

Mary Jo Pemberton
City Clerk



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City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois
Regular City Council Meeting
Monday, May 1, 2017
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, May 1, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building, Veterans Park, 800 South 27th Street, Mt. Vernon, IL.

Mayor Mary Jane Chesley called the meeting to order.

Randy Winn gave the Invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed present: Council Members Jeff May, Dennis McEnaney, Donte Moore, Todd Piper and Mayor Mary Jane Chesley.

PRESENTATION OF JOURNALS

The Journal for April 17, 2017 Regular City Council Meeting was presented to Council for any additions, deletions or corrections. **Council Member Todd Piper made a motion to approve the Journal as presented. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, McEnaney, Moore, Piper and Chesley.**

VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Roger Jacobs spoke on the condition of Woodglen Acres Park. Mr. Jacobs requested that the Park be maintained on a more regular basis and developed with new equipment. Council Member Donte Moore replied that he was a member of the Park Board and assured Mr. Jacobs that the development plan has not died and he will work on getting the grass mowed.

Allison Allgaier spoke on fiscal responsibility regarding the City's water system. She has no problem paying the \$10-meter fee for a better water system. Her concern is paying \$200,000 for consulting services to prepare a study of the City's water system after it has already been completed by City employees. She feels that the \$200,000 should be spent for fixing the water system instead doing work already done. Council Member Jeff May replied as a group, the City has developed a comprehensive plan that addresses the issues with the sewer and water systems. The plan is a fiscally sound plan guided by the City employees who know where the problems exist. The plan addresses the major problems right away. He agreed that it is not fiscally responsible to pay for consulting services to prepare another study.

APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED VOUCHERS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable were presented to Council for approval. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel clarified the following larger accounts payable items: #2 Baxmeyer Construction - \$244,253.06 - Perkins

Avenue Reconstruction (\$104,764.43) and North 27th Street Construction (\$139,488.63). Bechtel explained that the payable is a progress payment. The Perkins Avenue project is nearing the end of the reconstruction. Remaining is some concrete work on Perkins and storm water work, curbing, and asphalt on South 10th Street. The North 27th Street Construction is on track to be completed this summer. #5 J K Trotter & Sons - \$138,525.26 – Construction on West Industrial Park water and sewer. Bechtel explained that the payable is for materials in the new industrial park. The lift station is completed and currently they are laying sanitary sewer in the area. There are three grants associated with the industrial park – EDA Grant, IDOT Grant, and the TARP Grant. The City will not receive reimbursements from the EDA Grant until all projects are bid out.

Council Member Dennis McEnaney made a motion to approve the Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable in the amount of \$1,297,063.40. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, McEnaney, Moore, Piper and Chesley.

BIDS & QUOTES

No bids and quotes were presented.

CITY MANAGER

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented a Request to Waive Bidding Requirements for Signage at the New Industrial Park. The signage helps with the marketing of the new 100-acre industrial park. The signs will be located at the main entrance by Neon Signs on Illinois State Route 15 and at the secondary entrance on Sparrow Drive. Mayor Mary Jane Chesley commented that signs at the Rolland W. Lewis Industrial Park are in bad condition and recommended that the signs be cleaned and repaired. Twenty-five acres remain to be developed in the RWL Industrial Park.

Council Member Todd Piper motioned to Waive Bidding Requirements for Signage at the New Industrial Park. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, McEnaney, Moore, Piper and Chesley.

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney David Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Second Reading of an Ordinance Annexing Real Estate to the City of Mt. Vernon. The Petitioning Party is Jefferson County Holdings, LLC. This parcel contains 70 acres and is located south of Lincoln Park on Harlan Road. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that the owners desire to annex the property, no matter the outcome of the rezoning request. The annexation stands on its own. The property's zoning will remain agriculture until the zoning is formally changed. Seven acres of the tract is donated to the YMCA and the balance of the property will be sold. Council Member Jeff May stated that even though the annexation and rezoning are not linked, he feels that this issue should be presented to the new City Council.

