

**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois
Regular City Council Meeting
Monday, October 16, 2017
7:00 p.m.
MINUTES**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, October 16, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building, Veterans Park, 800 South 27th Street, Mt. Vernon, IL.

Mayor John Lewis called the meeting to order.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard gave the Invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed present: Council Member Jeff May, Council Member Donte Moore, Council Member Jim Rippy, Council Member Mike Young, and Mayor John Lewis.

PRESENTATION OF JOURNALS

The Journals for the September 28, 2017 Special City Council Meeting and the October 2, 2017 Regular City Council Meetings were presented to Council for any additions, deletions or corrections. **Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Journals as presented. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.**

VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Brent Gentry, Williamson County Commissioner, spoke on behalf of Justin Qui. Qui is considering building a Fujiyama Restaurant in Mt. Vernon and Gentry asked if Mt. Vernon could provide incentives such as TIF (Tax Increment Financing) or Enterprise Zone benefits. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel stated the City has a vast Enterprise Zone and asked to meet with Qui to discuss the benefits. Mr. Qui stated that he owns six Fujiyama Restaurants in Southern Illinois and hopes to open a fine dining restaurant in Mt. Vernon.

APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED VOUCHERS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable were presented to Council for approval. Council Member Jeff May asked about the status of City Hall repairs. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel replied that the roof is complete. The heating and air conditioning is still moving forward. She said it will be

another month before the electrical is finished. May asked about the overtime budget. Bechtel replied that overtime is under budget year-to-date.

Council Member Jim Rippy stated that the accounts payable show a payment of \$86,615.32 to J. K. Trotter & Sons for the 28th Street Sanitary Sewer Project. Rippy requested that the first post audit be conducted on this large project. The audit will show if the project was on budget, on time, and if there were any change orders. Rippy asked about the \$526,883.10 payables for Quality of Life and Economic Development projects and he requested that these costs be highlighted to show what they represent.

Council Member Jeff May motioned to approve the Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable in the amount of \$1,561,127.65. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

BIDS & QUOTES

No bids and quotes were presented.

CITY MANAGER

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested permission to seek bids for new Pits, Telemetry, Altitude Valves and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System for the City's Water Towers. Bechtel stated that the Public Utilities Committee met on October 13, 2017 and recommended these items. She explained that the Eagle Court and Opdyke Water Towers need new Pits. The Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System will provide continuous access and monitoring of the water towers. Public Works Director Matt Fauss and Asst. Public Utilities Director Jonathan Younger will write the bids in-house. Council Member Jim Rippy stated that he was personally pleased with the Public Utilities Committee and the City is moving in the right direction.

Council Member Jim Rippy motioned to seek bids for new Pits, Telemetry, Altitude Valves and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System for the City's Water Towers. Seconded by Council Member Jeff May. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested permission to seek bids for the Renovation/Repair of the Eagle Court Water Tank. Bechtel stated this is another recommendation from the Public Utilities Committee from the results of the Water Modeling Study. The Study showed that even though Opdyke Tower needs repair soon, the Eagle Court Tower is the one crucial to managing the water system in the Times Square Mall Tower. When it is time to take the Opdyke Tower offline for repair, the Eagle Court Tower will be able to manage the water level in the Times Square Mall Tower.

Council Member Jeff May motioned to seek bids for the Renovation/Repair of the Eagle Court Water Tank. Seconded by Council Member Jim Rippy. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested permission to Close Part of Sassafras Lane from 6 pm to 8 pm on October 31, 2017. Bechtel explained that the residents desire to close Sassafras Lane's cul-de-sac to host a Halloween event. All neighbors signed the application to close the cul-de-sac.

Council Member Jim Rippy motioned to grant permission to Close Part of Sassafras Lane from 6 pm to 8 pm on October 31, 2017. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested permission to delay the presentation of the 2016-2017 Audit Report until the next City Council Meeting to allow Finance Director Merle Hollmann and Krehbiel's to prepare a simplified analysis of the audit report. The audit report is lengthy due to the bond money and new revenue from the capital fee. Council Member Jim Rippy asked who the City's auditor is at Krehbiel's. Bechtel replied that Greg Charlton is the auditor and he works closely with Jim Leuty.

CITY ATTORNEY

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for second reading an Ordinance amending Article 6, Section 6.2 Definitions and Section 6.3 Applications and Licensing. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that the Ordinance changes the requirement of the liquor establishment resident manager to live inside the City limits to living inside Jefferson County. The second change allows for a Memorandum of Understanding that gives a copy of a Liquor License to the licensee prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy for the premises solely for the use by licensee to obtain financing, to obtain State licenses, to permit construction or remodeling, or for other valid reasons approved by the local liquor Control Commissioner.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve Ordinance #2017-44, an Ordinance amending Article 6, Section 6.2 Definitions and Section 6.3 Applications and Licensing. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for second reading an Ordinance Amending Article 18, Section 18.20, Subparagraph (e) Prohibiting Parking on Certain Streets. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that City staff has identified several streets where restricted parking would benefit the safety of the residents in case of emergencies as well as maintenance for snow and ice removal. The proposed streets are:

1. The East side of 10th Street from Main to Broadway
2. The South side of Main Street from the West side of the Jefferson County Courthouse steps to 10th Street
3. The South side of Mannen Street from 27th Street to Logan Street
4. The West side of 19th Street from Logan Street to Perkins Avenue
5. The East side and West side of 22nd Street from Broadway to Perkins
6. The East side and the West side of 24th Street from Broadway to Perkins
7. The East side of 26th Street from Perkins Avenue to Forest Avenue
8. The East side and the West side of 26th Street from Forest Avenue to Veterans Memorial Drive
9. The South side of Casey Avenue from 19th Street to 27th Street

