CITY OF JOPLIN
COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ITEM:
Council Bill No. 2025-017 – AN ORDINANCE approving a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement (MOU) by and between the City of Joplin, Missouri, a Municipal Corporation, and Friends of Joplin Memorial Hall, for the purpose of renovating Memorial Hall.

MEETING DATE
December 1, 2025

DEPARTMENT
Legal

ATTACHMENTS
Council Bill No. 2025-017
Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement (MOU)
Friends of Memorial Hall Proposal

REVIEWED BY
City Attorney, Peter Edwards; Director of Finance, Leslie Haase; Director Joplin Athletic Complex, Paul Bloomberg; and City Manager, Nicholas Edwards.

SUMMARY
This council bill approves the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement (MOU) by and between the City of Joplin and Friends of Joplin Memorial Hall. The purpose of the MOU is to outline the Parties respective responsibilities and conditions that have to be met in order for Memorial Hall to be conveyed to Friends and to be fully redeveloped.

BACKGROUND
Friends of Memorial has submitted a proposal to acquire Memorial Hall and redevelop the building, subject to several conditions and contingencies. Friends and the local hotel industry will work with the Missouri State legislators to pass legislation at the state level that increases the lodging tax that the City of Joplin may levy from four percent (4%) to six percent (6%). If this enabling legislation is passed, the City will hold a local election so that the citizens will vote on increasing the lodging tax from four percent (4%) to six percent (6%). The proposal has an overall budget for renovations of approximately $16,740,396.00. Friends plans to apply for State Historic Tax Credits ($4,398,000.00), Federal Historic Tax Credits ($2,298,200.00) and New Market Tax Credits ($3,400,000.00). In addition, Friends will undertake a community fundraising campaign to raise $2,000,000.00. Upon successful fundraising, Friends of Joplin Memorial Hall will provide a financial statement certifying the completion of the $2M capital campaign, and only after the successful capital campaign will the City issue bonds. Friends is requesting city funds in the amount of $7,000,000.00. The City Funds would come solely from the revenue bonds that are issued and repaid solely from the revenue from the increase in the lodging tax as set forth above. This MOU is conditioned on the 2% lodging tax increase being law and the Joplin voters approving the tax increase. Friends would be responsible for any other funds required to complete the

renovations. In the event that Friends ever ceases operating Memorial Hall in the future, ownership of the building and all improvements would revert back to the City. Friends will obtain no rights to sell or lease the property to any third party in the future and any such sale or lease shall void Friends leasehold rights in the building and ownership of the building and/or leasehold in the building shall immediately revert back to City.

FUNDING SOURCE

Lodging tax, $7 million in municipal bonds repaid through a 2% increase to the lodging tax, if approved by voters.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends this Council Bill be approved on First Reading.