

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL
Minutes From
January 22, 2024
7:00 P.M.
REGULAR SESSION

Jackson City Council met in regular session on Monday, January 22, 2024. The pledge was led by Mr. Elliott and the prayer was given by Mrs. Colby.

President Fulks called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken as follows:

- Mr. Foster --Present
- Mr. Elliott -- Present
- Mrs. Colby -- Present
- Mr. Peters -- Present
- Mr. Newkirk - Present
- Mr. Crabtree - Absent
- Mr. Bopp -- Present

Mr. Peters made a motion to excuse Mr. Crabtree, with a second from Mr. Elliott. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

VISITORS/RECOGNITIONS~ Mayor Evans recognized the City's two newest employees. Samantha Gardner was hired as the Utility Department Specialist and Mike Lucas was hired as the Water Plant Operator.

Mayor Evans gave his Annual "State of the City" Address. It is attached to the minutes.

SIGNED IN VISITORS TO SPEAK~ None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES~ Mr. Peters made a motion, with a second from Mr. Newkirk to approve the regular council meeting minutes from January 8, 2024. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

UTILITY ~ No Report

BUDGET & FINANCE~ No Report

POLICE, FIRE, & TRAFFIC~ No Report

SERVICE COMMITTEE ~ The company that is proposing the Zoning Code updates for the city wants to present to council. A meeting is planned for Feb. 12th at 6:00PM prior to the regular council meeting. The Committee as a whole will be present for this meeting.

CITY AUDITOR/ TREASURER~ No Report

CITY ATTORNEY~ No Report

FIRE CHIEF~ No Report

POLICE CHIEF ~ No Report

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Minutes From

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MAYOR~

- Complimented the City Staff. They did an outstanding job of cleaning the streets on the season's first snow removal.
- The Boat Ramp and Kayak Launch is finished at Hammertown Lake. There will be an official Ribbon Cutting in the Spring.
- PD received a grant for Body Worn Cameras Program. Council approved the PD to apply for it. It as for almost \$70k, and will cover most of the cost of implementing the program.

SERVICE DIRECTOR~

- Recognized his Operations Managers: Ron Aldrich and Greg Farrar. He said he would not be able to accomplish the things he has for the city without these two people. He also thanked Traci Plants for all the work she has done in getting the many grants for the city. He said people make the difference and he has a great group of people working for him.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCE NO. 05-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE AND SAFETY DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE FOR SALE AND TO SELL TO THE HIGHEST AND BEST BIDDER CERTAIN EQUIPMENT NOW OWNED BY THE CITY AND USED BY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BUT NO LONGER NEEDED FOR A MUNICIPAL PURPOSE, PURSUANT TO R.C. SECTION 721.15 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

Mr. Newkirk made a motion to adopt the Ordinance, with a second from Mr. Elliott. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

Mr. Peters made a motion to suspend the rules with a second from Mr. Newkirk. A roll call vote was taken, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes
Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

A roll call vote was taken to adopt the Ordinance, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes
Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

Ordinance 05-24 Duly Adopted

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes From

January 22, 2024

7:00 P.M.

REGULAR SESSION

RESOLUTION NO. 06-24

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR PAYMENT TO THE CITY OF JACKSON PURSUANT TO A "THEN AND NOW" CERTIFICATE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$13,505.24 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

Mr. Elliott made a motion to adopt the Resolution, with a second from Mr. Bopp. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

This is to pay for city utilities. It is a "then and now" because the PO was not yet opened for 2024 when we received the bill. There was not enough left in the 2023 PO to pay the bills.

The PO was dated incorrectly. The clerk made the correction on the official copy.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to suspend the rules with a second from Mr. Peters. A roll call vote was taken, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes
Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

A roll call vote was taken to adopt the Resolution, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes
Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

Resolution 06-24 Duly Adopted

RESOLUTION NO. 07-24

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR PAYMENT TO THE CITY OF JACKSON PURSUANT TO A "THEN AND NOW" CERTIFICATE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,977.59 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL
Minutes From
January 22, 2024
7:00 P.M.
REGULAR SESSION

Mr. Elliott made a motion to adopt the Resolution, with a second from Mrs. Colby. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

This is to pay for city utilities. Same as the last resolution.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to suspend the rules with a second from Mrs. Colby. A roll call vote was taken, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes
Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

A roll call vote was taken to adopt the Resolution, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes
Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

Resolution 07-24 Duly Adopted

RESOLUTION NO. 08-24

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND SAFETY
OR HIS DESIGNEE TO FILE AN APPLICATION WITH THE OHIO VALLEY
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION FOR THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
BLOCK GRANT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

First Reading

Mr. Newkirk made a motion to adopt the Resolution, with a second from Mr. Bopp. In a voice vote, all members agreed.