Council Member Donte Moore reported that he drove every one of the proposed streets and restricting parking especially on 26th Street will solve many problems.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to adopt Ordinance #2017-45, an Ordinance Amending Article 18, Section 18.20, Subparagraph (e) Prohibiting Parking on Certain Streets. Seconded by Council Member Jim Rippy. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving a Conditional Sign Permit for Property Located at 2227 Broadway. The applicant is American Family Insurance. Todd Ham of T.Ham Signs explained that American Family Insurance desires to install a four-

by-eight electronic messaging center sign. The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved this request. No objectors were present at the Commission Meeting.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Resolution Approving a Conditional Sign Permit for Property Located at 2227 Broadway. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration a Resolution approving an Agreement with CSX Transportation, Inc. to Construct a Water Main by Rackaway Street. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained this Agreement will allow the City to bore under CSX's railroad to replace the water main on Rackaway Street. Bechtel stated that this Agreement has been under CSX's review for 150 days.

Council Member Jeff May motioned to approve the Resolution approving an Agreement with CSX Transportation, Inc. to Construct a Water Main by Rackaway Street. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

MAYOR

Mayor John Lewis reported on the September statistics from the Water, Fire and Police Departments. The Water Department repaired 20 leaks. The Police Department responded to 2,060 total events. The Fire Department responded to 267 alarms and the Fire Inspection Department conducted 110 inspections and 4 public education seminars.

Mayor John Lewis introduced Gary Allison to give a presentation. Mr. Allison stated the first leaf burning week concluded. The week was rainy and windy. He presented Council Member Mike Young with a 2018 Almanac to help him and the Council select a better week for next year.

CITY COUNCIL

Council Member Jim Rippy spoke on the opening of 7th Street at the railroad crossing. Rippy stated that he is asked weekly why the street is not open. He feels that it is appropriate to direct the City Manager to continue negotiations to open 7th Street. Council Member Jeff May stated that the Council previously voted on this motion and asked why it is needed again. The previous motion is in place and there has been no change in what the City Council approved. Mayor John Lewis stated that Councilman Rippy wanted clarification that the City Council still supports the pursuit of 7th Street. Rippy stated that the street belongs to the citizens. He explained that he has no knowledge on how or why the closure occurred. No one has reported to the City how the closure has benefited the City, how much tax was added, and how many people were hired. Rippy wanted to see how the Council still feels about 7th Street. Council Member Donte Moore explained that his opinion has always been the same. Moore explained that the City agreed to the closure in 2012. If negotiations fail, then the City will need to break the agreement. He has a problem when government breaks its word with businesses. Rippy said that the contract does not have any consideration for the City. Corporation Counsel Bill Howard replied that economic development is always a consideration. Mayor Lewis stated that the City is not trying to break any contracts. He explained that the City is in negotiations to see if there is a win-win to adjust the contract in place. May stated that the City is actively in negotiations authorized by the City Council and there has been no change. He said that outside some political grandstanding, there is no reason to vote on this matter again. Rippy stated why would the Council not vote on it again to let the people know who is in favor of opening 7th

Street. Council Member Donte Moore asked when the last time was the City spoke with the business. Bechtel said that it has been over a week. Mayor Lewis stated that the business has postponed negotiations due to family issues. He feels that the City will have an answer soon from them. Lewis explained that Council Member Jim Rippy has the prerogative to place this question on the agenda. Moore said that the City Council has already acted on this matter and nothing has changed whatsoever. The City Manager has the power to continue negotiations. Corporation Counsel Bill Howard agreed with Moore, but on the other hand this motion is not out of order.

JoAlice Pierce, 700 Meadowbrook, shared her concerns about the closing of 7th Street. She stated that the East Side of Mt. Vernon is dying due to the lack of access and stated that the City should not sacrifice the East Side for one business. She feels that it was a tremendous mistake to close 7th Street. Council Member Jeff May stated that even though he does not agree that this matter should be on the agenda, he does agree with continued negotiations to reopen 7th Street. Mayor Lewis stated that the City is trying to find a consensus that is a win-win for everyone.

Council Member Donte Moore stated that there is no harm in voting for this, but it has already been done. Council Member Jim Rippy replied that either you are for or against opening 7th Street. Moore stated that he is not for being sued and hopes that an agreement is reached without a lawsuit. Council Member Jeff May said that the City Manager has other important matters to focus on while this is negotiated on the side. Rippy stated that the City Manager has made every effort to negotiate the reopening and it should be aggressively pursued.

Council Member Jim Rippy motioned to direct the City Manager to continue negotiations to open 7th Street. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Rippy, Young, and Lewis. Abstain: May and Moore.

Council Member Donte Moore announced that the monthly Community Watch Meeting will be held on Monday, October 23, 2017 at 6:00 pm in the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building, Veterans Park, 800 South 27th Street, Mt. Vernon, Illinois. As always, everyone is invited to attend.

VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Karen Browning of Garden Glen Apartments asked for the City's assistance to obtain recycling at the apartments. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel said that apartment complexes are not part of the City's residential contract and commercial businesses should deal directly with Republic Services. Bechtel will speak with the City's Republic Service representative.

Bobby Farris spoke on video cameras for the City Police Department to help stop gun shooting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session was held.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Jeff May motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Jo Pemberton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "M" and "P".

Mary Jo Pemberton
City Clerk