

JCCAT

JASPER COUNTY CONSERVATIVE ACTION TEAM

Fueled by coffee. Driven by conviction. Built for action.

MEMBER NEWSLETTER | JULY 2026 | NEWTON, IOWA

WHO WE ARE

JCCAT is a grassroots civic action group for conservatives in Jasper County, Iowa who are done watching from the sidelines and ready to get to work. We are neighbors, not politicians. We are ordinary citizens who share conservative principles and believe liberty is worth showing up for.

Everything we do runs through three pillars:

- **Coffee.** Neighbors around a table. Trust comes first, because trust is what makes action possible.
- **Discussion.** Real talk on the issues that matter, from the Newton City Council to the Iowa statehouse.
- **Action.** Discussion without action is just talk. We show up, we speak up, and we follow through.

And four commitments:

- **Voice.** Speaking up for conservative issues when it matters most.
- **Presence.** Showing up where the decisions actually get made.
- **Agenda.** Advancing a defined conservative agenda in Jasper County.
- **Action.** Turning conviction into measurable results.

WE MEET

2nd and 4th Thursdays | 7:00 to 8:00 AM | Newton HyVee Community Room

Grab a coffee, pull up a chair. One hour. Real conversation. Conservative neighbors getting to work.

CURRENT PROJECT: NEWTON'S FRANCHISE FEE

What it is. The Newton City Council has proposed a franchise fee on Alliant Energy and Black Hills Energy bills, phasing to 5 percent over three years and locked in on a 25 year term. A council review is promised after year three, but there is no automatic sunset. The Iowa Supreme Court has already called this kind of fee what it is: a tax.

Where it stands. Two readings are complete. The third and final vote is set for the August 3 council meeting.

Why it matters. Newton already carries the highest city levy in Jasper County at \$17.10 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation, ahead of Colfax at \$16.15 and more than triple the county's lowest. A fee on the meter reaches everyone: homeowners, renters, seniors on fixed incomes, churches, and every business in town.

What the law says. Iowa Code 364.2 makes voter approval the default. A franchise ordinance does not take effect unless approved at an election. For gas and electric franchises the council may dispense with that election, but only if no valid citizen petition is filed. The council may also place the question on the ballot on its own motion, at any time. Fort Dodge voters rejected a similar 5 percent franchise fee at the ballot box in September 2024.

Legal? Yes. Necessary? No.

Right now we are not telling anyone how to vote. We are asking that there be a vote.

What you can do this week

- **Sign the petition.** Signers must be Newton residents of voting age. Download a sheet at jaspercountyconservatives.com/downloads.
- **Drop off completed pages.** Meisner Center Office, 200 N 8th Ave E, Newton. South side under the sign. Walk in or use the drop box.
- **Call and email every council member.** A single sentence is enough: I do not support the franchise fee. Then recruit three neighbors to do the same.
- **Show up on August 3.** Personal impact carries the most weight. Employees, landlords, business owners, homeowners.

The legal threshold is roughly 110 valid signatures, 10 percent of the 1,093 residents who voted in the last regular city election. We are aiming far higher. Extra signatures are the cushion that protects the petition if any are ruled invalid. The petition must be in before the council takes its final vote.

WHAT'S NEXT

Our members set the agenda, and our rule is simple. We learn first, then decide whether to act. That is what separates a serious action team from a complaint session. Here is what members have put on deck:

- **Flock cameras and license plate readers.** Who approved them, what they cost, and where the line sits between law enforcement and privacy.
- **Property taxes and assessments.** How the pie gets divided between city, school, and county, and how a valuation is actually set.
- **Utility rates.** Rate increases, and how citizens engage the Iowa Utilities Board.
- **City spending priorities.** From nonprofit support to equipment purchases, where the money goes and why.
- **Flooding infrastructure.** Storm sewer plans and the projects now moving through council.
- **The city budget.** Learning to read it before January budget season, when the real decisions get made.

Bring your questions. If an issue belongs on this list, say so at the next meeting.

ON THE WEBSITE

Everything a member needs is posted and free to download at jaspercountyconservatives.com. Send your neighbors straight to the site.

- **/downloads** Petition sheets in Word and PDF, ready to print. Call and email scripts for reaching council members. Franchise fee talking points. Template emails for residents, business owners, and those on fixed incomes. Property tax and levy comparison graphics you can share.
- **Main site** Who we are, our model, our principles, the meeting schedule, and how to join.

New material posts as it is ready. If something you need is not there, say so at the next meeting and we will get it up.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Monday, August 3 Newton City Council, third and final reading on the franchise fee. Fill the room.

Thursday, August 13 JCCAT meeting, 7:00 to 8:00 AM, Newton HyVee Community Room.

jaspercountyconservatives.com

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JCCAT is a private gathering for individuals who share conservative principles and values. We reserve the right to maintain the integrity and focus of our meetings.