This is a 10% match. There is no issue with meeting this amount. The deadline is 2/29/24.

Mr. Peters made a motion to suspend the rules with a second from Mrs. Colby. A roll call vote was taken, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL
Minutes From
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REGULAR SESSION

Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

A roll call vote was taken to adopt the Resolution, and the results are as follows:

Foster	Yes
Elliott	Yes
Colby	Yes
Peters	Yes
Newkirk	Yes
Crabtree	Absent
Bopp	Yes

Resolution 08-24 Duly Adopted

CORRESPONDENCE~ The clerk passed out the Financial Disclosure Reminders to the Council Members. This is from the Ohio Ethics Commission requiring all elected officials to file online by the deadline of May 15, 2024 to avoid penalties.

OLD BUSINESS~ None

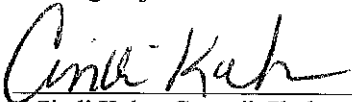
NEW BUSINESS~ President Fulks said that he and Mr. Reed were on the Tourism Board and that council needed to elect a member to serve as well. Mr. Peters has done it in the past, and is interested in remaining on the board. Mrs. Colby made a motion for Mr. Peters to continue service with a second from Mr. Newkirk. In a voice vote, all members agreed. Motion Carried.

Mr. Peters said that he was going to postpone a committee meeting to discuss DORA until the local businesses were able to discuss and be involved with it.

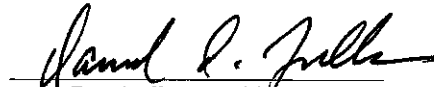
President Fulks said the chairs of each committee would remain the same as the last term. And, asked that council re-appoint Mr. Peters as the President Pro-Tem in the event that President Fulks was unable to attend a meeting. Mr. Elliott made this motion, with a second from Mrs. Colby. In a voice vote, all members agreed. Motion Carried.

Mr. Peters made a motion, with a second from Mr. Newkirk to adjourn. In a voice vote, all members agreed. Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourned 7:35 PM


Cindi Kuhn, Council Clerk

Date 2-12-24


Dan Fulks, President

Date 2/12/2024

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes From

January 22, 2024

7:00 P.M.

REGULAR SESSION

**Annual
“State of the City”
Report to Council 1-22-24**

Each new year, at the request of many of my colleagues, I try to make this annual report to council, a little shorter than the year before, and this year, after multiple revisions over the last 10 hours, I think I may have done it! So, those of you who are keeping track, start your clocks.

Each new year I also like to hold myself accountable by reminding myself, and council, of the things that (5 years ago) I hoped that, together, we would try to accomplish, If I was to become mayor.

1. First, I wanted my hometown to be managed more efficiently, more productively, and more professionally. Over the last four years, with your cooperation, we have been reorganizing and modifying our staffing to meet TODAY'S needs. These changes haven't been easy. In lieu of having supervisors over each department, we created Operations Managers to manage & guide multiple departments. By empowering and trusting the people they manage, we really can do more, with less. My management team today is less than half the size of what it used to be here. Those changes and other cutbacks in staffing have been mostly through attrition, resulting in huge savings each year, and have allowed us to fund new services and meet new demands, with less overall staff. One of these new services, our Geographical Information System (GIS) continues to develop as we add more of our assets, making all of our utility related work more efficient. Also, by creating a position that can focus on grant writing and projects, we have secured over \$11 million in grant funding to implement various infrastructure upgrades. To support existing business and promote future growth and investment, the City partners with and I serve on the Board of the Jackson County Economic Development Partnership.

2. Secondly, I wanted the city to continue providing great services to our citizens, but I wanted our utility rates to be more competitive. The last time any utility rates were increased in Jackson was over 4 years ago!
The rate cuts that we made in 2020, and the lack of any new increases, have made our city utility rates very competitive with other area providers.

Our Utility Departments: Electric, Water, Wastewater, and the Utility office.

All these departments continue to provide incredibly reliable services to our customers...and respond very quickly to problems. We will continue improving efficiency by making in-house upgrades with our own personnel. Our water and sewer upgrade projects also help us to maintain competitive utility rates. Water line replacement reduces repair costs and water losses.

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes From

January 22, 2024

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REGULAR SESSION

We have repaired and replaced over 12,000 feet of sewer lines that have made a noticeable reduction in storm water entering our wastewater plant, making those operations more efficient.

Again, yet another year with zero increases in utility rates.

Our Service Departments include street & alley, garbage, mechanics garage, and the cemetery, all continue to provide great service.

