

**CITY OF JEFFERSON**  
Council Worksession  
March 14, 2024  
6:30pm

**COUNCILORS PRESENT:** Bob Rossiter, David Kellogg, Keonali Hutley, Mayor Myers, David Watkins, Charles Vickery  
**COUNCILORS ABSENT:** Chandra Cruikshank  
**STAFF PRESENT:** Sarah Cook, CM/R

**I. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE** – Mayor Myers called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and led in the flag salute.

**II. WORKSESSION TOPICS**

**A. Utility Assistance Program – Review/Discuss Draft**

The City Manager provided a brief overview of the City Clerk’s research into assistance programs offered by other similarly sized cities, noting most also utilized the LIHWA program, which had run out of funding and prompted this assignment. She clarified that the assistance funds would only be put toward amounts due for water and sewer usage, noting other fees associated with the City Services bill would remain the responsibility of the account holder, i.e. public safety fee, stormwater fee, etc.

Councilor Vickery particularly liked the example provided by Aumsville, which provided a flat 20% discount for all senior citizens. Councilor Kellogg thought there should be documentation on where the funds were coming from and how much was available; however, Sarah Cook noted the fluctuating amounts that came in year to year from the Service Line Warranty proceeds, which was why staff preferred language suggesting limited funds were available, or similar. Councilor Watkins would rather not identify naming the revenue source in the policy document, noting the limitations that would create for that specific source, which may or may not be the case going forward should the City decide to add in-house funds later or if something else were to come available. Councilor Kellogg expressed concern about the City contributing in-house funds to the program without hearing from the public and incorporating it into the budget, to which Councilor Vickery agreed. Mayor Myers pointed out the policy could be adopted without such specifics, or they could wait until it could be worked into and discussed during the budget cycle. The Council opted for the later and staff would bring back the Utility Assistance Program policy for adoption at the same meeting in June that the budget hearing would be held.

**B. Fire District Levy – Discussion on City Council’s Role**

Mayor Myers pointed out first thing that no City staff, nor City materials or resources, could be utilized for whatever direction the Council decided to go after the discussion and provided options for them to consider: 1.) prepare a joint letter of the Council to go in the ballot, which cost approximately \$350; 2.) work independently, rather than as the City Council, to support or promote the levy on their own social media pages or other methods.

There was open discussion amongst the Council and with the Fire Chief in attendance regarding the results from the last election and concern from some Councilors about their role and jurisdiction limiting them to the confines of the City limits. Councilor Kellogg and Rossiter had similar comments, in that they represented the people as a community, and their role was to hear what the people needed, rather than tell the people what they should or shouldn't support.

Mayor Myers expressed his surprise at the diverse comments and pointed out that much of what they did as a Council and a City happened outside the City limits and through various local and regional partnerships and he believed it was their role to represent the constituents and not tell them what they should or shouldn't support, but to share why they think one way or another. He indicated his plan to prepare a letter for the voters pamphlet as he was aware of the Fire District's great need.

#### C. Class of 2024 Invite – Discuss & Select Date/Times

The Council discussed various dates to propose to the High School Principal, noting the need to not interfere with the student's lunch or daily dismissal times. Sarah Cook would send several options and would let the Council know when one could be agreed upon between the City, JHS, and availability at the Community Center.

**III. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE** – Councilor Rossiter moved to approve. Councilor Watkins seconded. Ayes – 5, Opposed – 0. **APPROVED.**

#### **IV. VISITORS**

Lyle Johnson, Scrael Hill, Albany – was present to dispute the cemetery rules, noting the Caretaker had removed his personal belongings from around his wife's headstone and told him he couldn't bring his personal lawn care tools/equipment to maintain her burial site. He spoke of the custom made poles he had placed with hanging baskets and that they had been removed three times, noting that the last time he was told they had been discarded. He thought the rules were unreasonable when money was involved.

Councilor Vickery questioned the expense Mr. Johnson was out for the discarded belongings and offered to pay him back personally. He was surprised that the City wouldn't be happy to have the free work and suggested in the future that the Caretaker could call Mr. Johnson before removing his items so he had an opportunity to collect them himself. The City Manager reminded the Council of the City's liability risks associated with somebody, that was not an employee of the City, performing any kind of work or operating equipment or otherwise on City property. She also reminded the Council that the rules of the cemetery had been adopted unanimously by the Council within the last 6 months after the Deputy City Recorder's review and research of other cemeteries. Last, she cautioned the Council in providing the expectations of special treatment, such as personal phone calls, to one individual unless every other affected person would receive the same. Mayor Myers also reminded the Council of their task to write policy, while leaving the day to day operations and execution of the policy to staff, noting if they needed to have a re-look they certainly could, but they needed to be reasonable and keep any liability to the City at a minimum. Councilor Watkins agreed and stated it

was an individual issue and that by and large the City kept good control and it was the Council's job to make sure the rules fit the majority, not just one or a small group. In the end, Mayor Myers suggested to Mr. Johnson that he go through the rules and identify his specific areas of concern and get them turned in to City Hall so the Council could review them.

**V. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS – none**

**VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION\*\*\*ORS 192.660(2)(e) – Real Property Transactions**

Mayor Myers stated the above noted ORS and excused the City Council and City Manager to the small conference room for the executive session at 7:38pm, noting for the audience that there would not be any decision or vote upon reconvening. The Council reconvened back into regular session at 7:42pm.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT – Councilor Watkins moved, seconded by Councilor Vickery. All 5 were in favor and the meeting closed at 7:42pm.**

**MINUTES APPROVED** this 25<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2024.

  
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Michael D. Myers, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Sarah Cook, City Manager/Recorder