

Minutes of the City Council Meeting
Jennings City Hall
March 27, 2017 - 7:00 pm

The two thousand three hundred sixtieth meeting of the Jennings City Council was held on Monday, March 27, 2017 at 7 p.m. at Jennings City Hall.

Special Recognition: Jennings Resident: Mrs. Ora Brown-Temes 80th Birthday Recognition

Public Hearing:

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger opened the public hearing asking if there was anyone to speak for the Conditional Use Permit to operate a convenience food and liquor store at 9484 Lewis and Clark. She invited them to go to the microphone and speak.

Mr. Shetal Patel, owner of the Subway next door and person requesting the Conditional Use Permit, spoke before the City Council in support of the Conditional Use Permit. He spoke of his community involvement and support with Jennings High School. I stated that he went before the Planning Commission and addressed the commission's security concerns. He stated that the proposed location will be equipped with security cameras. Mr. Patel stated that the presences of the store would bring additional taxes to the City of Jennings from the surrounding communities because there is not a convenience store in the area where he is proposing to locate. Mr. Patel stated the hours of operations would be Monday – Sunday from 9 am – 10 pm.

The Mayor asked if there was anyone else to speak for or against the Conditional Use Permit of the convenience store at 9484 Lewis and Clark. There were no additional responses from the public.

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger asked if there was anyone to speak for or against the request for a liquor license to sell intoxicating liquor of all kinds, at retail, in the original package at 9484 Lewis and Clark. There were no responses from the public.

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger concluded the Public Hearing.

Mayor Pro Tem, Francine Dugger called the meeting to order at 7:14 p.m.

Present:

Mayor Pro Tem Francine Dugger
Councilman Alan Stichnote
Councilwoman Miranda Jones
Councilwoman Yolanda Fortson

Councilwoman Phyllis Anderson
Councilwoman Nicole Cook
Councilman Rodney Epps
Councilwoman Carol Epps

Also present: City Attorney Carla Allen and City Clerk Deletra Hudson

On the motion made by Councilwoman Jones, second by Councilwoman Fortson, the City Council voted to amend the agenda to add the approval of the City's Budget for the Fiscal Year 2017-2018. The item was added to the agenda under New Business as agenda item 12(B). The agenda item named – Motion for closed session, Personnel (RSMO 610:021-3) was moved to agenda item 12(C).

On the motion made by Councilwoman Jones, second by Councilman R. Epps the amended agenda was approved.

On the motion made by Councilman R. Epps, second by Councilwoman Cook the council approved the minutes from the regular meeting of March 13, 2017.

Reports of Council:

Councilwoman Y. Fortson thanked Public Works for clearing trash in the street that was reported at the last council meeting during public comments.

She also thanked Councilman Stichnote for assisting with getting the water turned off at a vacant property at 8828 Cozens. The complaint about water in the street was mentioned at the council meeting on March 13, 2017 during public comments as an issue.

She reported that there were large trucks on the Urban League lot that didn't belong there. Councilwoman Fortson thanked St. Louis County PD for assisting with getting the trucks moved off of the lot.

She thanked resident Robert Cotton and Jim Maixner, Public Works, for connecting with Ameren to address the light that was out on Ada Wortley.

She thanked Mary Brock and Ms. Theresa for the sympathy cards they sent to her on the loss of her cousin.

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger reported that Ameren will be in the community trimming trees. She informed the community that the information received from Ameren stated that it could affect electrical service. She stated that residents will receive notifications from Ameren about the project.

Councilman Stichnote asked why the City was not collecting rent for the city owned property at 8714 Jennings Station Road. The City purchased the property in August. Mayor Pro Tem Dugger responded that she would look into it.

Councilman Stichnote continued his report with thanking St. Louis County PD. He informed the public that there were 55 drug related arrests made in February, with 11 made in Ward 1. He also reported that over the past week, the St. Louis County PD made a large drug bust in the community seizing guns, drugs, and cell phones. Overall, crime was down 3% for the month of February.

