

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

A meeting of the Warrensburg City Council was held on September 11, 2023, at 7:00 p.m., at 200 S. Holden and via Zoom, with Mayor Kushner presiding. Mayor Kushner requested a moment of reflection in remembrance for those who lost their lives on this somber day twenty-two years ago during the worst terrorist attack on United States soil.

Mayor Kushner called the meeting to order and led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called as follows, Present: Osborne, Uhler, Jones, Kushner. Absent: Bentley.

The minutes of the August 28, 2023, Regular Meeting were considered. Osborne moved to approve the minutes. Yes: Osborne, Uhler, Jones, Kushner. No: none.

The adoption of the agenda was considered. Jones moved to adopt the agenda. Yes: Osborne, Uhler, Jones, Kushner. No: none.

Mayor Kushner read a Proclamation for Water and Wastewater Treatment Professionals Week September 10-16, 2023, to offer a unique opportunity for these professionals and the communities they serve to join together and recognize the vital role water and wastewater professionals play in our daily lives. Phil Adlich, Manager of Operations/Water Pollution Control, Enrico Villegas, Assistant City Manager/Public Works Director, and Missouri American Water personnel were in attendance to hear the proclamation.

Tracy Brantner, Director of the Johnson County Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC) presented on August 14th and was asked specifically to come back and present on small business resources offered by JCEDC in our community. Brantner said the JCEDC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1995. It is a public/private partnership, abides by open meetings law and serves all the communities of Johnson County including chambers of commerce and main street organizations. The mission of JCEDC is to collaborate, work together and share resources in pursuit of local development opportunities to increase the county's economic prosperity. All services are free and open to everyone without fee or otherwise.

Brantner highlighted the current Board of Directors of thirteen members (including two voting seats held by the city and county and one voting seat held by the university) and thanked Mayor Kushner and City Manager Dulin for serving on the board. The JCEDC staff includes herself and Aimee Courtaway as Business Talent Development Coordinator. The JCEDC investors include the city and county, Johnson County investors and banks, the university and school districts (pointing out that a talented workforce drives economic development), utility companies, various small businesses and financial services/bond counsel firms. The JCEDC contracts for services with the city, county, school district, Whiteman Area Leadership Council, SBDC Missouri and Pioneer Trails Regional Planning Commission.

Brantner relayed JCEDC's five main pillars of business development, entrepreneurship, talent, placemaking, and regionalism abiding by data-driven performance measures created under a 2018 strategic plan. Brantner said because of a 2016 study performed by the University of Missouri reflecting Johnson County as one of the Missouri counties not supportive of entrepreneurship, stakeholders in 2018 directed JCEDC to take a lead role in cultivating and supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Brantner said entrepreneurship drives innovation, creates new jobs and increases tax base in our community through small startups ("small" was defined as 500 employees or less by the Small Business Administration). Johnson County was doing a good job today in self-employment, new entry and those that have not exited the marketplace for entrepreneurship. Those objectives to cultivate entrepreneurship include support for start-up and existing businesses, lessen the burden of governmental and infrastructure impacts on new and existing business and establish a one-on-one support system to aid in small business success.

Brantner reiterated that cultivating a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship was important because it generates GDP and economic growth (increases in the standard of living over and beyond necessities and creating a churn in the economy), unique problem-solving, attracts and retains talent, and increases resilience and adaptability.

Brantner said partnerships and referrals are key for entrepreneurial start-ups and existing businesses. The entrepreneurial start up needs influencers and advisors like attorneys, accountants, local cities, chambers of commerce, main street organizations, access to capital and talent resources, and access to state and federal resources. Brantner said the influencers pass the start-up or existing entrepreneurs to JCEDC. Brantner said the Small Business Development Center in Johnson County provides opportunities for training, referrals to other influencers and advisors by providing three references (i.e., legal, accounting, marketing, etc.), customized one-on-one assistance and access to resources. JCEDC offers an interactive question based LifePlan program to do business plan online with financial forecasting to determine if the business is just a hobby or revisit the business plan to set a profit margin. JCEDC offers other options for a business plan including Score and QuickBooks and offers 30% off online subscription through the Small Business Administration. Brantner said JCEDC offers services for an existing business owner that include guidance from idea to exit providing as much support to that person as a start-up. This support includes lots of models for business growth, adding a market line, providing market research, financial analysis, and a microloan program for access to capital. Brantner said there is a successful JCEDC grant program available to anyone and there are resources available on the website of available sites, buildings, and workshops.

Discussion ensued whether some employers had trouble finding employees in Johnson County. Brantner said workforce and talent are a challenge from small to large businesses and was addressed by looking at what is the breadth and depth of the issue and what is reflected by the data. The economic development strategy is to keep recruiting regardless of the talent that may be lacking with a conservation view since the work from home talent/workforce is unknown. The question was asked if Brantner has worked with Retail Strategies and she said she had and the company had used data from JCEDC's website.

