue to work on improving the wastewater capacity at the southern edge of our city so this growth can be encouraged and not turned away. We hope to have by the end of this year the capacity necessary to encourage almost any industry to build and grow at the former Goodyear plant site.

One of the reasons why the Merillat site was so attractive for development and future employment was because of the rail service that was available.

From the foresight of Tom Evans and Ron Speakman to keep the shortline railroad for the city 30 years ago, to our successful efforts to acquire a new shortline operator who has made tremendous gains in less than a year, it is these long-term gains that will benefit our community, not some short-term fixes that soon disappear.

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But while it takes great time and effort to bring such visions to fruition, one can never turn its back on the everyday responsibilities our city government carries out in a most successful manner.

Whether it is keeping the citizens safe from drugs, theft and fire, making sure the utilities are operating at peak capacity when needed most or being ready to respond to the gravest of emergencies, we have without question met those challenges, many times with flying colors.

With the outstanding work of City Auditor Brett Reed and his staff, to the cooperation of our city employees, we have gone from the depths of despair with our city audits a decade ago to now being recognized as one of the best in the state, clean audits for a city that has the responsibility of tracking as much as \$40 million a year.

We responsibly track and deposit as much as \$20 million in utility payments annually, accounted for to the penny. We maintain over 112 miles; or more than one-half million feet of utility lines in our electric, water and wastewater departments, every inch which needs to be working properly to provide the expected service.

We have worked to improve our parks and recreational offerings, to promote a quality of life which furthers our efforts to enhance Jackson to the industrial world, demonstrating we are a good community to raise family.

We also work to grow our walking and bike trails to bring better health opportunities to our residents that hopefully all of our citizens can benefit from, as a healthier community is one with lower health care costs. The physical health of a community and reducing health care costs for a company is always a priority when an industry decides if Jackson is right for them.

This is just another unseen example of how everything we do is for one ultimate goal, to bring more and better jobs to our people, and give them a better quality of life.

Our community is clean as a result of the outstanding efforts of the street and alley plus garbage departments with over 50 miles of street to care for.

But maybe most of all, those who are entrusted with the safety of the community, our police and fire departments, should never be taken for granted or forgotten.

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They are the ones who, when called, most often are responding to an emergency where life and property could very well be in danger, and must respond knowing every second counts and never knowing what danger might lie ahead.

The investment we make in law enforcement to retain experienced police officers is invaluable, and I truly believe that experience and knowledge of the repeat offenders and trouble makers are a true deterrent to crime and leads to more and quicker arrests.

We truly have an outstanding fire department that can respond to any level of emergency. They are knowledgeable and experienced and their dedication is unmatched. We are blessed to have them.

Yes, many times we take for granted that our electric light will come on, the water will be clean and safe and our garbage responsibly picked up, the police and fire will respond on a moment's notice. One must always remember, though, it never happens by accident, but by a dedicated effort from the mayor's office to the newest employee to serve the citizens well.

These dedicated supervisors and employees have been an asset in keeping our costs at a minimum. As an administration, we have instilled a mindset that all employees are expected to do their very best in the most cost effective manner possible and always within budget, and with less employees than when I became mayor. They have also helped in keeping the citizen's investment at a minimum by accepting more than 50 percent less in pay increases than they received before I became mayor.

Yes, nothing succeeds by accident, it succeeds by having the right plan in place and executed by the right people.

As for me, I have been blessed to have at my side Bill Sheward as my safety-service director. As the everyday manager of the city's operations, his job is often a thankless one. But his no nonsense approach and total dedication to see the city responsibly operated at the lowest possible cost has saved our city countless amounts of dollars.

He has been responsible for bringing in millions of dollars of grants, grants that will replace bridges that could have cost us as much as \$1 million, and reviewing each city expenditure to ensure it is one that will best serve our city and citizens.

Those who work with Bill everyday know his value to our city and the money he has saved us. Thank you, Bill, for a job well done.

But as I look back with pride over the past seven years at the things we have accomplished, I am still saddened and disappointed by the number of things our financial limitations have not allowed us to complete.

We have many infrastructure items we still must address, including the future of the Memorial Building, our streets and their curbs, maintaining and improving our parks, addressing the situation with our creeks, along with maintaining the lifeblood of our community, its utility system.

When you see how well we have been able to manage our resources to date, it is clear if we would have had the \$5 million our city has lost from the potential general fund income, many of the projects we are working on now, such as the Memorial Building, our streets and curbs as well as cleaning our creeks most likely would have already been completed or well underway.

But therein truly lies the challenge, making sure we find the responsible way to ensure these projects succeed, making sure that we make every dollar count to its fullest extent, that every improvement is a lasting improvement, not some superficial band aid. We will only have enough money to do it once, that is why we have to do it right.

