

JASPER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Regular Meeting-September 09, 2025

The Jasper City Council of the City of Jasper met in-person on **Tuesday, September 09, 2025.**

Members present:

Mayor Kim Lape; Council members: Deb Plahn, Zach Kounkel, Tim Houg, Stacie Smith;

Employees present: Admin/Clerk-Treas: Deputy Clerk/Treas.: Maggie Erickson; Public Works Superintendent: Brian Thode; Public Works: Kevin Gum

Pipestone Star: Kyle Kupal;

Meulebroeck, Taubert & Co – 2024 Audit Results – Matt Taubert

Community members: Cynthia Jamison, Angel & Trinidad Garcia, Angelica Rieck, Brian Sievert

Mayor Kim Lape called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance;

Agenda Approval:

Removed: N/A

Added:

- Kevin cell phone
- Cigarettes butts in front of bar
- Conflict of interest policy
- Unlicensed pickup at the truck parking
- Auxiliary getting key to QCC
- Edging around City Hall and Memorial Hall
- Yard waste

Motioned by: Plahn 1st/Houg 2nd. All ayes followed

Meeting with Meulebroeck, Taubert & Co – 2024 Audit Results – Matt Taubert

- Matt Taubert – 2024 Audit Results – Began on page 3 of the report which is where they render their opinion on the financial statement. One qualification was in the report, which was the Jasper Volunteer Firefighters Relief Association does not have a GASB Statement No. 68 financial report that is typically provided by an actuarially company and runs about \$2,500.00. He continued that as long as they (the auditors) put this paragraph in their report, it saves us that cost. Until it becomes a negative consequence of that cost, he recommended we continued doing it the way it has been done. Mentioned that Pipestone has to have one due to their size. Matt then went into the financial data, which was more detailed at the back of the report. He began with the General Fund. Budgeted Revenue - \$618,849.00 Actual - \$1,267,472.00 Variance - \$648,623.00. He highlighted 2 reasons for the difference – Small City Development Grant - \$380,831.00 &

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Donations - \$220,866.00. Neither were budgeted for, so it makes sense that the revenue would be that high. Even if those two items were removed, the city was still over by about \$48,000.00. General Government – Budget - \$394,100.00 Actual - \$404,191.00 Variance – -\$10,091.00 Comparing to 2023, it was within a few hundred dollars from 2023 actual. No significant differences. Police Contract Budget - \$58,000.00 Actual - \$52,287.00 Variance - \$5,713. Fire – Budget - \$58,000.00 Actual \$53,000.00 Variance - \$4,978.00. Streets – Budget - \$163,750.00 Actual \$80,563.00 – Variance - \$83,187.00. Recreation – Budget - \$9,400 Actual \$286,190.00 Variance - \$-276,790. Miscellaneous – Budget \$8,560.00 Actual \$446,874.00 Variance \$-438,314.00 (due to revolving housing fund and capital outlay). Other Financing Sources – Budget \$15,000 Actual \$3,250 Variance - \$-11,750.00. Total Expenditures – Budget - \$633,810.00 Actual - \$1,270,840 – Variance \$-637,030.00. Within \$157 of the actual budget. General fund ends with \$695,807.00 State likes to see 3-5/mo. average expenditures in fund balance (\$280,000.00 fund balance at a minimum), our fund balance is about 250% funded, which is really good. Could operate about 1 year without revenue. Debt outstanding on emergency services building, just over \$70,000.00. Special Revenue Funds – Fire Department – Budget - \$53,484.00 Actual - \$61,575.00 Variance - \$8,091. Expenditures - Fire Department - \$82,481.00 Actual - \$91,670.00 – Variance - \$-9,189.00. 2024 Deficit - \$-23,095 Fund has an overall deficit of \$-56,283.00. Suggested to consider a transfer from general fund to get it at least to a positive to give results a true representation. Special Revenue Funds – Ambulance – Budget - \$53,750.00 Actual - \$103,507.00 Variance - \$49,757.00. Expenditures – Ambulance – Budget \$48,925.00 Actual - \$41,396.00 Variance - \$7,529.00. Ends the year with a positive balance of \$255,214.00. Enterprise funds – Water Fund – Revenue \$111,345.00 Expenditures \$159,978.00. Variance – \$-48,633.00. Ends year with positive balance of \$115,529.00. Sewer Fund – Revenue - \$29,943.00 Expenditures \$60,838.00 Variance \$-30,895.00. Ends year with positive balance of \$254,505.00 Garbage Fund – Budget \$68,255.00 Expenditures \$64,073.00 Variance \$4,182.00. End year with positive balance of \$36,205.00. EDA housing Fund – Budget \$3,953.00 Expenditures \$259,131.00 Variance \$-255,178.00. End year with positive balance of \$10,425.00. Wellness Center Fund – Budget \$14,798.00 Expenditures \$21,089.00 Variance \$-6,291.00. End year with positive balance of \$20,266.00. Overall comment was that the city utility funds are doing well. Went over Auditor Report on Internal Control and Compliance. Had 2 findings – 2024-I – Lack of segregation of duties (is in almost all audits they do for small towns and is found to be economically infeasible to design the system of internal control to adequately provide for the segregation of duties). 2024-II = Lack of expertise by City personnel to prepare financial statement in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (Similar to 2024-I - no reflection of work done at the city, just have to comment on it in the report). Management letter – Enterprise Fund Profitability – be aware of enterprise funds and though it may not be popular, you need to charge a fee for services. Recommended Adjusting Journal Entries – if adjustments need with approval, instruct the clerk to make the proper adjustments to cash for the year ended December 31, 2024. Prior Year Comments – “The current City Clerk/Treasurer has implemented many measures to improve on prior management letter comments. A more organized system of filing invoices/receipts, timeliness of monthly bank reconciliations, and timely backup of city