Our street and alley department continued upgrading streets, curbs and sidewalks in 2023, and we plan to do even more of that with our in house crew this year. The cemetery staff kept that 62 acres looking the best it has in years, while handling 75 burials. Rumpke has raised the landfill dumping fee substantially, but we have not raised the garbage fees we charge to our citizens.

Our mechanics in the garage continue maintaining our 120 pieces of equipment, vehicles, and work trucks.

The Auditor's Office performed nicely in 2023 and continues to receive outstanding audit reports from the state.

Our Police Dept. continues to make our town safer and reports a 50% reduction in overdose deaths, zero homes broken into, and zero robberies in 2023. This year we are very close to adding three desperately needed cruisers to the fleet that been on order for two years. We also plan to implement a Body Cam Program.

Our Fire Dept. continues to do an outstanding job of serving our community with 13 members and in 2023 reported 321 call outs.

3. My third goal was simply to clean-up and fix-up our town.

Last year our efforts to clean up included dealing with over 400 cases of ordinance violations such as high weeds & trash, junk vehicles & illegal dumping...and we have partnered with the Land Bank to complete 11 building demolitions, and we have 9 more pending grant approval for this year. We resurfaced the parking and basketball courts at Hillcrest park and added striping for pickleball. We constructed a new boat ramp and kayak launch at Hammertown Lake

We paved over 8 miles of 40 different streets and partnered with ODOT to finally pave East Broadway St. Our plan is to repair and pave every street in town. That's about 52 miles of streets plus the parks & parking lots. It's going to take 8-10 years to get them all, and then it will be time to start over. We have replaced almost 3 miles of curbs, many sidewalks, and working with the tree commission we planted 51 trees last year and plan to plant over 100 trees this year.

These efforts, all over town, in every neighborhood, are bringing back community pride, to our city.

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So as I begin my 5th year as Mayor, I recommit to these same goals, and we are going to continue doing all the good things we've been doing for the last four years. But we need to do more!

The Income Tax

This November, I plan to have the City income tax on the ballot for renewal. The city income tax provided us over \$4.2 million in revenue in 2023. Remember, most of that income comes from people who live outside the city. And much of that tax if it wasn't collected here, would just go to another city. We must continue the income tax so we can continue making all these improvements.

We have been, and will continue to, use the income tax exactly like we said we would. Up to half the tax revenue is and will continue to be used to fund the police department. This will provide for almost all of the over \$2 million dollar police budget this year. I plan to revise the tax language to allow the tax to be used for police and fire departments.

The remaining tax revenue is and will continue to be used to fund infrastructure repair and replacement. The income tax allowed us to budget for over \$2 million dollars of additional infrastructure work for 2024, most of which will once again be street paving, curbs & sidewalks, and water & sewer line work. Without the income tax, these projects would not be possible.

Even the grant funded projects usually need income tax money to meet the match funds required

And even with all the improvements we've accomplished thus far, we're really just getting a good start addressing the vast needs of the city

City Buildings

Most of our city owned buildings are in need of repairs or replacement too, and we need to start addressing them. We have applied for multiple sources of grant funding to help repair or replace the memorial building, and plan to advance the planning for that this year. Also in the next couple of years we will be planning to improve or replace other buildings that are long overdue in our other departments too

Flooding and Parks

We have received two different grants to help us try to mitigate flooding along Salt Lick Creek and the city parks. Grants through FEMA and ODNR's AMLER funding total \$2.4 Million Dollars. All of our parks except Hillcrest, are on the banks of Salt Lick Creek or its tributaries. We want to continue improving and expanding opportunities for outdoor recreation for our citizens but first we need to mitigate the frequency and severity of flooding in our parks and neighborhoods

JACKSON CITY COUNCIL

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Other

- Other things on the agenda for this year include:
- We are looking at going to city owned trash cans for our garbage service.
- Updating of the 40 yr old zoning regulations.
- Planning for repainting of the apple tower.
- Upgrading our outdated computer systems.
- Complete overhaul of the city website.
- Bringing back a Parks & Recreation director to help facilitate better access to our pool and other recreational facilities.

There are a lot of great things going on in our city, and a lot of things yet to do.

I want to conclude, with these thoughts:

1. Our purpose here, is to guide and govern the process of providing services for our citizens. That is why we are here.
2. Secondly, The Money we spend here, to provide those services, comes from them, in the form of taxes and utility revenues. We need to be good stewards of those dollars and spend it wisely and efficiently.
3. The State of our City is good, very good, and we have a lot of momentum, going in the right direction. We just need to keep it going.

In closing, I enjoy being your mayor, .but I'm just the mayor... Everyone at this table is part of our team. And working together, we will continue to improve our great little city.

Thank you, to each of you.

Randy Evans, Mayor

City of Jackson

1-22-2024

