



**City of Jasper**  
 200 Burnt Mountain Road  
 Jasper, GA 30143  
 MINUTES | PUBLIC HEARING  
 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
 Monday, October 7, 2024, 5:30 PM

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mayor Kirk Raffield  
 Dr. Folsom Proctor  
 Anne Sneve  
 Jim Looney  
 Brandon Hannah

**STAFF**

Brandon Douglas  
 Kim Goldener  
 Andrew Collins  
 Mike Davis  
 John Sherrer  
 Mary Elizabeth Burgess  
 Elizabeth Brundige

**GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE**

See Attachment A

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

John Foust

**LEGAL COUNSEL**

David Syfan

**PRESS**

Mari Livsey – KnowPickens  
 Angela Reinhardt – Pickens Progress

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Call Meeting to Order	<b>PRESENTER:</b> Brandon Douglas – City Manager	
Mayor Raffield called the administrative public hearing meeting to order @ 5:30pm.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None	N/A	N/A

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Administrative Public Hearing	<b>PRESENTER:</b> Brandon Douglas – City Manager	
<p>Mr. Douglas provided his slideshow on the city tax millage rate explaining how property tax is calculated. The current millage rate is 5.221 and the proposed millage rate is 6.721. Mr. Douglas provided some additional information as it relates to the budget shortfall. One of the largest revenue shortfalls was with the estimated building permits revenue line item. The 2024 Budget had an estimated revenue amount of \$750,000, which will not be achieved and will require a fund balance transfer to balance the budget.</p> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lydia Marsicek – Discussions are over our heads. What will be done with funds once the shortfall has been met?</li> <li>2. Penny Dicus – Has all the questions and comments helped or possibly changed anyone’s mind about the proposed millage rate?</li> <li>3. Jeff White – stated that he is tired of not receiving any services from the city, he has called for the streets to be patrolled, and the roads are in need of repair, but nothing has been done.</li> <li>4. Marta Endara – Is there a chance for this proposed millage increase to be tabled until next year?</li> <li>5. Karen Degiorgio – Has the budget been gone through thoroughly? Why are our taxes going up when others have not?</li> <li>6. Jessica Crenshaw – My property has been reassessed in 2019 and again 2021. We are living paycheck to paycheck.</li> <li>7. Tony Davis – Everyone needs to get real honest you know you have already made your decision. How does a bad budget decision make it right to raise taxes on the citizens? You have no intention in listening to what we have to say.</li> <li>8. Sharon Champion – I live with my mother, and she is disabled. We cannot handle any more expenses; I will continue to work as much as possible to keep her in her home.</li> <li>9. Jeff Davis – If my family is broke, we don’t have big parties, like Downtown Live events or Marble Festivals. We cut our expenses, maybe you should ask the people what they want.</li> <li>10. Vickie Painter – Have you taken the seniors into consideration with this tax increase decision?</li> <li>11. David Shouse – I know Goodwill is really wanting to come to this area and this may be why, because everyone will need to start shopping at Goodwill. The City Manager has been here since 2019. Cove Rd has been an issue in the past and the development process do difficult to handle we will have a hard time in getting new businesses.</li> <li>12. ?? – Questioned the City Manager and Assistant City Manager’s salaries.</li> <li>13. Ms. Ray – Stated issues with sign permits, double water bill for her car wash business and the fact that she was told that her other building is too large for the parking lot space she has available.</li> <li>14. Patricia Badgley – Made some comments on the documents provided and stated that there are possibly some typical errors on them.</li> </ol>		

15. Frances Hollomon – With all the tax increases, you are asking me to give up a month of my fixed salary to pay them.
16. Donna Tucker – Wants to see more transparency. City lines are like a jigsaw puzzle. The city needs to cut out things that are not needed. Codes need to be updated to today's standards.
17. Jason Davis – Stated that she had sent emails to Dr. Proctor but has not received a response. Is this tax increase just a way to cause people to have to give up their homes or have their homes taken away from them?
18. Norma Matase – With the increased cost seniors will not have the money to spend and will be forced to rent instead of owning their homes.
19. Ms. Bunch – How can you ask people to pay this who only make 20-30 thousand a year?
20. Nancy Castor – How can people pay these taxes?
21. Diane Burge – What about the school taxes? Has there been any ideas on how to reduce cost, like gather donations, allow a business to donate and be able to put their name on an item? Has spoken to Rick Jasperse about the school taxes.
22. Ms. Debbie – Had a question about why there is so much chlorine in the water?

