



Box 29
Jackson, Minnesota 56143
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"Growing With Jackson"

KKOJ PROGRAMS AND ISSUES.....JANUARY THROUGH MARCH 2015

In accordance with the Federal Communications Commission rules, the following, in the opinion of KKOJ, are the problems and needs of the Jackson Community for the period noted above. They are not necessarily listed in the order of importance. Each is addressed by significant public affairs, and/or public service programming to those needs.

Issues

1. Proposal for Roundabout in Jackson is defeated by City Council vote

State-approved plans to install a roundabout at the intersection of Highway 71 and Industrial Parkway in Jackson were defeated on January 27, 2015 on a vote of the Jackson City Council.

A motion to move ahead with the roundabout contingent upon county approval of its share of funding, was defeated at the City Council meeting with Mayor Wayne Walter casting the deciding vote.

Mayor Walter said he looked at it from a financial aspect regarding the estimated \$334,200 the City would have to contribute toward the \$1.85 million project. Mayor Walter said the City has other places they can spend that money. Joining Walter in opposition to the roundabout were council members Mike Handevitdt and Brandon Finck, as well as Dave Cushman. Voting in favor of the roundabout were Ken Temple, Fred Bern and Donnie Schoenrock.

Handevitdt said while cost was an issue for him, he was also concerned with the number of citizens opposed to a roundabout. Schoenrock admitted the overwhelming public sentiment is against a roundabout, but questioned why those who were opposed were not present at the meeting to voice their opinion.

Responsive Programming

KKOJ aired a news story about the Jackson City Council's discussion and action to not move forward with the installation of a roundabout at the intersection of Highway 71 and Industrial Parkway Road in Jackson. The story aired on KKOJ on January 28, 2015 on newscasts at 7 a.m., 7:50 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. The length of the story was 4 minutes, 35 seconds.



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2. Jackson County Commissioners approve sale of Jackson Speedway

Jackson County Commissioners have agreed to sell the Jackson Speedway to Windom businessman Tod Quiring. Though the purchase agreement had yet to be finalized and a closing date set, Commissioners on March 3, 2015, unanimously authorized the sale pending County Attorney review.

Terms of the agreement call for the sale of the speedway to Quiring for \$500,000 paid over a period of five years, with a \$100,000 down payment. The resolution of sale approved at the March 3, 2015 Commission meeting designates sale proceeds to the County's Capital Projects Fund.

Commission approval of the sale comes two weeks after Luke Lundt, a spokesman for Quiring, said the founder of Big Game Tree Stands and avid racing enthusiast is prepared to spend a lot of money to improve the facility over the next three seasons to make it one of the Upper Midwest's premier sprint car racing locations. Planned improvements include shortening the track and improving the surface and drainage, relocating and improving pits, installing a new scoreboard, raising current seats and adding additional seating, paving walkways, expanding concession stands and adding an observation deck.

Commissioners will retain as part of the purchase agreement first right of refusal on any future sale of the speedway, along with an easement for County Fair Board usage of the facilities.

Responsive Programming

KKOJ aired a news story about the Jackson County Commission's approval to sell the Jackson Speedway to Windom, Minnesota businessperson Tod Quiring. The story aired on KKOJ on March 4, 2015 on newscasts at 7 a.m., 7:50 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m., and 6 p.m. The length of the story was 3 minutes, 45 seconds.



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3. Downtown Jackson Parking Limits Remain the Same

Results of a survey conducted by the Jackson Business Development Committee showed an overwhelming majority of downtown business owners prefer to leave the existing two-hour limit on downtown parking in effect rather than extend it or eliminate it. One Main Street business owner earlier petitioned the City Council to consider changing the limits which Council Members declined to do at their February 3, 2015 City Council meeting.

Of the 29 business owners who lodged an opinion on the issue, nearly three-fourths preferred the two-hour limit stay as it is. Five, or 17 percent, said they were OK with eliminating the two-hour parking limit, while the remaining three, about 10 percent, thought it best to extend the limit.

