

**CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.**

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING - CITY HALL - #1 MUNICIPAL DRIVE

The City Council of the City of Jacksonville, Arkansas met in a regular session on January 19, 2023 at the regular meeting place of the City Council. Council Member Bolden delivered the invocation and Mayor Elmore led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag.

ROLL CALL: City Council Members: Dietz, Bolden, McCleary, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Kinman, and Rains answered ROLL CALL. Mayor Elmore also answered ROLL CALL declaring a quorum. PRESENT TEN (10) ABSENT (0).

Others present for the meeting were: City Attorney Stephanie Friedman, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House, Police Chief Brett Hibbs, Fire Chief Alan Laughy, City Engineer Adam Whitlow, Human Resource Director Charlette Nelson, IT Director Emily Osment, Lieutenant Ryan Wright, Wastewater Utility General Manager Thea Hughes, Water Superintendent Jake Short, Jerry Sanders, Fred Belote, John Ferrell, and Addie Gibson.

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES: Mayor Elmore presented the minutes of the regularly scheduled City Council meeting of January 5, 2023 for approval and/or correction at the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Twitty that the minutes of the regularly scheduled City Council meeting of December 15, 2022 be APPROVED. MOTION CARRIED.

CONSENT AGENDA: REGULAR MONTHLY REPORT/FIRE DEPARTMENT

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Ray to approve the regular monthly report for December 2022 from the Jacksonville Fire Department, reflecting a fire loss of \$199,450.00 and a savings total of \$2,074,550.00.

REGULAR MONTHLY REPORT/POLICE DEPARTMENT

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Ray to approve the Regular Monthly Report for December 2022 regarding annual crime statistical comparisons.

REGULAR MONTHLY REPORT/CODE ENFORCEMENT

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Ray to approve the regular monthly report as presented for December 2022.

Assigned Calls	53		
<u>Self-Initiated Calls</u>	<u>161</u>		
Follow Ups	214	Apartment Complexes Inspected	0
Three Day Notices	69	Red Tags Issued	5
Seven Day Letters	112	Search Warrants	0
Citations Issued	1	Rehabbed Structures	2
Vehicles Tagged	40	Structures Condemned	0
Vehicles Towed	4	Demolition by City	2

**CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.**

Garbage Cans Tagged	0	Demolition by Owner	1
Basketball Goals	0	Parking Violations	0
Structures Inspected	214	Grass Mowed	0

ROLL CALL: Council Member: Dietz, Bolden, McCleary, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Kinman, and Rains voted AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

WATER DEPARTMENT: 2022 Annual Report by Water Department Superintendent Jake Short

Water Department Superintendent Jake Short offered the following report:

He expressed on behalf of the Water Commission he is am pleased to provide City Council with the 2022 Annual Water Works report. He reported that Jacksonville Water Works had zero water quality violations and has once again completed the year within budget while providing the citizens of Jacksonville with quality water and services that they not only deserve, but have come to expect.

The projects completed during 2022 includes the installation of 9,461 linear feet of pipe, 12 additional fire hydrants, and 40 valves. At the end of 2022 we had 11,432 water meters in the water distribution system which includes 79 new water services.

Customer service continues to be a top priority of Jacksonville Water Works staff. We continue to take online payments from our customers through our secure internet site. In the year 2022, we received 30,833 online payments totaling \$2,953,709. We continue to receive many positive comments from our customers using this updated service.

Water Production increased in 2022. On December 24, 2022 we reached a peak demand for the year of 6.7 million gallons. This is well below the previous year's peak water flow of 10.2 million gallons which occurred on February 18, 2021. The total water production for the year was I .328 billion gallons, which was a 4.7% increase from the previous year. Our average daily water flow for the year was 3.64 million gallons per day.

JWW currently operates and maintains close to I .2 million linear feet of water distribution lines, 800 fire hydrants, 5,250,000 gallons of storage capacity, and provides an average of 3,500,000 gallons of potable water per day to the residents of Jacksonville. JWW not only provides reliable water service to a population of over 29,000 people in the Jacksonville area, but also delivers wholesale water to LRAFB and three other wholesale customers.

