

**TOWN OF JACKSON**  
**MAYOR JAMES “JIMMY” M. NORTHSWORTHY, III**  
**TOWN MEETING**  
**Jackson Volunteer Fire Department**  
**1631 Charter Street**  
**Jackson, Louisiana 70748**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**APRIL 14, 2025**

**PRESENT:**

HONORABLE JAMES NORSWORTHY, MAYOR  
MRS. ANNISSA WOODARD, TOWN CLERK  
MR. DANE BROWN, BOARD MEMBER  
MR. JAMES MCCRORY, BOARD MEMBER  
MR. DAVID GUILLORY, BOARD MEMBER  
MR. WILLIAM FREE, BOARD MEMBER  
HALEY MAJOR GREEN, TOWN ATTORNEY (TAKING MINUTES)

**ABSENT:**

MICHAEL HARRELL

5:45 PUBLIC HEARING WAS HAD.

DISSCUSSION: Louisiana Community Development Block Grant Program. In order for the Town of Jackson to obtain grants to clean blighted properties, the Town must rehire firms that can assist with getting those grants. The Town of Jackson must rehire 1. Engineering Services and 2. Administrative services to assist in obtaining the grants. The Town is in the beginning stages of applying for the grants to begin projects for the 2026 –2027 years. These things must be in place now.

The blighted property grants are in “Final Review” - the Town provided the clarification needed for all the issues outstanding with the application. There is a lot of work that goes into obtaining the grants. Chris got involved because an Engineering company had to do a planned map and complete some engineering tasks. There are many properties that are getting cleaned up. Many have already been cleaned up, some are in the process of getting cleaned up. The grant will provide funding to get the properties cleaned up. The Town of Jackson does not really want to seize the property but wants the properties cleaned up.

The Town has applied for the maximum amount of grant, which is \$250,000.00 We will wait to see the amount for which we can qualify. Chris and the team is working with Ashley with Professional Engineering Services.

The Town is seeking approval, via resolution, to re-hire firms for the engineering and administrative services in order to secure the grant.

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#### CALL TO ORDER:

The town meeting was called to order by Mayor Norsworthy at 6:04 p.m., pursuant to the prepared agenda.

#### ROLL CALL:

The roll was called by Town Clerk, Annissa Woodard with one member absent.

#### PRAYER/PLEDGE

Opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance were led by Mr. William Free.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA-

A discussion of the Agenda was had – Ms. Parker requested to be added to the agenda, to make a statement regarding her tiny house located at 1505 Talley Street. Mr. Guillory made a motion to add and Mr. Free gave a second to the motion, there was no opposition; the motion carried and Dianne Parker was added to the agenda.

Chief Mitch Harrell asked that number 4. under New Business be deleted from the agenda. Mr. Free made the Motion and Mr. Guillory gave a second. There was no opposition; item number 4 under new business was removed from the agenda.

#### MEETING MINUTES-

Mr. Free made a motion to approve the Minutes from the March 10, 2025 meetings as written. Mr. Guillory gave a second; there was no opposition. The Minutes of the March 10, 2025, town meeting were approved as written.

#### BILLS/ BUDGET V. ACTUALS

Mr. Free requested that the bills be approved for payment. Mr. Free made a motion to accept the bills and approve payment thereof. Mr. Guillory gave a second. Payment of the bills was approved.

A discussion of the budget versus actuals was begun by Mayor Norsworthy. At this time, the budget looks fairly good, although there are still areas of concern. The audit that was done in September of last year has been completed. The person who completed the audit will be present at the next meeting to discuss the findings of the audit and recommendations for moving forward. Nevertheless, the budget and the actuals were close. When you look at a picture of the year before, there is an 11 % inflation on everything as compared to the year before.

FINANCES – we are struggling dealing with companies who are dealing with the longterm effects from COVID. Insurance rates have risen 10% without a problem. Record insurance

agency handling our insurance – we are having trouble maintaining insurance – automobiles and liability policies. We have gone back to Louisiana Municipal Association for most insurance policies related to cars/police cars/liability. Anissa Woodard remarked the Town has incurred a \$25,000.00 increase for the total cost of insurance. There really is no way to raise that kind of revenue to keep up with the increase. There is a 1% sales tax that goes into the general fund. It took some dips in January and February. Therefore, we have to look at different places where we can cut corners. Sometimes, maintenance has to cut corners. The general fund is struggling. This is the fund out of which the majority of the spending comes. Our sales tax fund is a fund out of which we do not spend a lot. Our public utility fund is functioning well.

## OLD BUSINESS

Golf Court Ordinance – the Board has voted to take no action on this matter. A question was posed as to whether the Town is currently checking on the golf carts that are currently being operated in the Town of Jackson. As of now, they can only ride on the side of the roads or highway legally. The Town of Jackson has not reportedly had any problems or complaints with regard to operating on the streets.

## NEW BUSINESS-

1-2. Public Hearing Issue – The Board seeking approval for the adoption of a resolution to rehire of the two firms for the Louisiana Community Development Block Grant programs. The Board considers the Resolution to hire the Engineering Service PEC for LCDBG program and a Resolution to hire the Administration firm for LCDBG program. Mr. Free made a motion to approve the Resolution one with regard to the engineering firm -. Mr. McCrory gave a second. There was no opposition and the Resolution was adopted. Mr. Free made a motion to hire the Administrative firm and to pay all fees associated with the application and the application process. Mr. Brown gave a second. There was no opposition and the second resolution to rehire the Administrative firm was adopted.

