



# Edwardsville Officials Remember Jack Burns's Mentorship, Humor, And More

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter  
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EDWARDSVILLE - At their first meeting since the [passing of Alderman Jack Burns](#), members of the Edwardsville City Council, Mayor Art Risavy, and other city officials spoke kindly of the late alderman, recalling his sense of humor, mentorship, and more.

“Jack was a trusted friend - somebody I respected, cared about. He was an advocate for the people in his ward and the people of the City of Edwardsville,” Mayor Art Risavy said. “He was a veteran, he was a successful banker, he was a Main Street Community volunteer, and he was a Scott Air Force Base honorable commander representing the

City of Edwardsville - and most recently, I learned that he actually tried out for the St. Louis Cardinals.



“No one can replace Jack. I personally will never forget the impact he’s had on my life.”

Each of the aldermen had something positive to say about their time serving with Burns on the City Council, whether for years or just a few months.

“Jack was a good listener, and a storyteller, and a consummate helper,” Alderman William Krause said. “In every meeting, no matter the seriousness of the issue, he was able to tackle it with a level mind and good nature. Whatever the outcome, he could move forward taking none of the debate with him. Jack was kindness made whole, and I will miss serving with him.”

Alderman SJ Morrison said he and Burns were sworn in to the City Council on the same day so he always thought of Burns as his “classmate” on the council - one he didn’t always agree with, but always mutually respected.

“Jack had a joy about him, didn’t he? That, we’re really going to miss,” Morrison said. “He also brought a level of civility and mutual respect to every conversation, and I appreciate that about him, because we didn’t always agree and sometimes meetings got heated ... and nothing was ever personal - it’s just a level of civil discourse that doesn’t exist in modern political discourse unfortunately, and that’s just a testament to him, to his integrity and to what he valued. He loved this city like crazy, and it showed in how he represented the city.”

Alderdwoman Elizabeth Grant said Burns was “the most compassionate leader” she’s ever worked with. She added Burns was “so much fun,” and that her only regret was that she hadn’t known him longer.

Alderdwoman Andrea Miracle said while her time serving with Burns was much shorter, he was just as influential on her career as an alderwoman.

“I only got to sit next to Jack for a couple of months, but he had a huge impact on my life,” Miracle said. “He was a great role model for how to be an alderman, and I appreciate the few short months he mentored me.”

Jennifer Warren shared a comment someone made at Burns’s funeral, which was held on Friday, Oct. 13, 2023. The person recalled occasionally going out with Burns for a drink after work, and said by the time they left, Burns seemingly knew everybody in the bar. Warren said to her, that sounded “just like Jack.”

Alderman Chris Farrar agreed with everyone’s comments, adding that Burns “made the mundane fun” and “will definitely be missed.”

City Clerk Michelle Boyer described Burns as “a role model, a mentor, and a cheerleader” who always had a positive word to say and a smile, adding she will “really miss him and his friendship.”

City Attorney Jeff Birkbigler said he worked with Burns for six years in his City Council capacity, but also worked with Burns on projects at Main Street Community Center.

“He used humor as a great tool, but he was always very serious about city business,” Birkbigler said. “He carefully listened to what city staff had to say. We’ll miss him, but I know we’re all glad we got to work with him, too.”

Pastor John Roberts then said a few words in prayer, asking the public to pray for Burns’ family and encouraging the City Council to honor his legacy.

“Lord, we mourn his passing, and we pray that you ... be with the rest of the City Council and the Mayor as they seek to go forward and to honor his legacy,” Roberts said. “May we be inspired by his example and encouraged by his humor, his wisdom, and his commitment to serving others.”

Before continuing with the rest of the night’s agenda items, Mayor Risavy said Burns would want city officials to keep moving forward.

“If you knew Jack, you know that he would want us to continue tonight and he would want us to have fun,” he said.

A full recording of the Oct. 17, 2023 meeting is available at the top of this story or on the [City of Edwardsville Facebook page](#).