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computers/data are among many changes that have been made.” Trinidad has done a great job and made changes to make things considerably more organized. Forgot to bring the boxes with him to return. Communication With Those Charged With Governance – Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices – nothing for 2024, but things coming down the pipe. Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit – none. Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements – none. Disagreements with Management – none. Consultations with Other Independent Accountants – none. Other Audit Findings or Issues – Comment about how things are in really good shape from an organizational standpoint. Trinidad asked about a cash balance report from Scott. Matt said that Scott has it completed and would bring it in person. Plahn asked about hearing that a firm that writes the city audit, can not do the city audit. Matt said that it is the professional standard and that they do it internally at his firm and that it has been acceptable up to this point. It is possible that it could be changed to have to be a completely different firm, which would be an additional expense. Trinidad asked if there was going to be a change is the threshold amount for when a city is required to do an audit. Matt said yes, but it was for federally funded programs. From an auditing standpoint, for a city, they have to have a very low amount of funds. Matt then left the meeting.

Lape then requested a motion to adjourn the meeting and go into a public hearing.

Motioned by: Plahn 1st/Smith 2nd. All ayes followed

Amend Chapter 4 of City Code – Beer, Wine and Liquor Licensing and regulation section 4.53 of the Jasper City Code – Removed off-sale restrictions on New Years Day, January 1st and Independence Day, July 4th.

Lape opened the floor for public comment. No comments made by public.

Motion to approve by: Houg 1st/Smith 2nd. All ayes followed.

Motion to close public hearing: Smith 1st/Kounkle 2nd. All Ayes followed

Motion to re-open regular council meeting.

Motioned by: Plahn 1st/Houg 2nd. All ayes followed.

Community Input:

- Jim Baustian (presented by Maggie Erickson) – There is a sign near his house that says Children at Play and it is no longer visible. Asked if it can be removed. Council discussed and said it was so close to the park and chose to replace the sign. **Motioned by: Plahn 1st/Smith 2nd. All ayes followed.**
- David Ahrendt - Pod on 2nd St. (presented by Maggie Erickson) – Wondering how long it was allowed to sit there. Home owner was given permission to have it there, but there was no term of how long. Smith asked how long campers were allowed to be on the street and it is 24 hours. Kounkel suggested sending a letter to have it removed. Lape mentioned it had been there over a

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month and Brian Thode said it was since Quarry Days. Agreed to send a letter giving 1 week from today to have it removed. **Motioned by: Smith 1st/Plahn 2nd. All ayes followed.**