2022 was JWW's fourth full year serving as the privatized owner of the LRAFB distribution system. This 50-year contract requires JWW to operate, maintain, repair, upgrade, and improve the LRAFB water system. The LRAFB water distribution system includes approximately 290,000 linear feet (If) of pipe, 507 hydrants, 3 pump stations, and 1,350,000 gallons of storage. The system provides an average of 574,000 gallons of potable water per day and serves

**CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.**

approximately 12,000 people. In acquiring these facilities, JWW has employed the operations and maintenance strategies that have proven successful with Jacksonville's water distribution system and blended those with procedures familiar to the LRAFB system. It is important to note that JWW operates this system independent from its own. There are many advantages to this contract, but one key benefit to privatization is that by ridding itself of utilities, LRAFB can now focus on its specific mission requirements instead of water system upgrades and repairs. JWW not only benefits from increased employment and from economies of scale through combined utilization of fixed, general and overhead costs, but it also has gained a closer relationship with the planning and expansion efforts on LRAFB and is able to integrate planning for both JWW and base customers alike. I am pleased to report that in calendar year 2022 the LRAFB system also reported zero water quality violations.

The projects completed on LRAFB during 2022 includes the installation of 16,524 If of PVC water mains, 56 valves, and 29 fire hydrants as part of Phase II of renewal and replacement work in Military Family Housing. The JWW LRAFB Maintenance Team also oversaw the scheduled maintenance of 617 valves and 353 fire hydrants in the distribution system, conducted training for LRAFB personnel as needed, and repaired 7 leaks as part of routine activities.

This work was accomplished with a workforce of 27 employees. We currently have 9 employees licensed by the Arkansas Department of Health to properly operate the water system with 4 additional staff members currently working toward the completion of their water operator license to further enhance the professionalism of the Jacksonville Water Works team.

We appreciate your confidence and continued support in working with the Jacksonville Water Commission to ensure that our City will have a safe and adequate supply of high-quality water for the future growth of the Great City of Jacksonville today, tomorrow and for many years to come.

WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT: 2022 Annual Report by Wastewater Utility Manager Thea Hughes

Wastewater Utility Manager Thea Hughes offered the following report:

She acknowledged 2022 Sewer Commissioners: Fred Belote, Chair; John Ferrell, Vice Chair; Eddie Porter, Secretary; Jerry Sanders and Jeff Elmore.

This has been a year of busy construction. Planning and design of three projects has been going on for 3-5 years, and suddenly all three projects hit at the same time. We are moving sewer lines down Hwy 67/167 for the widening of the highway. We are moving sewer lines on Loop Road for the bridge overpass, and we finally started the renovations to the treatment plant.

The two sewer relocation projects have been a challenge due to the location along the freeway, and due to material shortages. The Loop Road project has been at a stand-still for several months waiting for pipe delivery. The Hwy.

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.

67/167 project is in progress now, but continues to hit obstacles with conflicting utilities. We are truly appreciative of the cooperation we have from the local businesses whose parking lots and drive-thrus have been disturbed.

At the treatment plant, we completed our 27th consecutive year without a permit violation. We are currently operating the plant with about ½ maximum capacity due to construction, so meeting permit during construction is becoming more and more difficult. Our plant operators are adamant about keeping our perfect record going, so they have made it a personal goal to try to operate a live, active plant in the midst of major construction.

The treatment plant renovations consist of replacing 35-year-old aerators and other equipment, replacing sand filters with new cloth media filters, replacing antiquated electrical gear, and implementing a SCADA control system. This will be the 4th major renovation to the treatment plant since its installation in 1987, but the first time to replace much of this equipment. Specific information about the plant upgrades and some pictures can be found on pages 7-8.

Our Technical Services staff handle investigation, cleaning and televising, and oversight of all construction. The report for that department is found on pages 3-4 where you can find details about their activities for the year.

The Collection Systems staff is responsible for repair and replacement of existing sewer line and manholes, and construction of new lines. Their report is found on page 5.