Council Member Jeff May made a motion to table Agenda Item 10-A, Second Reading of an Ordinance Annexing Real Estate to the City of Mt. Vernon. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, McEnaney, Moore, Piper and Chesley. Agenda Item 10-A, a proposed Ordinance, was tabled.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Second Reading of an Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Municipal Property Adjacent to South 42nd Street. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that due to the construction of the new interchange, Exit 94, the City ended up with 0.1465-acre of land. The land is in the IDOT access control area and the City will never be able to access the property by roadway. The owners of the adjacent property, B & J Family Limited Partnership, has interest in purchasing this tract of land from the City. B & J has offered to purchase the 0.1465-acre tract for the sum of \$13,231 plus the conveyance to the City of two tracts totaling .01215-acres for right-of-way for 42nd Street for the development of a future turn lane.

Council Member Donte Moore made a motion to approve Ordinance #2017-22, an Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Municipal Property Adjacent to South 42nd Street. Seconded by Council Member Jeff May. Yeas: May, McEnaney, Moore, Piper and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving the Naming of the New Industrial Park. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel stated that because of achievements of the Council lead by Mayor Mary Jane Chesley, this Resolution approves the naming of the new industrial park to "Chesley Industrial Park". Bechtel listed several of Mayor Chesley's accomplishments including:

- The creation of communication between the City and the following: Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, Jefferson County Development Corporation, Mt. Vernon Twp. High School, Mt. Vernon Grade School District 80, Rend Lake College, I-57 Corridor Project, Southern Illinois Mayor's Association, developers of the International Council of Shopping Centers, Greater Egypt Planning Commission, local State Representative and Senator, Illinois Governor's Office, United States Senator and Congressman, Illinois Municipal League, Man-Ta-Con, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Mt. Vernon Airport Authority, Downtown Development, and numerous citizen's committees and commissions such as the Branding Study, Aquatic Center, Comprehensive Plan, Mt. Vernon Festivals, Perry & Franklin Counties Mutual Aid, FEMA, Lifeboat Alliance, Cedarhurst, Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution, and Brehm Memorial Library.
- Fifteen hundred new jobs created in manufacturing, distribution and health care.
- New interchange was opened and a new TIF district of approximately 600 acres was developed to the west of the interchange for potential growth.
- Expansions and remodeling of Continental Tire, Magnum Steel, Bennet Sheet Metal, Phoenix Modular Elevator, and Krogers.
- New businesses brought to Mt. Vernon include Kohl's, Sears Home Store, Rend Lake Sporting Goods, United Rentals, Jung Trucking, Spinball, Williamson-Asia, Innotech, Jimmy Johns, GameStop, Panda Express, Buffalo Wild Wings, Bandanas, Agave, Dollar General, Family Dollar, RARE, King City Book Store, Roger's Tire, Sensation Station, Fun Blaster, Gallery 223, Plaza Tire Service, Panera Bread, BnC Bicycler Shop, Tesla Charging Station, Double Overtime Grill, The Grill, Dirt Buster Car Wash, the Trackside Bar & Grill, Savvy Boutique, Ace Hardware, and Huddle House.
- New businesses at Time Square Mall include Dunham's, Hobby Lobby, Ross Dress for Less, Moe's, Rue 21, Kay Jewelers, and AT&T.
- New and remodeled institutions include Good Samaritan Hospital, Crossroads Community Hospital, Cedarhurst, Marion Eye Center, Drury Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Double Tree by Hilton, and Byrd-Watson.
- Creation of three TIF Districts as well as the recertification of the I-57 TIF District.
- Mt. Vernon won five Governor's Hometown Awards for volunteer work at the Granada Center for the Performing Arts, the Nutrition on Wheels (NOW) program, Daughters of the American Revolution Monument to Women Veterans, Lifeboat Alliance, and the Wall and Hall of Honor at the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport.
- Development of the city's demolition program for dangerous and dilapidated houses
- The sidewalk and bike trail program
- New Aquatic Center
- Renovation and expansion of Dawson Park
- Implemented the annual State of the City address hosted by the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce

Council Member Todd Piper stated that he was proud to be part of the accomplishments which would not have come about without all the time devoted by Mayor Chesley. Chesley replied that she has been very fortunate to work with the community and the Council as a team. She appreciated all the help received and is humbled.