**Conclusion:** Mr. Brandon Douglas responded to the public comments as stated below:

- 2021, 2022 and 2023 tax millage rates were rolled back.
- Due to receiving the tax digest 30 days late and the required advertisement requirements, unfortunately we do not have the time to table this item.
- The elected may elect to use the fund balance to balance the budget, if this were the case it would require the amount of \$750,000 to be pulled.
- Publix will not be on the tax digest until 2026 and then the taxes would not come online until 2027.
- Tax millage rate is one of the few revenue line options that the city has some control over.
- The city's budget documents are expected to be released in November with an adoption date in December.
- The city does not have control over property assessments or school taxes.
- The city does attempt to receive grant monies whenever possible. Ms. Goldener has acquired over 4 million dollars in grant monies during her tenure.

The elected body provided their feedback to the group:

**Councilmember Jim Looney**

- I have received accusatory emails, and I can assure you that I am not a millionaire because I sit on the city council.
- Please understand this city has nothing to do with school taxes.
- There have been comments made that the decision has already been made, but it has not. This is a very difficult decision.
- Cost of elections is up to the county. They run the elections, and we pay them to handle the process.
- Taxes have been historically rolled back.
- The cost of living is up for everyone. Can this tax increase be tabled, that is hard to answer?
- The proposed budget has no increases in salaries or employees.

**Councilmember Anne Sneve**

- First, I wanted to thank all of our employees for the work they do.
- There is some confusion on who conducts the property tax assessments.
- We tried to be as consistent as possible with our responses to the citizens.

**Councilmember Brandon Hannah**

- Great to see everyone here and welcome the conversations that have been had.

**Councilmember Dr. Folsom Proctor, III**

- There are a lot of new people here, but there is a lot that I have taken care of either some of you and/or your families. You trusted me then and you can trust me now.
- When I came into office, we had poor police and fire departments who were not properly trained. We are now fully staffed in both departments who are properly trained.
- We have heard the complaints about our parks and have plans to make them better.
- I pray everyday about the decisions I make.
- We have set a plan in place and sometimes we will have to make hard decisions. This has not been easy on anyone.

**Mayor Raffield**

- Public hearings are for the elected officials to hear what the public has to say.
- We currently have some of the best staff and our staff are underpaid compared to other entities. You have firefighters who are saving people's lives. Yes, we have raised our public works staff's starting pay up to \$16.00 per hour because they deserve a livable wage.
- We encourage the use of social media and are thankful for the crowd's decorum during these public hearings.
- We encourage you to reach out to the county and go to their meetings to ask the questions that you have

about taxes or any matter that affects you.

- Inflation and unrealized building permit revenues are some of the causes for the shortfall.
- Please take some time to reach out and get to know us.
- The city's new charter put into place splitting the Mayor and City Manager's office. The Mayor is the Chief Elected Official and the City Manager handles the day-to-day operations.
- We ask for everyone to be civil to one another.

**Public Hearing ended @7:05pm**

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Call Meeting to Order/Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance	<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mayor Kirk Raffield	
Mayor Raffield called the meeting to order. Mayor Raffield called on Councilmember Dr. Folsom Proctor to confirm a quorum was present. Mayor Raffield called on Dr. Donald Johnson to provide the Invocation. Mayor Raffield called on Councilmember Jim Looney who led the Pledge of Allegiance.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Adopt Agenda	<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mayor Kirk Raffield	
<b>Discussion:</b> Councilmember Jim Looney requested to amend the agenda by moving New Business Item # 4 Consideration and Approval of Ordinance No. 2024-27 for Ad Valorem Tax Millage Rate to be the first item heard prior to proclamations in an effort to not keep anyone waiting any longer than necessary after the public hearing.		
<b>CONCLUSION:</b>		
Mayor Raffield called for a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Councilmember Brandon Hannah made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Anne Sneve provided a second. The motion to approve passed 4 to 0.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Approved	N/A	N/A