3. EMPLOYMENT/TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT OF OFFICERS – Chief Harrell explained that he has recently had to terminate employment of some police officers and offer new employment to two officers. He is seeking approval from the Board to do so. Mr. Free made a motion to terminate Cody Baron, Isaiah George, and Brandon Brooks. Mr. McCrory gave a second. There was no opposition and the Officers Cody Baron, Isaiah George and Brandon Brooks were terminated from employment. Mr. Free further made a motion to employ Derrick Fortier, full time at \$18.00 per hour. And Jonathan Cutrer, part time at \$16.00 per hour. Mr. Guillory gave a second. There was no opposition. The motion to employ three officers was approved.

4. REMOVED

5. GUEST, MR. JESSIE BURKES (OFFICE = (225)310-5117; CELL= (225) 301-4314; [burkesj@mybrcc.edu](mailto:burkesj@mybrcc.edu). Burkes is the Training Work Force Manager. There were between 7,000 and 12,000.00 last year at the Jackson Campus. He wants to see the campus bustling again. He aims to see economic growth through systems that educate and expand the work force. He is focused on expanded technology programs focused on creating jobs and sparking economic growth. His home office is in Jackson, Louisiana. He discussed the Dual Enrollment and the Allied Health program where high school students are brought on to the campus. He wants to see more programs taught there. He wants to see economic growth in the parish and is open to input on how BRCC and its programs can help spark economic growth. If enough people want a program, he can bring it to the Jackson campus. He needs a minimum of 10 students for any one program. There is a GED program at the main campus. There was a suggestion that one on the Jackson campus would be welcome. He is looking for what is lacking in the workforce. Also, looking for ways to get the word out.

.ADD-ON. - Ms. Dianne Parker thanks the mayor and the board and attorney Andy D'Aquila for writing her a letter regarding placing a tiny house on her property. She has decided she will not pursue this and upon her death will donate the property to the Town of Jackson.

#### MAINTENANCE REPORT -

MATT LEGGETT'S report indicates that they are scheduled to get the water project completed. The water wells should be completed within the week. Then, on to the water towers. The aerators will be installed this week.

GAS LEAK SURVEY – Mayor Norsworthy remarked on the report that the Town has less than 5 % gas leakage, which is incredible and far below the norm. Mayor Norsworthy thanked Matt and Chris for their hard work.

There is a water meter replacement project. There were 400 meters installed another 100 are left to be installed. The next two grants should give us the 300 meters we need to obtain to the complete the meter change out project. The meters cost f\$300.00. We apply for the grant to get these meters changed out.

The gas system project has been going well. The maintenance department has fixed 23 gas leaks but needed to do so to be in full compliance.

POLICE REPORT- Chief Harrell reported that in the month of March, 103 tickets were written, 90 tickets were paid, bench warrants were issued for those who did not pay. \$29,163.00 in fines was collected in the month of March. There were 400 calls last month – which were traffic stops, domestic calls and theft. There have been a rash of thefts. 4 bicycles were stolen. 4 bicycles were recovered. The police officers completed all training in one month including CPR and Taser certification. They made 4 narcotics arrests, affected two search warrants, and multiple narcotics investigations. Tasers are a safety item for the officers. AXON is upgrading their tasers and the ones currently used by the Police Department will be outdated, cannot get any cartridges for them. You must buy these on a monthly basis, they cannot be bought out

right. Looking at a cost of \$17,000.00 per year. A 5-10 year plan would cost \$184,000.00. These are costs that must be incurred. We now have officers, but the equipment will have to be replaced. Currently, they are applying for grants to pay for such equipment.

Mayor Norsworthy discussed the possibility of using some of the fines collected to pay for these things. The money collected goes into the general fund, but he would like to have some designated as surplus in order to cover the costs of some of this equipment. Chief Harrell indicated that it is important to him to abide by a set budget. He says that he is over budget now. But, he has put officers in place to clean up some of the things going on in the town. He would like to use some of the funds from the general fund in order to keep that budget balanced.

Chief Harrell spoke to the concern for the number of tickets that his officers are writing. He says that it seems like there are large numbers, however, when you look at the type of infractions – these individuals are operating vehicles without insurance, without proper driver's license, without registration, etc. It's not just speeding issues, they are not in compliance with the law.

#### CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORTT:

Officer Quiet reports that there are several residences that have debris, junk, overgrown vegetation, abandoned cars, dilapidated fences, etc. He is getting these individuals to correct the issues and clean up the properties or summon them to court.

With regard to the missing bicycles, with the help of the community, he was able to recover the bicycles. He turned to social media.

He emphasized the importance of taking in your belongings and locking up your house and cars. He encourages anyone who has cameras on their homes to register them with the police department. They are very useful in solving crime. If you do not have cameras, he encourages everyone to get them. There is a real growing concern for individuals riding bicycles with backpacks on. They have been responsible for some of the thefts happening.

ATTORNEY REPORT: None

#### MAYOR'S COMMENTS:

The Car Show and the Choctaw Event that were had did not seem to be as big this year. Ms. Parker contributed that Dustin, sponsor of this event, had less entries than last year. He broke even but there was \$1000.00 raised for the Food Bank. The weather was not great and there was the threat of really bad weather.

Ms. Parker invited everyone to the Easter Sunrise service at 7 am at Centenary College on College Street. It will last about one hour and there are 6 local churches participating.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Free and there was a second offered by Mr. Guillory. The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.