This past year, we took the first responsible steps to the lengthy process that will be the restoration of our treasured Memorial Building, which has served our community admirably for more than 75 years.

We completed a professional study, a mandatory first step to make sure the investments that will be made are the investments that are needed first.

Then, we invested the remainder of the money set aside responsibly, by installing a new heating and cooling system for the second floor.

We must always be mindful, though, that when you are dealing with the restoration of a public building, there are many specific, time-consuming laws that must be met.

Almost every aspect must be professionally engineered, then those plans approved by state inspectors before any actual work can begin. Then, it will be required that whoever does the work be certified in those fields, such as certified electricians, plumbers, etc. The laws approved by others make it very specific as to how these projects will be completed, and failure to follow these specifications can result in very costly penalties.

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But the success our city enjoys with these projects and others will always be as a team, and never as an individual. While the administration has set the tone for the success, it takes a total commitment and cooperation from the administration, the supervisors, the employees, the city council and the citizens, and I look forward to working with all this year to make sure 2015 is the finest year our city has ever had.

As always, I thank each of you on council for your support in the past and look forward to working with each one of you this year. So many times the issues we face are complicated and not simple, not black and white but difficult decisions where the politics and personalities must always be set aside so all of us as a team can make sure we are doing everything we can to ensure the investment of the citizens gets the greatest possible return.

This cooperative effort will be most important as we address our general fund needs and infrastructure projects, not only for 2015 but for many years to come.

Even with the additional sources of revenue discovered by Auditor Reed, our general fund still remains in a most precarious position. Maintaining current costs and programs, in addition to the added infrastructure improvements, such as the Memorial Building, streets, creeks and curbs, will be a tremendous challenge based on current projected general fund income.

All of these projects, though, are extremely important to the future of our community as it is critical in today's world to project the true image that we are a community of progress. We must never forget those who view the city of Jackson from the outside world, and hopefully will invest employment opportunities with us, truly view our city now almost solely through the eyes of the Internet.

They start by reading what others write, whether it is in the newspapers, on social media such as Facebook, and judge demographics compiled from state and census data. You will never know if some negative, inaccurate comment sends valuable jobs packing to another location, never knowing we were in the running.

When someone actually arrives to see what Jackson is like in person, they already most likely know more about us than we know about ourselves. The world is always watching, and the positive or negative images we provide and the tone we set now is what will determine our success in the future.

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If we wait for them, they will never wait for us. Everything we do now is what will set the tone for the future, whether it be today, next week or next year, but if not done today, there will be no future tomorrow.

This is why we cannot go backwards, regress or even start to dismantle our city under the demoralizing guise that everyone is broke and we just can't afford it. I know we can succeed and we are proving that every day. If we remain diligent in our quest, we can continue to build on this progress.

But it is an everyday process, a never-ending chore to make our community the most inviting community there is for jobs and future growth.

For those industries who will look at utilities, we have an abundance of water and are very reliable. We have the location, at the intersection of two major four-lane highways, as well as new schools, adequate healthcare and many other positive amenities.

But the biggest issue many times is your workforce, not only is there a qualified workforce, but the health of the workforce, and maybe most of all, are there enough drug free workers.

That is why having the most adequate, qualified police force demonstrates to the eyes of the world we are serious about fighting crime, as most estimates are 70 to 80 percent of today's crime is drug related.

And we must never forget, not even for a minute, that the drug lords from other states, who travel through Jackson every day on our four-lane highways, are looking for any opening they can have.

Our calling is to take every responsible step possible to make a better life for all who count on Jackson to be their lifeblood. It is about opening our window to the world and showing Jackson is a good place to do business, like the national chains in our new shopping mall attest to, why the Merillat building was so attractive to a new owner, why being able to address our issues in a constructive and positive manner can place us a step ahead of many communities who become mired and are controlled by petty politics and personalities.

We might be unique in many ways as a community of Appalachia, but the positives we can put forward will far outweigh the negatives if we allow the future to grow and take shape.

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But as I summarized seven years ago in my first state of the city address and is still true today, we can't let Jackson down, we just can't. If it meant so much to our forefathers to make the sacrifices they did, then it must mean that much to us to do the same for our residents of today, as well as our children of tomorrow and beyond.

If we all share in the responsibility, then we will all share in the success. This must be our direction, this must be our goal, to make Jackson the city those on the outside envy, but most of all, the place we will always love to call home.

I am very proud of Jackson, the best is truly yet to come, and it is up to us to make it happen. We can't turn back now, we just can't.

I thank you with all of my heart.