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> New Business moved from end of agenda- #4 Consideration and Approval of Ordinance No. 2024-27 for Ad Valorem Tax Millage Rate	<b>PRESENTER:</b> Lindsey Williams – Finance Director	
<b>Discussion:</b> Councilmember Jim Looney suggested a 1 mil increase instead of the proposed 1.5 mil. Councilmember Brandon Hannah questioned what services will be received for this tax increase?		
<b>Conclusion:</b>		
Mayor Raffield called for a motion. Councilmember Jim Looney made a motion to approve a 1 mil tax rate increase. Councilmember Dr. Folsom Proctor, III provided a second. Councilmember Anne Sneve voted against the motion. Councilmember Brandon Hannah voted against the motion. Due to a tie vote, Mayor Raffield voted to break the tie with a vote to approve the 1 mil increase. The motion passed 3 to 2.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Approved	N/A	N/A

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Proclamations	<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mayor Kirk Raffield	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Serve Pickens – October 19, 2024</li> <li>2. Fire Prevention Week – October 6-12, 2024</li> </ol>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Presentations	<b>PRESENTER:</b> John Sherrer – Fire Chief	
Jasper Fire Department would like to present Life Save awards to Jasper Fire and Pickens Fire personnel that successfully saved a life at two separate incidents in the City of Jasper. The first incident was a witnessed cardiac arrest located at the Carriage House restaurant and the second incident was a confined space rescue taking place on Bell Ave.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Public Hearings		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mary Elizabeth Burgess – Planning & Development Director	
<b>Unfinished Business:</b>			
1. Request for Variance for Parcel JA13 095 to utilize metal accents exceeding the 10% maximum allowance for the building façade provided in Zoning Ordinance Sec. 94-96 (c)(1)(c). The Planning Commission and staff recommend denial of variance. No one was present to speak on behalf of the applicant.			
Public Comment: A member of the public spoke. Mr. David Shouse stated he felt that the city was making things too restrictive, especially on the outskirts of downtown. He stated that Tractor Supply building is an eyesore and feels that there should be some comprising.			
Public Hearing ended @ 7:50pm.			
<b>New Business:</b>			
1. Request for Special Use Permit by applicant Dana Holt on behalf of Michael R. and Rebecca L. Jenkins, the owners of approximately 0.80 acres zoned C-2 General Commercial located at 10 Mountain City Drive (Parcel 030D 096 124), for a Special Use Permit to allow for a manufacturing establishment involving the mechanical or chemical conversion of raw materials into semi-finished or finished products (millwork for furniture manufacturing). The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of special use permit request.			
The applicant was not present due to sickness but felt comfortable with the hearing moving forward.			
Public Hearing ended @ 7:54pm.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
N/A	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Consent Agenda		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mayor Kirk Raffield	
1. Minutes from 09.05.2024 Council Work Session Meeting			
2. Minutes from 09.09.2024 Council Meeting			
Mayor Raffield called for a motion. Councilmember Jim Looney made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilmember Brandon Hannah provided a second. The motion to approve passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Approved	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Unfinished Business		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mary Elizabeth Burgess – Planning & Development Director	
1. #1 Consideration and Approval of Pinnacle RE Holdings LLC – Release and Settlement Agreement			
<b>Discussion:</b> Consideration and Approval of Pinnacle RE Holding LLC – Release and Settlement Agreement. Legal has reviewed and approved the agreement.			
<b>Conclusion:</b> Mayor Raffield called for a motion. Councilmember Anne Sneve made a motion to approve the Pinnacle RE Holdings LLC Release and Agreement. Council Member Jim Looney provided a second. The motion passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Approved	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Unfinished Business		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mary Elizabeth Burgess – Planning and Development Director	
2. Consideration and Approval Ordinance No. 2024-22 for the Request for a Special Use Permit for an 11-unit Cottage Housing Development at 0 Grandview Road – tabled until 11.04.2024 meeting.			
<b>Discussion:</b> Staff and Planning Commission has recommended approval of this request with conditions outlined in the ordinance and discussed in the presentation. The applicant was not present at the meeting.			
<b>Conclusion:</b> Mayor Raffield called for a motion on the Request for Ordinance No. 2024-22. Councilmember Jim Looney made a motion to table the request. Councilmember Anne Sneve provided a second. The motion to table was passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Tabled – continued to the 11.04.2024 meeting	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> New Business		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mary Elizabeth Burgess – Planning and Development Director	