The Operations department is responsible for operating the treatment plant, running process control tests in the laboratory to ensure we are within permit regulations, assisting our industries with their wastewater treatment, and maintaining and repairing all plant maintenance and vehicles. Their reports are found on pages 6-8. Once again, there were no violations from ADEQ inspections of the plant and solid waste monofill, and no violations of our biomonitoring testing.

The Administration department handles financial management, personnel, purchasing, and clerical support. Their report is found on pages 9-10.

Not only was this year filled with construction, but a few pretty significant awards were earned by our employees. These achievements can be found on pages 10-12 along with pictures of the recipients.

- At the local level, David St. Clair received the Dick Morris Employee Excellence Award given to one outstanding wastewater employee annually.
- At the national level, Mike Overstreet received the Water Environment Federation's Hatfield Award which is given to acknowledge one expert treatment plant operator in each of the 50 states.

**CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.**

- At the state level, Luke Avery received the Arkansas Water Environment's Collection System Award which acknowledges one employee in the state who demonstrates excellence in maintaining a sewer collection system.
- Also at the state level, Thea Hughes was inducted into the Arkansas Water Works & Water Environment Federation's Hall of Fame, which is a lifetime achievement award in the water and wastewater industry.

Employee Licenses & Certifications:

- Utility employees hold the following licenses:
 - o 9 Collection System certifications
 - o 21 Wastewater Operator's licenses, with 6 being Class IV (highest)
 - o 5 Solid Waste licenses
 - o 7 Plumbing Inspector licenses
 - o 13 CDL licenses

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

STREET DEPARTMENT:

SANITATION DEPARTMENT:

PARKS & RECREATION:

PLANNING COMMISSION:

COMMITTEE(S):

GENERAL: a. DISCUSSION Former Jacksonville Elementary School building

Council Member Rains recalled over the past couple of years she has been asked periodically by constituents about the former Jacksonville Elementary School. She then requested Lieutenant Ryan Wright to give an overview of what is going on there. She noted that the lease agreement was included in the City Council packets, pointing out it is for 99 years, for \$1.00 annually, that the City has for the building owned by Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD).

Lieutenant Wright stated over the past couple of years, since he has taken over Code Enforcement, they, along with the Parks and Recreation Department, have had to deal with the building. He explained, as it stands right now, the building is falling apart, adding that they typically go in once a month to search and remove the homeless out. He mentioned there have been numerous fires set inside by them, noting that it has become almost impossible to keep them out since as soon as they put boards up, they rip them right back down. He shared that they have had several police calls for people going inside, along with a possible deceased person found there. He confirmed it is becoming a problem with the community, as far as the homeless going in, and with the status of the building, someone could get hurt, because it is in bad shape. When Council Member Rains inquired about asbestos, he replied from what he understands, that is why the building has not been torn down because of the large amount present that would cost quite a bit of money to remove it before it can be destroyed.

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.

Council Member Rains believes 2012 was the last time it was looked into to renovate the structure and bring it to hospitable conditions, and the estimate was approximately \$250,000.00.

Council Member Mashburn suggested giving the building back to PCSSD and letting them tear it down since the City cannot pay \$250,000.00 for asbestos removal, and then go back and tear it down.

Council Member Rains brought up that the cost assessment was made prior to the fires that have taken place inside, the copper being stripped from the entire structure, along with tons of other things that have gone on since the 2012 time period, so there is going to be a lot more fees encumbered than just \$250,000.00 to get this building restored.

When Council Member Traylor inquired, City Attorney Friedman confirmed the City cannot tear it down since they are only leasing the building and do not own it, but they are responsible for maintenance and repairs. She mentioned possibly being able to terminate the lease with a 90-day notice.

Lieutenant Wright related as far as feasibly making the repairs and keeping the building secure, they cannot, because as soon as they board it up, someone takes them right back down.

