



CITY OF JACKSONVILLE



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JACKSONVILLE NEWSLETTER

August 2022

Mayor

Donna Bowen

Council

Mike McClain

Jim Lewis

Ken Gregg

Steve Casaleggio

Andrea Thompson

Scott Selbe

City Administrator

Jeff Alvis

City Hall

Monday-Thursday

8:30 am—4:00 pm

Friday

8:30 am—2:00 pm

Public Works

Monday-Friday

8:30 am—4:00 pm

After Hours Dispatch

(emergencies only)

541-776-7206

Police

Office 541-899-7100

Dispatch 541-776-7206

Fire

Office 541-899-7246

Dispatch 541-776-7206

Planning

541-899-6873

Monday, Tuesday,

Thursday, Friday

8:30 am—2:00 pm

Inspection Request

541-484-9043 or

800-358-8034

Rising Costs of Fire Safety—*Written by Councilor Andrea Thompson*

If you ask any resident what they enjoy most about living in our City, the answers are pleasantly varied. Some cite the small-town atmosphere or the presence of the Woodlands Trails system. Others cite Britt's offering of world class concerts or the proximity to area wineries. There are many reasons for Jacksonville's broad appeal. On the other hand, if you ask residents what concerns them most about our area, the answer is almost always the same: the possibility of a major wildland fire.

Our city and its residents are working together to mitigate the danger. Currently, in our small town of less than 3000 residents, we have 27 active Firewise communities led by a fervent group of volunteers. The City Council established a Safety Subcommittee which has prepared emergency materials, evacuation maps and raised awareness about types of highly flammable vegetation, etc. The Fire Chief has written dozens of grant proposals and has received over \$ 2 million in grant dollars toward fuel reduction and fire services. Thanks to a seismic safety grant the new fire station is nearing completion.

Yet despite all of this, there continue to be challenges for funding. Cities across the nation are struggling with the escalating costs of fire protection. Add that to the fact that fires continue to grow more intense and more common, particularly in the urban wildland interface.

On July 5th the Jacksonville City Council approved a first reading of Ordinance 02022-002, to raise the Fire Protection surcharge by \$ 7.00 next year, followed by an additional increase of \$1.00 each year for the next three years. This Ordinance was based upon the recommendation of the City's Budget Committee which met in May. The City has not raised the surcharge in 7 years, even as costs continue to rise. I assure you that we take no joy in raising a financial burden on our residents. We have kept the increase very small—in fact, about the cost of a Starbucks double latte a month. The City understands the high priority our residents put on fire safety, and we understand as well our commitment to provide the highest level of safety to our residents. It continues to be an amazing feat that a town this size has its own 24/7 fire department! Even with this modest increase, it continues to be a bargain.

In last month's City Newsletter which accompanies the monthly water bill, residents were given a number of charts describing the cost of police and fire services throughout the Rogue Valley for 2021-2022. Without much context, some residents were puzzled and confused by the information. Others simply wondered why this material appeared. I think I can simplify this information. With a permanent tax rate of \$1.84 per thousand, the second lowest in Jackson County, it is extremely difficult to provide the services our residents expect. Compare this to the tax rate in Ashland of \$4.28/thousand or Central Point at \$4.47/thousand or Medford at \$5.23/thousand or Phoenix at \$3.64/thousand. On a \$400k home, property taxes in Ashland generate \$1712; in Central Point, \$1788; in Medford, \$2092 and in Jacksonville, \$736. Simply put, this is why we rely on safety surcharges to offer a high level of safety services.

Neighboring communities with healthy tax rates also have fire and safety surcharges, many of them significantly higher than our own. The charts included provide additional comparative details.

The bottom line is that with our new surcharge rate of \$42, each household will pay about \$500 for full time fire service. Considering the rise in home values over the last several years, this is indeed a bargain.

Residents may apply for reduced and/or waivers of the surcharge by confidentially contacting City Recorder, Angela Watson, about the Surcharge Relief Program.

