

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Jacksonville Advertising and Promotion Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission, on Tuesday, February 23, 2023. Chairman Roger Sundermeier called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Council Member Reddie Ray delivered the invocation and led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance".

**ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Sandra Patel, Jai Patel, William Fagan, Council Members Reddie Ray and Joy Kinman answered roll call. Chairman Roger Sundermeier also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (6), Absent (0), one open position.

Others present for the meeting included: Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, City Attorney Stephanie Friedman, Mayor Jeff Elmore, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Marlo Jackson, Parks and Recreation Events and Marketing Manager Megan Tharp, Chamber of Commerce President and Economic Developer Paul Harvel, Chamber of Commerce Vice-President Kathy Perez and Mrs. Michelle Elmore.

**MINUTES:**

**Council Member Reddie Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Joy Kinman, to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2022 meeting as presented. Motion Carried.**

**FINANCIALS:**

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel presented the financial report for January, reporting assets of \$1,611,421.00 with total liabilities and fund balance of \$1,611,421.00. She reported \$37.00 of investment income, explaining revenues received in January are for the month of December and posted to December 2022. She reported expenditures of \$12,141.00; with an excess of expenditures over revenues in the amount of \$12,104.00. She explained month-to-date and year-to-date calculations are based on 2023 sales; having none to report she reviewed the December revenues reported. She explained the figure is the amount of sales reported which is used to compute the tax due. December hotel/motel gross revenues reported were \$336,789.00, which is an increase of seven percent regarding the year-to-date comparison and a one hundred and forty-seven percent increase when compared to the same month last year. She suspects the difference from 2021 to 2022 is due to revenues not recorded on their spreadsheet, saying she believes it is an error on the December 2021 figure. Prepared food tax gross revenues reported were \$4,343,032.00, which is a one percent increase regarding the year-to-date comparison and a nine percent increase when compared to the same month last year. Overall gross revenues reported were \$4,679,821.00, which is a one percent increase regarding the year-to-date comparison and a thirteen percent increase when compared to the same month last year.

**Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Kinman, to approve the financial report for January as presented. Motion Carried.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Election of Officers**

Recording Secretary Wilmoth noted the officers for the Commission are Chairman Roger Sundermeier and Council Member/Vice-Chairman Reddie Ray.

**Council Member Ray moved to vote by acclimation.**

Chairman Sundermeier called for additional nominations.

Council Member Ray offered the definition of acclimation is “the same person” without change.

**Commissioner William Fagan seconded the motion, to re-appoint Chairman Roger Sundermeier and Council Member/Vice Chairman Reddie Ray. Motion Carried.**

**B. Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Report**

Chamber of Commerce President and Economic Developer Paul Harvel stated he lives by the phrase “relationships first, success follows” explaining he works harder on building relationships. He then reviewed the quarterly report (on file in the Recording Secretary’s office). He said they would be attending the International Council of Shopping Centers’ convention in Las Vegas and noted attendance at the same convention held in Dallas. He explained the purpose of attending the conventions is to make connections. He said there is a group of people working to put sites together to get them certified, adding it takes a lot to get them certified and money. He noted there are eight or nine certified sites in Arkansas with a goal to have two certified sites in Jacksonville. They are going to be working on a competitive communities’ designation, which is provided by the AEDC, two certified sites, and chamber accreditation; all three will bring attention to the city with money from AEDC and different sources.

**Council Member Kinman moved, seconded by Council Member Ray, to approve the Chamber of Commerce quarterly report. Motion Carried.**

**C. Update Discretionary Expenditure Chamber of Commerce Business Directory Ad**

Chairman Sundermeier said a request was received to run the Commission’s usual ad in the Chamber of Commerce Business Directory as has been done previously. Due to a time/space issue the Commission was unable to discuss in a formal meeting so he utilized his discretionary funds for the expenditure of an ad purchase.

**D. Nomination to fill vacant seat**

Chairman Sundermeier noted there is a vacant seat to be filled by a representation from the restaurant industry; a pretty substantial list of individuals has been vetted without success and the seat still needs to be filled.

In response to a question from Council Member Kinman, Chairman Sundermeier replied the owner of Romas has been contacted and they were not interested in serving. The owner of Titan Nutrition was brought to his attention recently, expressing the need for a list of people to discuss and contact.

