



Jonesboro Advertising and Promotion Commission

Minutes: July 12, 2023

City Council Chambers

2:30 p.m.

Attending: Jerry Morgan, David McClain, Tom Fielder, Chris Gibson, Mallory Hurt White, and Tracy Owens

Absent: Dan Das

Chairman Jerry Morgan called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. announcing that an official quorum was present. Mr. Morgan announced that Mr. Bill Hurt has served on the Commission for 19 years, but has retired from the Commission. He introduced Mr. Hurt's replacement, Ms. Mallory Hurt White and welcomed her to the Commission. Ms. White is the manager of the 501 Restaurant. Mr. Morgan reviewed the minutes of the meeting held April 3, 2023, which were included in the meeting materials. Mr. Gibson moved to approve the minutes and Mr. McClain seconded. The minutes were approved as presented.

Financial Report:

Morgan reported on the A&P Current Cash Position.

Current cash position of the three revenue sources:

3% Hotel Tax – \$446,374

1% Hotel Tax - \$443,107

2% Prepared Food Tax - \$3,983,050

There is a slight trend downward from 2022 and we are watching that closely.

Mr. Gibson moved to accept the financial report and Mr. McClain seconded. Financials were approved as presented.

New Business:

Mr. Morgan asked for approval of the 2024 Grant application. Mr. Gibson moved and Mr. McClain seconded. Motion was approved. This application will be posted on the TourJonesboro.com website by September 1, 2023. It will also be posted on the City of Jonesboro website at the same time. Organizations wishing to apply for grants must have the applications submitted by October 1, 2023 to be considered.

One grant that was approved since the last meeting went to USA TF Track. It was a grant to fund a large track meet originally scheduled to be held in Missouri. There was a problem with the track, and they requested assistance to move it to Jonesboro. The Commission awarded

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\$12,520 to make this possible. The event was very well attended, and bringing it to the Jonesboro facilities was considered so successful they have planned to move it to Jonesboro the next two years. The track coach at ASU was very actively involved, as it was held at the ASU track facility. This funding was made possible from the Miscellaneous expenses budget item.

Morgan asked Kevin Hodges, Chairman of the Sports Complex steering committee to update the Commission on the progress of the committee. Mr. Hodges reported that the committee has been very busy. The architecture firm has been engaged. Nine town meetings were held with about 200 people from the community attending. Spirited debates concerning competitive vs recreation swimming were up for discussion. Other activities such as cricket were introduced for discussion. Many venues for Sports facilities were presented and voted on to gain consensus on the "style" of facility we want here in Jonesboro. Mr. Hodges showed pictures of styles and facilities being considered. Basketball and volleyball slides were presented showing how the different courts could be converted to make it very flexible. After discussion, Hodges reported that consensus was consistent across all town hall meetings. The process is taking a little longer than anticipated, but "we want to get it "right." Hodges asked for approval to engage Eastern Sports Management for \$45,000.00 to assist in getting the right equipment and other necessities for the operation of the facility. Morgan stated that the steering committee has approved the request and recommends it to the full Commission today. The pricing was discussed and was determined to be very reasonable. Mr. Gibson and Mr. McClain seconded after Mr. Morgan presented the recommendation to approve the engagement of ESM. Recommendation was approved.

Hodges then presented a diagram of a Regional Detention Pond proposed on the site of the future Sportsplex. Hammerhead will develop and maintain a new location for this Regional Retention Pond. This project will also need to be approved by the City of Jonesboro. Morgan asked for any questions. This project will continue under review for the present time. Mr. Morgan thanked Kevin Hodges for all his work on this project.

The Mitchell Williams law firm's representative Michelle Longwood gave a presentation to address the best legal options for financing the Sport Complex. At least a portion of the complex will need to be financed. Who has the authority to borrow the money for this process? The City of Jonesboro or the Public Facilities Board of the City would be the two options at this time. She recommended The Public Facilities Board borrow the money needed for the project. This will clarify that this money is operated and maintained outside the normal working budget of the City of Jonesboro. The Public Facilities Board should also be the owner of the Sports Complex. The A&P Commission should be the operator of the facility and make it available to the community. We are a governmental entity so tax exempt financing would be available if determined that was the most efficient way. An issue of bonds was discussed. A construction loan or drawdown bond structure was recommended by the law firm. The benefit would be an amount of money with the ability to borrow as needed. The A&P Commission would lease the property from the Public Facilities Board. There is not a direct pledge of sales tax money with this structure. The Public Facilities Board is the owner of the property with the A&P Commission leasing the property and

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paying rent. The A&P Commission will maintain all operations and financials of the facility. Legal and financial representatives will be in place to orchestrate the financing ensuring transparency and oversight of all components of this process. The bids process will be totally transparent with an underwriter in the position of accepting the bids. The volunteer Commissioners will not be involved in this bids process. The next step is deciding to accept this recommendation, and moving forward to determine if this is acceptable to all involved. A motion to accept the recommendation and move forward to work with the Public Facilities Board was made by Mr. Gibson and seconded by Mr. McClain. Motion was approved.

Danny Kapalas from the City Parks and Recreation Department requested additional funding to help with a Parks Conference being held in Jonesboro in September. Mr. Morgan suggested Mr. Kapalas come back when they know how much they will need.

Chairman Morgan called for further questions and there being none, Mr. Gibson moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McClain. Motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Submitted by

Christy Appleton
Administrative Officer