1. Consideration of Ordinance No. 2024-25 for a Request for Variance for Parcel JA13 095 to utilize metal accents exceeding the 10% maximum allowance for the building façade provided in Zoning Ordinance Sec. 94-96 (c)(1)(c).			
<b>Discussion:</b> The applicant, Nick Taylor, on behalf of owner Blue Star Enterprises LLC, requests a variance to Sec. 94-96 (c)(1)(c) of the City of Jasper Zoning Ordinance to utilize metal accents exceeding the 10% maximum allowance for the building façade. The subject property consists of approximately 4.05 acres zoned C-2 General Commercial located at 294 East Church Street. The applicant seeks relief from the noted requirement to replace the existing cedar shake shingles on the Tractor Supply Co. building awning with ribbed metal. The Planning Commission and staff recommended denial of the variance request. The council discussed with legal that each variance is a case-by-case basis and does not create a legal precedence.			
<b>Conclusion:</b> Mayor Raffield called for a motion. Councilmember Brandon Hannah made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2024-25 for a Request for Variance for Parcel JA13 095. Councilmember Dr. Folsom Proctor, III provided a second. The motion passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Approved	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> New Business		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mary Elizabeth Burgess – Planning and Development Director	
2. Consideration of Ordinance No. 2024-26 for the Request for a Special Use Permit by applicant Dana Holt on behalf of Michael R. and Rebecca L. Jenkins, the owners of approximately 0.80 acres zoned C-2 General Commercial located at 10 Mountain City Drive (Parcel 030D 096 124), for a Special Use Permit to allow for a manufacturing establishment involving the mechanical or chemical conversion of raw materials into semi-finished or finished products (millwork for furniture manufacturing).			
<b>Discussion:</b> The applicant, Dana Holt, on behalf of owners Michael R. and Rebecca L. Jenkins, requests a Special Use Permit to allow for commercial furniture manufacturing. The subject property consists of approximately 0.8 acres zoned C-2 General Commercial located at 10 Mountain City Drive. Based on the analysis of this application, using the standards and criteria found in Section 94-246(d) of the Zoning Ordinance, staff recommends APPROVAL of the request for a SPECIAL USE PERMIT for a manufacturing establishment involving the mechanical or chemical conversion of raw materials into semi-finished or finished products			
<b>Conclusion:</b> Mayor Raffield called for a motion. Councilmember Anne Sneve made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2024-26 for the Request for a Special Use Permit. Councilmember Jim Looney provided a second. The motion to approve was passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Approved	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> New Business		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Lindsey Williams – Finance Director	
3. Consideration and Approval of Alcohol License for Made with Love Soul Food, Mr. Iver Graham Dixon located at 27 Burnt Mountain Rd, Jasper, GA.			
<b>Discussion:</b> Made with Love Soul Food has made an application to sell beer, wine, and distilled spirits for consumption on the premises at 27 Burnt Mountain Road. The background check had no discrepancies, and applicant met all requirements. Staff are requesting approval of this alcohol license.			
<b>Conclusion:</b> Mayor Raffield called for a motion. Councilmember Anne Sneve made a motion to approve the alcohol license for Made with Love Soul Food, Mr. Iver Graham Dixon. Councilmember Brandon Hannah provided a second. The motion passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Approved	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Committee Report Updates		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Councilmembers	
<b>Discussion:</b>			
Development & Local Infrastructure	Dr. Folsom Proctor – Council Member John Foust – Council Member		
Finance & Administration	Jim Looney – Council Member Anne Sneve – Council Member		
Enterprise	Dr. Folsom Proctor – Council Member Jim Looney – Council Member		
Parks & Properties	Brandon Hannah – Council Member John Foust – Council Member		
Public Safety	Brandon Hannah – Council Member Anne Sneve – Council Member		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
N/A	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Executive Session - Legal		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mayor Kirk Raffield	
<b>Discussion:</b>			
<b>Conclusion:</b>			
Mayor Raffield called for a motion to go into Executive Session @ 8:14pm for discussion of Legal & Personnel. Councilmember Brandon Hannah made a motion to go into Executive Session. Councilmember Anne Sneve provided a second. The motion passed 4 to 0.			
Mayor Raffield made a motion to end Executive Session @ 8:43pm and go back into council meeting. Councilmember Jim Looney made a motion to end the Executive Session. Councilmember Anne Sneve provided a second. The motion passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Approved	N/A	N/A	