Staci Beseke, administrative assistant in the Jackson Economic Development Office, said JBDC members attempted to contact all downtown business owners for the purposes of the survey. She said a few were out of town and a few had no opinion either way. Beseke reported some business owners opposed to changing the two-hour parking limit feared tenants in the apartments above Main Street businesses and business owners or employees would park on Main Street long term, leaving less available parking for customers. Others who voiced support for a change said their businesses provide services that occasionally require more than two hours of time. Beseke also reported a few business owners expressed a desire for more parking downtown, especially over the noon hour. It also was suggested parking limits be kept the same on Main Street but eliminated on the side streets.

Responsive Programming

KKOJ aired a news story about the survey that was conducted among downtown Jackson businesspeople regarding parking. The story aired on KKOJ on February 4, 2015 on newscasts at 7 a.m., 7:50 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. The length of the story was 3 minutes, 15 seconds.



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4. Minnesota West Seeks Special Funding from the Minnesota Legislature

Minnesota West Community and Technical College is looking to State Senator Julie Rosen and State Representative Bob Gunther for help to fund an indoor powerline lab at the Jackson campus of Minnesota West. The two local legislators met with college faculty, staff and students and private industry representatives on March 6, 2015 to discuss the project and other initiatives for workforce training.

The powerline project at Minnesota West is on hold because it was passed over for state bonding funds last year, and the next bonding fund cycle is not until 2016. The college's hope is that, due to the projected state budget surplus, there may be a chance for bonding considerations in 2015 and the project could get funded this year.

Barbara McDonald, interim president of Minnesota West, said powerline is one of those areas where there's a significant need across the state. Currently, the college's powerline training facilities are outdoors, just off of Riverside Drive. There are no permanent restrooms or running water. Minnesota West's proposal is to demolish a two-story portion of the current campus structure on the west side and construct the lab in its footprint for a total cost of \$2,410,009. In addition to attracting more students to fill the projected wealth of high paying powerline jobs, the new lab would be available for use by private organizations, such as the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, for a small rental fee. McDonald pointed out despite proposing both the new lab and a geo-thermal project, Minnesota West did not receive any state bonding awards last year.

Gunther cautioned the state's surplus is in high demand. Discussion at the meeting also included the broader issue of educating workers to fill technical jobs such as welding. The Jackson campus is on track to open a new state-of-the-art welding facility this fall, with help from industry partners, including AGCO.

Responsive Programming

KKOJ aired a news story about Minnesota West seeking special funding from the Minnesota Legislature for the Jackson campus. The story aired on KKOJ on March 9, 2015 on newscasts at 7 a.m., 7:50 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. The length of the story was 4 minutes, 50 seconds.



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5. Planning Underway For New Fort Belmont Trail Extension

The Jackson City Council is ready to help extend the City's walking and biking trail system from Springfield Parkway north along Highway 71. It just wants to know where it's headed from there first.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation recently suggested three possible routes for the trail set to run along the east side of Highway 71 north from Springfield Parkway. The first would run up the hill to the golf course driveway, at which point the trail would cross a median-free segment of highway. The second option calls for the trail to be extended to a point halfway between the golf course driveway and Industrial Parkway and cross the highway with the assistance of a median refuge and possibly LED-enhanced signage. The third route runs the trail all the way to Industrial Parkway and pushes it across the highway near the intersection of the two roadways.

The Friends of the Jackson County Trails group has indicated a preference for the second option, Jackson City Administrator Jennifer Bromeland told City Council members at their March 17, 2015 meeting, with the crossing between the north side of the golf course and the south side of Asa Auto Plaza. However, before committing \$50,000 in cost share funds to the possible \$300,000 project, City officials thought it prudent to get an idea of where the trail will head once it crosses the highway. Bromeland said if the City is going to spend \$50,000 in taxpayer funds, she thought the City needs to know where the trail is going to go.

Mayor Wayne Walter appointed council members Dave Cushman and Brandon Finck to meet with City staff, trails group members, the county trails director and perhaps a Fort Belmont representative to hammer out a plan in the near term regarding the trail.

Responsive Programming

KKOJ aired a news story about the Jackson City Council's discussion regarding the future route of the Fort Belmont trail where it crosses Highway 71. The story aired on KKOJ on March 18, 2015 on newscasts at 7 a.m., 7:50 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. The length of the story was 3 minutes, 50 seconds.