It was clarified the individual must reside in Pulaski County.

Council Member Kinman suggested the owner of Keith & Co.

Chairman Sundermeier noted the previous administration had reached out to some owners.

She then suggested the owners of First Street Café.

Chairman Sundermeier asked Recording Secretary Wilmoth to compile/send a list of business owners contacted for review and further discussion.

**E. Monthly rental of static side of digital billboard located in parking lot of FAB&T/Wal-Mart branch (near Starbucks)**

Chairman Sundermeier explained Lamar Outdoor had a billboard on the side of the freeway by the old Shipley Donuts, basically the old Pizza Hut, location. Due to highway construction, they had to tear down the structure. By State code, if they did not install another billboard in close proximity to the former structure, they would lose the billboard license; explaining there are only a certain number of licenses issued in the area. Lamar Outdoor representatives visited with Larry Wilson (FAB&T) regarding the placement of a billboard at the branch located by Wal-Mart. It is a digital billboard on one side and a static billboard on the other side explaining, static is the old-style billboard where vinyl graphics are changed periodically. He thought it was a great opportunity for the city to promote events and information on the opposite side of town. Lamar would offer a substantial discount on rental which would be \$450.00 monthly (normally \$800.00 per month) and \$350.00 per vinyl. It is a good opportunity to get a really good rate on outdoor advertising space and would like to discuss and entertain a motion to enter into a yearly lease agreement with Lamar.

Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House said they have not had billboard advertising for years, explaining it was not cost effective.

Chairman Sundermeier said having a billboard on this side of the freeway would be really good for the city, especially with FestiVillle moving downtown and getting that word out, there is a lot of opportunity to share the message with a lot of people and it is something he would like to see the Commission engage in.

In response to a question from Council Member Kinman, Chairman Sundermeier replied it would need to be changed for the larger events in the fall, but may not need to be changed as often in the first or second quarters.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fagan, Parks and Recreation Events and Marketing Manager Megan Tharp said it is a good location, explaining the banners they have right now are by Fire Station three and are great when seen. Static banners are difficult because they have to be out for a long period of time and if there is not strategic planning on when to change them, they could be up for two to three weeks after an event. The benefits are the good location, saying if they work strategically to get them out at proper times it could be quality of life and events marketing. There is good and bad as billboards are hard to read, explaining they occasionally get digital billboard groups reaching out to them for sponsorships but digital billboards flash quickly.

Chairman Sundermeier suggested trying it for a year and working together on an editorial calendar regarding installation and time frame. There should be no issues with installation as the billboard is on concrete. They could work with Lamar regarding what is needed and when; saying they could probably create the graphics and send to them.

Parks and Recreation Events and Marketing Manager Tharp questioned if the cost included Lamar designing the graphics or if they would need to design the graphics and submit to Lamar; explaining sometimes Lamar will do graphics on their end.

Chairman Sundermeier questioned if there was a charge for that, explaining everything the bank does he designs.

Commissioner Jai Patel stated there is an additional charge for graphics.

Chairman Sundermeier said if there was a way to save money, by not having Lamar design the graphics, that could be figured out.

Council Member Ray offered he likes the billboard, noting there is another item to be added to the agenda and questioning if there would be a conflict.

Chairman Sundermeier suggested the Commission discuss it next.

**Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Commissioner Fagan, to approve the lease agreement with Lamar Outdoor for one year in the amount of \$450.00 monthly.**

Council Member Kinman questioned if the term would begin in March.

Chairman Sundermeier replied it would be twelve months once it is ready to go and has been informed the structure would be ready to go in mid-March so plan on mid-March to March 2024.

City Attorney Stephanie Friedman requested to review the contact prior to it being signed.

**Motion Carried.**

**Council Member Ray moved, seconded by Council Member Kinman, to suspend the rules and place the item of digital signage on the agenda. Motion Carried.**

Mayor Jeff Elmore informed the Commission a request was submitted for in town digital signage, explaining seven separate ones were submitted instead of one inclusive request due to the total amount and to allow for full and/or partial funding. The first request is for a replacement sign at City Hall which would replace the existing structure. It would provide the capability of actual controllable signage that is cloud based and can be programmed remotely, so certain people could have access to it to put up anything pertaining to the city. The sign would be used to advertise Parks events, emergency alerts such as “tornado shelter opening”, and other multiple avenues that events can be advertised, public safety issues, and various other things pertaining to the city. The other requests are for other planned signs throughout town; the second request is the largest in dollar amount and size, which would be located at the Firestone location on Main Street and would replace the twenty-foot banner and be a permanent structure/sign for that side of town. The other signs would be at locations that presently have banner signage.