- Duane Hassing (presented by Maggie Erickson) – Requesting help for clean up days. Says he has some appliances that he would like to bring to junk days and is unable to bring it to the curb. Kounkel suggested he call his landlord to assist with moving the things. No group has reached out to step up to help with this particular problem this year like in years past. Maggie will be reaching out to let him know.
- Angelica Rieck – Handicap Parking – Lape asked how it was going with the ramp that the city put in. Rieck stated that it was a little steep and that going up it was rougher and said the back sides of walkers get stuck going up. Rieck asked if it could be leveled out a little bit. Also said wheelchairs get stuck on the top of it. Cynthia Jamison stated there is also no designated handicap parking, making it a longer distance for people to get to the ramp. Plahn asked if there was an option to get a wider ramp. Thode said it was already a 4 foot across ramp and wheelchair accessible doors are 3 feet, so it should be wide enough. Sievert pointed out that elderly loose muscle mass and coordination, so that may be why it feels smaller to some. Kounkel pointed out that there are additional ramps at the ends of the block. Smith asked what other cities do, pointing out that Pipestone has businesses and they do not have ramps in the middle of the block and only use the ends of their blocks, Plahn and Lape agreed. Smith also expressed that if we keep trying to accommodate things, and there are always the issues, such as we get the ramps (acknowledging that things have flaws), and then asked where do we stop. Brian Thode commented that we have put quite a bit of effort to put the ramp there already. Plahn said she does not know of any town that has a handicap ramp in the middle of a block and that they are at the end of the blocks. Then empathized with the need for it. Smith pointed out that it doesn't seem like we will ever be satisfied with any result and pointed out that if we cut into the cement, it would damage the property at the bottom of the lot. Plahn agreed that if we continue with the ramp, there should be at least 1 designated handicap parking spot on either side of the ramp. Brian Thode pointed out that to be within rights, they have to take up two spots to be van accessible. Sievert pointed out that there should be at least 1 per 25 parking spots. Brian Thode said there is one at each end of the blocks. Lape asked if it was possible to have 2 of those ramps in the spot. Rieck agreed to that. **Motion to purchase another ramp by: Kounkel 1st/house 2nd. All ayes followed.** Brian also said they would also paint lines in the spot the ramp is in. **Motioned by: Kounkel 1st/Smith 2nd. All ayes followed.**

Review and approve minutes from:

- Regular Meeting on Tuesday, August 12, 2025
Motioned by: Plahn 1st/Houg 2nd. All ayes followed

Review/Approve receipts and claims to date.

Motioned by: Houg 1st/Kounkel 2nd. All ayes followed

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Delinquent Sewer/Water/Garbage:

- Sending out delinquent notices the end of this week.
- JDC 115 Wall St W – Permanent Disconnect of Water/Sewer – Brian Thode – did that yesterday. Plumbing is not typical. Water line did not have a shut off to it like every house does because the City used to own it. Brian said when they do take it down, he will have to get the water line out away from the building. Already put a 2in curb stop. Building coming down this fall. When it does come down, Brian will cap the sewer out back.

Wellness Center/QCC:

- Gym Maintenance – Professional Review – Public Works Supt spoke with him and is willing to do it.

New Business:

- **Jasper Fire Department** – add new member, Devon Dixon – **Motioned by: Houg 1st/Plahn 2nd. All eyes followed.**
- **New MN paid Leave Law** – Jan 1st, Minnesota launches a state paid program. Training is Worthington Sept. 25th. Maggie and Renae will attend.
- **3D Security Quote** – Current system was federally banned in the US. Most places are fazing them out because parts and updates are unavailable. Can have an impact on Federal Grants. Cameras go down with power outages. Smith asked to table it until we get a quote from Convergent.
- **New Hire** – Hired Renae Thode, starting in the office 9/22
- **Kevin's Cell Phone Number** – On the website. Need new magnets. Order maybe 200
- **Cigarette butts in front of the bar/cafe** – Becoming a problem. City paying for an ashtray to go out front.
- **Conflict of interest policy** – Legal provided a sample of a Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Everyone look over it and make notes/changes and bring it back for next meeting. Kounkel and Plahn have already received comments about hiring Renae.

Old Business:

- **Emergency Plan Safety Data sheets** – Still working on it
- **Accessible Parking on Mainstreet** – Already talked about.
- **Property Letters 3rd round** – Time to get legal involved. Kim and Maggie going around on Saturday to check the properties.
- **Holiday Off Sale ordinance – Ordinance NO. 25-02** – taken care of
- **Adopting Rules for the Jasper City Park – Resolution 20-252 – Motion to approve by: Plahn 1st/Kounkel 2nd. All eyes followed.**
- **Budget Meeting** – Had it and at a lull right now. Need the Sheriffs amount. Tabled for now.
- **Property/Casualty Insurance Renewal – Require inventory list** – Ambulance – Kim Drew taking care of theirs. Fire Department – Kip taking care of theirs and Lape is willing to help them if necessary. City office has not begun theirs yet.
- **Geronimo Power – Expand Out Community Solar Subscription** – Still waiting on a response