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> Adjourn		<b>PRESENTER:</b> Mayor Kirk Raffield	
<b>Discussion:</b>			
<b>Conclusion:</b>			
Mayor Raffield called for a motion to adjourn 8:44pm. Councilmember Jim Looney made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Anne Sneve provided a second. The motion passed 4 to 0.			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	
Adjourn	N/A	N/A	

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mayor, Kirk D. Raffield

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 City Clerk, Lorrie Waters



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October 7, 2024

PRINT NAME	ADDRESS/OR BUSINESS AFFILIATION
Dianne Kuyper	11 Serenity Ln
Jayce Norrell	" "
Benny Dicus	Grand Circle.
Wesley Landrenea	Carbor Hills
Tara Bowker	2344 Refuge Rd.
AMY G H O R I E Y	
A. DAVIS	4 SCOTT DR.
Jason Davon	4 Scott Dr.
SUGAN BRYANT	235 Keeblee
Bob Bryant	" "
Daniel S. Wilk	309 Lower Grandview
Janice Youber	6 Piedmont view Ln.
Nickie Painter	179 Indianforest Rd.
JESSICA Creenshaw	370 WHISPERING WINDS DRIVE
Wesley Kuehn	1946 Indian forest Rd
Maren DeGiorgio	65 Myrtle St.
JEFF WHITE	118 WILDLIFE RIDGE RD
Cindy DeMair Chris D	475 S. Main St
Sharon Champion	315 S Main St.
Greg A.	<del>315</del> 64 Jordan Ln

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PRINT NAME	ADDRESS/OR BUSINESS AFFILIATION
Pam Briardly	Pendley Creek Brewing Co.
Ann Lopez	103 South Main st
Melissa Bartley	Hwy 53 W
<del>Sharon Townsend</del> Charm	Talking Rock Brewery 53W
Nera Bunch	
Dave Terry	Jasper, GA
Susann Morgan	770 E Church St
Gail & Ralph Ray	669 Dove Rd
Leslie Hedrick	75 Piedmont View Ln.
Sharon Hollomon	11 Piedmont View Ln.
Ed Davis	- Jasper, GA.
Robbie David	- Jasper, GA.
Tony Davis	400 Georgia St Jasper
Scarlett Peck	190 Whispering Pebbles Trl
Mary Rogers	343 Hobson Dr.
Angela Purpus	PO Box 70704 30177
SCOTTY CHADWICK	10 BELL AVE, JASPER, GA 30149
TISHA GARREN	" "
Amanda Carter	33 Piedmont View Ln
MANNY SWANSON	30 N. MAIN ST JASPER.





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PRINT NAME

ADDRESS/OR BUSINESS AFFILIATION

DIANE MANTZ	10 PIEDMONT VIEW LANE
Jennifer McDonald	Hill & Vine
NORMA MATASY	23 Serenity Lane
Theresa/William D. Kell	725 Stivers Rd.
Norma Tucker	49 Bryant St.
Dr. Donald Johnson,	POB 1512, Jasper, GA 30143