Councilwoman Jones reported there was a Ward 1 meeting on March 8th. She said it was informative, but attendance was not as expected. St. Louis County PD was present and there were conversations regarding crime in the community. She reported that the Ward Cleanup was postponed until later in April. Councilwoman Jones reported Aldi's is closing earlier at 7 pm, may be City wide, not just in Jennings. The Shop and Save on Lewis and Clark is also anticipated to close permanently.

Councilwoman Jones informed the public of locations where they can get taxes done for free. One of the closest places to get taxes done for free is New Northside Church. She informed the public that she had a list of locations. She also stated that St. Louis County tax assessors are in the Jennings area reassessing properties. She stated property taxes in Jennings are going up because property values are increasing. In closing, Councilwoman Jones encouraged the citizens to vote. She thanked the public for coming out.

Councilwoman Anderson thanked Captain Cox for the Breakfast with the Commander. She also thanked the community for coming out. She thanked Waste Management for picking up furniture that set on a resident's property for over one month. She called Waste Management and they immediately removed the furniture. Councilwoman Anderson reported that she and Councilwoman Fortson visited the convenience store, that a resident reported at the March 13th Council meeting as not putting prices on the goods for public sale. She said they spoke with the owner of the convenience store. He agreed to resolve the issue with the pricing. Councilwoman Anderson informed the public that she had a flyer that list jobs in the area and encourage the public to take the flyers.

Councilwoman Cook reported speaking with residents in the Ward about their concerns of what they would like to see improved in the community. The response she reported was grass cutting, activity for the youth, cleaning vacant buildings and lots. She asked the public to share any ideas of activities for the youth in the community.

Councilman R. Epps thanked Public Works for cleaning up fire debris left on Westcott. He also thanked Margie, Building Department Administrative Assistant, for assisting with the efforts of getting the cleanup executed from the water main break on Hodiamont. Councilman Epps thanked the City for Focus on Four efforts and cleaning the lots. But he stressed the importance of getting development in the City. He stated that the City has a developer who is interested in bringing development, but the City is not moving forward with the project. He reported the population is decreasing due to the decrease in housing in the community. He said Ward 4 has been cleaned up many times. He urged to sell the vacant lots to someone who wants to develop and let them do the work. He reported that the City is not responsible for clearing liens on the property, the developer is responsible for clearing the liens. He stated that when the City starts to be developed; the people will take care of the City.

He thanked the public for coming to the meeting and encouraged the public to vote.

Councilwoman C. Epps had no report but thanked the public for the opportunity to service in the Council seat for the City.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger informed the City Council that her report will begin with a presentation from staff on the Focus on Four Initiative. She called Kimberly Smith, Director of Housing and Economic Development, to do a presentation to the public on the Focus on Four Initiative. Mayor Pro Tem created a task force to carry out the City's duties of the initiative. The task force included the cooperative efforts of the Building Department, Public Works, St. Louis County Police Department, Finance Department, City Clerk and Courts to address the issues of dumping, property nuisance and crime in the City. Kimberly Smith reported on the work of the task force and narrated a presentation that highlighted before and after pictures of properties that had been abated of trash, debris removal, grass cutting, and board ups in the 4th Ward.

Since the inception of the initiative, the Building Department reported inspecting 1,110 properties, issuing 529 notices and \$72,827 in code violations. The Public Works Department reported 663 man hours to abate issues, using 54 dump trucks of debris and 20 pickup trucks of trash was hauled from the area. St. Louis County Police have assisted with enforcing crime. The Finance Department collects the fines enforced by the Court division. The City Clerk records the meeting and research resources that provides assistance to homeowners. As a result of the enforcement of the Focus on Four Initiative, The public is now contacting the City to acquire trash service.

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger reported that as Public Works hours decrease in Ward 4, the efforts will move to Ward 1. The Mayor informed the public that enforcement efforts will continue in Ward 4. The name for the initiative in Ward 1 is "We're One in One".