Chairman Sundermeier questioned where the other signs would be located.

Mayor Elmore replied one of the signs would be located on John Harden Drive beside Fire Station 3, explaining the exact placement would need to be determined based on highway construction. Another sign would be located on Marshall Road by the Public Safety building and at the entrance to Dupree Park for everyone coming off of the highway to advertise events. A sign would be placed at the corner of Graham and J.P. Wright Loop Road and in front of the Community Center. He reiterated the signs could be controlled remotely on a cloud-based system so approved personnel could make changes at any point and time. They could also place notices such as “trash is running on schedule”, saying there are multiple reasons to add these signs to better the city and provide more avenues of communication that is easily changed. The most important signs that he would like to see approved are requests one and two. He noted the quote was received from Action Signs in town.

Commissioner Fagan questioned if this went out for bid.

Mayor Elmore replied that it has not gone out for bid, it is just a quote from them. In doing that, there is local service, a five-year warranty, and tax dollars.

In response to a question from Council Member Kinman, Mayor Elmore replied the first sign is in front of City Hall, the second is on Main Street in front of Firestone, the third is at Dupree Park, the fourth is located at Fire Station 3, the fifth is on Marshall Road at the Public Safety building, the sixth is at the Community Center, and the seventh is located on Graham and J.P. Wright Loop Roads.

Chairman Sundermeier questioned if there would be a benefit to placing one at the Martin Street Recreation Center. He noted there are several downtown, and on the outskirts however; does not see anything other than the old channel lock marquee on First Street, adding it may be a great spot for a digital sign and could replace another sign elsewhere.

Mayor Elmore said they are not locked into the placements, explaining some are negotiable while others are needed where specially requested. If there is a need to add one without an additional request, it could be worked out.

Commissioner Jai Patel asked if additional quotes could be obtained from other companies.

Mayor Elmore replied affirmatively, saying it would be not be a problem.

Commissioner Jai Patel offered there may be additional cost savings.

It was noted the next closest sign company would be Ace Sign in Bryant.

Commissioner Fagan offered any sign work he does is generally with a company from Hot Springs, explaining local companies are well overpriced from his experience. Getting bids from other companies would probably save quite a bit of money.

Chairman Sundermeier commented he does not dispute/argue that but does want to think of the optics when it comes time, that a business is asked to be part of the community and then they are not chosen first, adding the optics are going to be a big challenge.

Director House stated if this is run through the Parks Department they will have to follow purchasing guidelines and this will have to go out for bid. He noted even if they are a Jacksonville company, they will get preferred bidding, saying they could be five percent higher and still get awarded the bid because of location. They would have to follow purchasing guidelines, this was just to get an idea of cost.

Commissioner Fagan said he gets it, saying getting multiple bids just keeps everyone honest. He is all for bringing money into the community, for a community company, but if they are bidding well over what everyone else is why are they doing that, which is his standpoint on it.

Mayor Elmore stated with any competitive business, they may be willing to adjust their costs.

Chairman Sundermeier questioned if this is a significant and important thing for the Commission to take on, saying price could be bid and discussed later. However, from the standpoint of being able to get the message to the community effectively and make people more aware, which is a common theme "I never knew this", "I never saw this", there would be no excuse, if you don't see it, it is on you because it is going to be out in front of you. Is there agreement of a viable project needing further exploration to bring to fruition is the victory for tonight.

Mayor Elmore offered the way it was presented was to provide the option of funding.

Chairman Sundermeier stated if the Commission were to fund the signage for City Hall and the Firestone location in one phase; the next locations the following year, and then fill in the gaps in the third year. A stepped measured approach would be the best way.

Commissioner Fagan concurred.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Chairman Sundermeier read the announcements of the Senior Wellness and Activity Center “A Taste of New Orleans” lunch and the Museum of Military History’s Night at the Victory Canteen” events.

**ADJORNMENT:**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.