Brantner advised that retail has forever changed as a result of the pandemic and online sales had increased again by 2% as of today. JCEDC provides a \$5,000 grant to support local business presence online and be a part of those sales. Brantner said in Missouri, 6 out of 10 purchases were now online and one out of every two businesses in Johnson County did not have a physical presence. Brantner said there were business services for packing, distribution and creating a platform for sales to help small businesses. Additionally, Brantner said a brick-and-mortar business will need to provide an experience in addition to an online opportunity for retail sales.

Brantner asked the city council to notify her of any other topics of interest for future economic development discussions.

Bill No. 09-01-2023 being for an Ordinance Adopting the Annual Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning October 1, 2023 for the City of Warrensburg, Missouri, was read a second time by title. There being no questions, Osborne moved said bill be adopted. Roll was called for the adoption or rejection of said bill as follows: Yes: Osborne, Uhler, Jones, Kushner. No: none. Said bill was declared duly adopted and given Ordinance No. 5819.

Mayor Kushner read a Resolution in Support of the Parkview Gardens Rehabilitation Project in Warrensburg, Missouri. City Manager Dulin said Missouri Housing Partners LLC had requested a letter of support for an \$8,000,000 renovation project of Parkview Gardens which provided affordable housing for senior (55+) residential population. The complex was originally built in phases in 1977 and 1986 and Missouri Housing Partners LLC was making application for federal and state housing tax credits. The question was asked if rents would be below market rates. Dulin answered that the use of funds will provide for percentages of the units rented to households at 30%, 50% and 60% of area median income. There being no further questions, Jones moved to adopt said resolution. Roll was called as follows: Yes: Osborne, Uhler, Jones, Kushner. No: none. Said resolution was duly adopted and given Resolution No. 2262.

Under Mayoral Appointments, Mayor Kushner recommended the appointment of Daniel Brigman as Member for the Historic Preservation Commission to fill an unexpired term through May 2026 (Samantha Krzeminski) and Michael Greife as Member for the Historic Preservation Commission to fill an expired term through September 2026 (Andrea Glinn). Jones moved to approve the appointment as presented. Roll was called as follows: Yes: Osborne, Uhler, Jones, Kushner. No: none.

Under Appearances to the Council not listed on the Agenda, Suzy Latare, attending virtually on Zoom, wished to share her gratitude and thank the Warrensburg Fire Department in light of today's remembrance of September 11, 2001.

There were no comments made under Miscellaneous Matters from the Mayor and City Council,

Under the City Manager's report, Fire Chief Jennings said a building fire occurred last Friday at 205 North Maguire Street. There was an engine crew about a block and a half away that arrived fast limiting damage, saving pets and salvageable items. At budget adoption last year, Jennings said the department was challenged with the replacement of half of its firefighters. Jennings knew the department would prevail and watched them work this call, and the past several fires. Jennings said the department has a great team of firefighters who cleared the scene in two hours. Jennings thanked the city council and city manager for their support during this challenging time.


Villegas said the public works department would kick off snow training for the upcoming season once a week in October by cross training staff members from wastewater treatment plants and collections to assist the street department with snow and ice removal. Villegas said the brine maker has arrived with extra storage capacities, and two trucks are scheduled to come in October. Villegas reported the street maintenance program removed and replaced 890 linear feet of curb along North Main which was the production for all of 2021. Villegas said there was \$6,000 left to go in the sidewalk improvement program and will move to another zone in the next fiscal year. The crew will be doing inspections in October and November for Zone 3.

City Manager Dulin said the city was excited that Main Street has secured a carnival this year for the Burgfest event. It has been ten years since a carnival has been part of Burgfest. Dulin thanked the city council for the opportunity to attend the City County Communications Marketing Association (3CMA) annual conference in Orlando, Florida last week. Dulin said it was a great conference wherein a lot was learned. Dulin was humbled to see the skills, creativity and talent of those professionals in attendance. Councilmember Uhler commented that the West Park Soccer Complex appears to have run out of parking and asked if there were plans to increase parking. Parks Director Deal would speak with the Park Board for a review of the Master Plan. The Park Board President, Jason Duffey, was present and said the Park Board has shifted the Master Plan Committee to meet in January to identify what is needed for our community rather than the plan from 2017. Duffey said lighting in West Park has been brought up and other things to include in the master plan.

Finance Director McCoy said the use tax as of August exceeded budget projections for 2023 and sales tax will most likely exceed budgeted projections by 3%-5%. McCoy offered kudos to the finance staff for their professionalism in diffusing a situation by a challenged customer last week. McCoy said thank you to management for making sure the finance staff was safe.

Councilmember Jones was approached by citizens concerning homelessness and said staff were going to look at possibilities of dealing with the problem downtown. Jones will share concerns with the city manager offline.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.



Jim Kushner, Mayor

Attest:


Jodi L. Schneider, City Clerk