Oregon Department of Forestry Tasked with Developing a Comprehensive Wildfire Risk Map

In 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 762. This comprehensive legislation provided more than \$220 million to help Oregon modernize and improve wildfire preparedness through three key strategies: creating fire-adapted communities, developing safe and effective response, and increasing the resiliency of Oregon’s landscapes.

As part of this legislation, the Department of Forestry was directed, in coordination with Oregon State University, to oversee the development of a comprehensive wildfire risk map, assign one of five wildfire risk classes to properties, and identify the wildland-urban interface.

ODF sent out letters to properties this month advising what risk class the property has been identified as being in, and whether the property is in the wildland-urban interface. The letter provides a website to view a detailed homeowner’s report for your property outlining your wildfire risk classification and what it means. <https://oregonexplorer.info/topics/wildfire-risk>. There are multiple resources available on the website.

All questions should be directed to ODF. If you disagree with your risk designation, you have 60 days to appeal from the date of the notice. To appeal, please visit <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/pages/appeals.aspx> for more information. If you cannot access your view your homeowner’s report, or need an appeal form, please call 503-945-7310, and a copy will be mailed to you.

City Council Meetings At-A-Glance

A synopsis of the previous month’s City Council agenda items and discussions so you, the citizens of Jacksonville, know what is going on in your local government. **If you would like more detail on any of the discussion items, please review the summaries for each item in the Council packet on the City website.**

July 5, 2022—City Council Meeting

An Executive Session was held prior to the Council Meeting, per ORS 192.660 2 (a) and (d) for discussion on Personnel and Labor Negotiations—the executive session was closed to the public.

- **Approval of New Hire—Jullie Flenner.** Jullie Flenner was hired to fill the vacant Utility Clerk position and will also be Finance Assistant/Office Manager.
- **First Reading of Ordinance No. O2022-022—An Ordinance Increasing the Monthly Amount of the Fire Protection Surcharge as Identified in Chapter 3.01, Fire Protection Act, of the Jacksonville Municipal Code.** Council approved the first reading of Ordinance No. O2022-002 with the second reading by title only and adoption of the ordinance on July 19, 2022.

July 19, 2022—City Council Work Session

- **Jacksonville Municipal Code Title 4.** Councilor Casaleggio summarized the proposed revisions to Title 4 of the JMC with discussion by Council.

July 19, 2022—City Council Meeting

- **Public Hearing for Petition to Consider Vacation of a Portion of a Public Pedestrian Easement.** After the public hearing was closed, Council approved the petition and directed staff to bring back an ordinance for the abandonment of the public pedestrian easement.
- **Second Reading and Adoption of Ordinance No. O2022-002—An Ordinance Increasing the Monthly Amount of the Fire Protection Surcharge as Identified in Chapter 3.01, Fire Protection Act, of the Jacksonville Municipal Code.** Council approved the second reading and adopted Ordinance No. O2022-002. The increase will be effective 30 days from the date of adoption, August 19, 2022.

***Audio and Approved Minutes from each of the City Council Meetings are located on the City website.
www.jacksonvilleor.us***

Public Meeting Schedule	Date	Time	Place
Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting	August 2nd, 2022	2:30 PM	City Hall –Assembly Room
City Council Meeting	August 2nd, 2022	6:00 PM	City Hall –Assembly Room
Planning Commission Meeting	August 20th, 2022	6:00 PM	City Hall—Assembly Room
City Council Work Session	August 16th, 2022	12:00 PM	City Hall—Assembly Room
Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting	August 16th, 2022	2:30 PM	City Hall- Assembly Room
Committee for Citizen Involvement Meeting	August 22nd,2022	5:15 PM	City Hall-Assembly Room
HARC Meeting	August 24th,2022	5:00 PM	City Hall—Assembly Room
Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting	August 30th,2022	2:30 PM	City Hall—Assembly Room