Council Member Sansing recalled in the past, Habitat for Humanity was interested in the location as possibly building houses for the future, but for that to happen, the City of Jacksonville has to own the property. He stressed that the taxpayer does not need to take the hit, adding the last estimate he heard for asbestos abatement was a little after 2012 and was \$400,000.00. He surmised a possible solution that can be discussed is to see if PCSSD will pay for the asbestos abatement, and then once the City gets the title to it, the City of Jacksonville, and whatever entity that is interested in the property, could consider tearing the rest of it down. He explained if PCSSD does not want to help the City, the City gives it back to them completely where they deal with it 100%, since they cannot give it to us as is, if we will not take it as is. He noted there may be other entities that would be interested in doing something there, but he personally likes the Habitat for Humanity idea because of the Ward. He reiterated that taxpayers do not need to take the hit for taking out asbestos that is the result of years of neglect by PCSSD and Jacksonville. He affirmed they need to step up and take the asbestos out of there, and if they do not want the property, give it to the City and we can go from there.

Council Member Bolden stated he cannot stand the building being over there, however, the City has no power over it. He pointed out that PCSSD owns it and is responsible for it, assuring they will not take it back because it is an eyesore to them, so our hands are locked.

Council Member Traylor brought up that they would not have a choice; if the City terminates the lease, they do not get to say "no you can't."

**CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.**

Council Member Sansing then read paragraph 15 of the lease agreement, stating "Termination: Lessee may terminate this Lease at any time by giving prior written notice to Lessor not less than Ninety (90) days prior to the stated date of surrender and then surrendering the premises to Lessor on the stated date."

Council Member Bolden moved, seconded by Council Member Twitty to terminate the lease agreement between the Pulaski County Special School District and the City of Jacksonville regarding 108 South Oak Street.

Council Member Traylor requested City Attorney Friedman to review and make sure there is nothing in the lease that says the City will owe them a lot of money for a building that is not in the same condition it was when we got it.

City Attorney Friedman noted she does not know what the condition was like when the City signed the lease, but there is no clause in the agreement, as far as termination or returning the property back to them, that would cost or penalize the City.

Lieutenant Wright added if it does get given back to PCSSD, it gives the City the ability to go through the Code Enforcement and condemnation process. He explained they could send them the notices, cite them if needed, and possibly take it to the Nuisance Board or to court to sue them and force them to tear it down.

City Attorney Friedman concurred.

ROLL CALL: Council Member: Dietz, Bolden, McCleary, Sansing, Ray, Mashburn, Traylor, Twitty, Kinman, and Rains voted AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

b. STATE OF THE CITY by Mayor Elmore

Mayor Elmore presented the State of the City address:

I am extremely honored and excited to be elected Mayor of the community that I love, Jacksonville. It is not a responsibility that I take lightly and will work tirelessly to innovate new ways to grow our city, inform the citizens of our city, and improve the aspects of our city that need attention. I wholeheartedly believe that the best years for Jacksonville are ahead of us. With a collaborative spirit between my office and the members of our city council, our community can be one that we can all love to call home. Progress is not an overnight endeavor. Patience, persistence, and diligence will need to be the tools that we use to build our community.

My goal with this address, as well as in the future, is to profile the successes of our city. We live in a society where shortcomings are easy to find and quick to be pointed out. I want to let our citizens also know the good that is happening within the borders of our city. A community is both a feeling and a tangible entity. I want to foster the feeling of community with a hope that positive stories and success will promote more success.

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2023
6:00 P.M. - 6:32 P.M.

As you can see, 2022 brought a lot of positive projects and energy to our city. But our work is not done. We cannot be satisfied with past success. We must look forward. The construction project on 67/167 will be a temporary headache but the finished product will open new possibilities to Jacksonville that we have yet to realize. Unity Health will open this year and provide a world-class medical facility in our community. The Jacksonville North Pulaski School District will continue to grow, thrive, and educate scholars that will, hopefully one day, return to Jacksonville to be the next generation of business and community leaders. I am excited and encouraged for the future of Jacksonville. I hope that you will join me in this excitement and be a part of the greatest chapter in our City's history.

APPOINTMENTS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT: Without objection, Mayor Elmore adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:32 p.m. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully,

Susan L. Davitt
City Clerk-Treasurer

MAYOR JEFF ELMORE