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger informed the Council about the NIMS (National Incident Management System) Training. She read the letter attached that informed the City that all City Council and department heads, who have not been trained in the past five years, must attend the NIMS training. Lt. Neal will schedule the training for the City on May 11 at 6-9pm in Bridgeton, MO.

Monthly Reports

The Mayor informed the Council that the monthly reports are attached to the packet.

Councilwoman Jones referenced the Sewer Lateral Report and asked why someone would be denied a sewer lateral. Kim Smith, Director of Housing and Economic Development, responded by stating that she was not speaking specifically on any particular case. She gave an example of an instance when a sewer lateral request is denied is when there are outstanding liens on a property. She explained that they are reviewed on a case by case basis.

On the motion made by Councilman R. Epps , second by Councilwoman Jones, the Council accepted the monthly reports.

Reports of Committees:

Solid Waste Committee: Councilwoman C. Epps reported that the City entered into a contract with Waste Management for trash collection.

Policy Committee – Councilwoman Fortson reported no meeting.

Park Committee – Councilwoman Jones reported there was a meeting. At the meeting, the committee discussed the grant extension for Lion's Park. She described some of the renovations occurring at the park. She also reported the committee discussed improvements with the basketball courts. The committee discussed using the Park Tax to upgrade the basketball courts. She commended Jim and Earl for their assistance with information on upgrading the court. She thanked the St. Louis County Police for providing a basketball hoop for the court.

Councilwoman Jones reported that the committee also discussed Sapphire Park and what could be done with the park. The committee was informed that there was so much dumping at the park that it may not be restored to a park that can be utilized as a traditional park. She stated there was also discussions of making it a dog park. The Park Committee is looking into what can be done.

The Park Committee also talked about the 30 day reservation policy to reserve a park pavilions. She thanked the Parks Committee for their work.

Public Works – Councilwoman Fortson reported no meeting.

Municipal League – Councilwoman Fortson reported no meeting.

Building Committee – Councilwoman Cook reported no meeting.

Ways and Means - Mayor thanked the committee for getting the budget done on time prior to the City's fiscal year end on Friday.

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger reported that the Committee is recommending the renewal of the Hochschild, Bloom and Company LLP contract. She reported that the City can opt out of the contract at any time and make it month to month agreement. The committee recommended to renew the contract for the next three years. On the motion by Councilman R. Epps, second by Councilwoman Jones, the City Council voted and approved the renewal of the contract for three years.

Next discussion by the Ways and Means Committee was the Finance Director, Rise' Johnson, provided the Ways and Means Committee a list of bank accounts and recommended combining the accounts. The Mayor asked the Council to accept her recommendation to combine the bank accounts. On the motion by Councilwoman Jones, second by Councilman R. Epps, the City Council voted and approved the recommendation to combine the City's bank accounts as proposed by the Finance Director and Hochschild, Bloom & Company LLP.

The Committee recommend the approval of the City's Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018. On the motion by Councilwoman Jones, second by Councilwoman Fortson, the City Council voted and

approved, amending the following policies to strike the references to the Police and Fire Departments:

- Vacation and Personal Days Policy
- Holiday Policy

On the motion by Councilman R. Epps, second by Councilwoman Jones, the City Council voted and approved the recommendation to approve the City's budget for the fiscal year 2017-2018 with the amendments the following policies:

- Vacation and Personal Days Policy
- Holiday Policy

Public comments:

Comments by the Public:

Joe Noelker of 432 Parkwoods representing himself as Chairman of the Board and legal counsel of A Caring Plus Foundation. He reported that the foundation had invested over \$17 million in the City of Jennings and plans to invest another \$10 million in the City in the 4th Ward. He stated in Fall 2015, the City Council approved a comprehensive plan of development which claimed that City would transfer properties to A Caring Plus as they became available. Initially, 29 properties were transferred. In Fall 2016, Lewis McKinney was informed by the City that no additional properties would be transferred. Mr. Noelker said the project cannot get Federal funds until they have site control. So the funds are sitting. He stated that on March 23rd, he attended what he thought would be a business meeting with the Director of Housing and Economic Development. The meeting ended up being with the Mayor Pro Tem, City Attorney and Mr. Henry Johnson. He was informed there was no legal basis for the A Caring Plus Foundation's position. He stated that A Caring Plus Foundation has a strong legal ground that it can proceed with, if necessary. They do not want to proceed legally. He stated the foundation looks forward to working with the City to resolve and get the 4th Ward cleaned up. Legal grounds include:

- Investment based expectation of proceeding with the project. He explained it to mean once you start something that was approved. You have sacramental reliance.
- Civil Act 42 USC1983 -sue municipality for punitive damages from the City and individuals.

He stated they do not wish to take the legal steps. They look forward working with the City to get things done.

Arleen Hayes of 7007 Idlewild Avenue member of Neighborhood Watch and Planning Commission voiced her opinion about the number of liquor licenses in the City.

Allen McDonnell of 9314 Scottdale discussed the Mayor forum held by the League of Woman Voters at the Northside Conference Center, which he was informed was the City of St. Louis. He stated he inquired with the League of Women Voters why the forum was in the City of St. Louis. He said he was informed by the League that of the location was in the City and the other half was in the County. He said he was told that the venue location was setup by the Jennings P/R person, John Parker of the Evolution Communication Group. He said he asked the person he thought was the P/R person why was the forum being held in the City. Mr. McDonnell said he didn't get an answer initially, so he asked again and was told to drop it by the P/R person. Who Mr. McDonnell said then told him that he was having a tough F*** day. McDonnell said he informed Mr. Parker that he worked for him. Mr. McDonnell then said Mr. Parkers reply to him was to go F*** himself. Mr. McDonnell said he asked again and was told again to go F*** himself. At that time, Mr. McDonnell said he replied back to Mr. Parker, in kind. At that point, a public exchange took place between Mr. McDonnell and Mr. Parker. Mr. McDonnell reported the exchange had to be extinguished by other citizens. McDonnell said the crude and immature behavior of Mr. Parker is inexcusable. He reported that the incident occurred in front of seven League of Women Voter

ladies and about five citizens. Mr. McDonnell's opinion was that he (Mr. Parker) doesn't merit a continued relationship with the City.

John Schlereth of 1910 Hildred said he witnessed the exchange at the forum between Mr. McDonnell and John Parker, the City's Public Relations contractor. He said he talked to the Mayor. Mr. Schlereth said he initially didn't know who the person was that was involved in the exchange with Mr. McDonnell. He was told that he was the City's P/R person. He stated that P/R people are supposed to have thicker skin. He said he understands that some people have a bad day. Mr. Schlereth said the reason he is bringing the information is because he talked to the Mayor, but wanted all of the Council to know, because he didn't think the Council would have known about the issue. Mr. Schlereth said he was embarrassed and apologized to the League of Woman Voters on behalf of the City of Jennings. He explained that the League of Women Voters conducted the School Board forum the week before and everything was fine at their forum. The ladies from the League remembered him from the School Board forum. He said he is a long time resident of Jennings. The exchange at the Mayoral forum did not represent Jennings. He added that when you represent Jennings and other entities, you have to be in a good manner. He said again he witnessed the exchange. He said what Mr. McDonnell said is true.

Marietta Beck of 5476 Hodiament requested a traffic study on Emma running east on Jennings Station Road. Sport cars are becoming a problem, people are running stop signs at Emma and Helen and Emma and Wilborn. There are children in the area coming from Fairview Elementary school and the playground at 5505 & 5507 Hamilton who are not paying attention to the cars. She said she didn't know the solution to the problem, but proposed maybe making the streets one way in opposite directions. She said the children are also playing in the street but she wasn't sure as to where they are coming from. She said once school is in session, there is one house where the children gather. Then later someone comes to pick them up from the house. She said she contacted the Jennings School District to see how many children are registered at an address to make sure the children are in the Jennings School District.

Ms. Beck said the issues in Ward 4 has been going on 20 plus years. She said she was on the City Council from 1995-1997. She said has been off of the Council for 20 years and she has been begging and pleading for something to be done in the 4th Ward. She wished the City luck with developing and cleaning the 4th Ward.

Ms. Beck stated that on her block, if the City is talking about building additional houses, you will have to make sure the right type of people will come in. She said there are people on her block that have a much different culture. She said there are people on her block who live in the houses without permits. She said she informed Councilman Epps about the issue in June and July. Ms. Beck stated that with the warm weather coming, the females will come out on the front porch and yell out "MF this and MF that" and she has to listen to it. She recommended the City get a Welcoming Committee that instructs people of the rule and how they are expected to live in the City of Jennings and what is expected for trash pickup.

David Kuechenmeister of 2021 Hord said he heard the property values in Jennings were going down. He stated he also heard the Shop and Save store was closing. He said he is hearing gun fire at night. He reported the Jennings Aldi's is the only one closing early. He said he talked to P/R person before and didn't like what he heard. He asked why the City needed a P/R person.

Legal Business -

- A) An ordinance approving a Conditional Use Permit and granting the same to Krisaarya Inc. d/b/a Goodtimes Food and Liquor to operate a convenience food and liquor store at 9484 Lewis and Clark, on the motion.

First Reading - on the motion by Councilwoman Forston, second by Councilman R. Epps

Second Reading — Bill #2490 - on the motion by Councilwoman Cook, second by Councilman R. Epps. The bill was approved to become Ordinance #2437 by the following roll call vote: voting

in favor were Councilmembers Stichnote, Jones, Fortson, Anderson, R. Epps, C. Epps; voting against were Councilmembers Dugger and Cook, no abstaining.

- B) An ordinance approving an application for intoxicating and non-intoxicating liquor license and granting the same to Shetal Patel, on behalf of Krisaarya Inc. d/b/a Goodtimes, to sell intoxicating liquor of all kinds, at retail, in the original package at 9484 Lewis and Clark

First Reading - on the motion by Councilwoman Cook, second by Councilman R. Epps

Second Reading – Bill #2491 - on the motion by Councilwoman R. Epps, second by Councilman Fortson. The bill was approved to become Ordinance #2438 by the following roll call vote: voting in favor were Councilmembers Stichnote, Fortson, Anderson, R. Epps, C. Epps; voting against were Councilmembers Jones, Dugger and Cook, no abstaining.

New Business

Approval of the bills for payment

Mayor Pro Tem Dugger asked for a motion to approve the bills for payment. On the motion by Councilman R. Epps, second by Councilwoman Fortson, the Council approved the payment of the bills.

Councilwoman Jones thanked the public for allowing her to serve. She also thanked Councilwomen Cook and Fortson who will not be returning to the Council.

Closing Remarks by Mayor

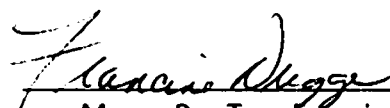
Thanked Rise' Johnson for her efforts with the budget. She also thanked the staff for their work. She encouraged the public to speak positively about what can happen in Jennings.

Closed Session

Motion for a closed session was made by Councilwoman Fortson, second by Councilman Anderson. The council approved holding a closed session for personnel (RSMO 610:021-3) by the following roll call vote: Councilmembers Stichnote, Jones, Dugger, Fortson, Anderson, Cook, R. Epps, C. Epps; no one voting against or abstaining.

After a brief recess, the City Council met in closed session. On the motion by Councilman R. Epps, second by Councilwoman Jones, the City Council voted and approved the personnel issue recommended by Mayor Pro Tem regarding the Recreation Director. This motion was approved by the following roll call vote: voting in favor were Councilmembers Jones, Dugger, Fortson, Anderson, Cook, R. Epps, C. Epps; voting against was Councilmember Stichnote: none abstaining.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm on a motion by Councilman R. Epps, second by Councilwoman C. Epps.


Mayor Pro Tem Francine Dugger

Attest:

City Clerk