Council Member Todd Piper made a motion to adopt the Resolution Approving the Naming of the New Industrial Park to Chesley Industrial Park. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, McEnaney, Moore, Piper, and Chesley.

Mayor Mary Jane Chesley asked if the outgoing Council Members Dennis McEnaney and Todd Piper and City Clerk Jerilee Hopkins had any comments. City Clerk Hopkins said that it has been an honor to serve the City for the past six years.

Mayor Chesley said that it has been a privilege and honor to serve the City of Mt. Vernon for the past twenty-four years – 8 years on City Council, 4 years on the Police and Fire Commission, and 12 years as Mayor. She said that she

has been fortunate to serve with some very dedicated City Council Members. Chesley said that it is her hope that the progress and growth continues with the new administration. She listed her top six highlights:

1. The creation and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan
2. New I-57 Exit #94 including the six-lane roadway on I-57. This project opened 600 acres for development. The project was worked on by five former Mayors.
3. The creation of 1,500 new jobs in the City including manufacturing, distribution and healthcare. The creation of over 40 new businesses in manufacturing, retail, health, restaurants, hotels, and other service areas. Two additional businesses are in the works.
4. The implementation of Tax-Increment Finance Districts (TIF) including \$15 million dollars invested in the Downtown Area.
5. Several economic development expansions such as the Times Square Mall.
6. Quality of life improvements in neighborhoods and throughout the City which includes the demolition of dilapidated structures, mow-to-own program, street overlays, curb and guttering, sidewalks, bike trails, Aquatic Center, numerous community and family events, new high school, and the expansion and national accreditation of Cedarhurst

Mayor Chesley explained that she treated the role of Mayor as a full-time position even though it is listed as a part-time position. This gave her time to work and meet many people which resulted in a tremendous amount of growth in a short period of time. Chesley said that she genuinely loves the City of Mt. Vernon, the people who work for the City, and the people who live in the City.

SWEARING IN OF NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Outgoing City Clerk Jerilee Hopkins, a notary public, performed the swearing in of the newly elected officials including Mayor John Lewis, Council Member Mike Young, Council Member James Rippy, City Clerk Mary Jo Pemberton, and City Treasurer Patricia Carlson.

Following the swearing in, the newly elected took their positions at the Council table and regular City Council continued.

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Requesting IDOT Approval for the Temporary Closure of Illinois 15, Westbound from Marlow Road (FAS 789) to the Junction of Illinois 15 and Old Route 15 at the East Edge of Mt. Vernon for the Purpose of the "Salute to Freedom" Fireworks Display on July 4, 2017. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that this is one of the technical items needed for the fireworks display held at the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Resolution Requesting IDOT Approval for the Temporary Closure of Illinois 15, Westbound from Marlow Road (FAS 789) to the Junction of Illinois 15 and Old Route 15 at the East Edge of Mt. Vernon for the Purpose of the "Salute to Freedom" Fireworks Display on July 4, 2017. Seconded by Council Member Jeff May. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

MAYOR

Mayor John Lewis made a short statement expressing his heartfelt thanks to the voters of Mt. Vernon. He is honored and humbled that the voters placed their trust in him. He is immensely grateful to his wife, Pam, and family for their support. He thanked Mayor Mary Jane Chesley, Council Member Dennis McEnaney, and Council Member Todd Piper for their selfless service.

All voices will be heard and he understands that even though everyone cannot be pleased, he will strive for a compromise. One item on his list is the updating of the City Ordinances which have been stifling our citizens and business community. Other items include the recycling program, landlord and rental issues, prohibition of trailers, City take-home vehicles, liquor ordinances, pension expenses, City logo and signs, and the armory.

Mayor Lewis plans to meet with the new Council to discuss the projects associated with the 2012 bonds. While most of the projects have merit, he would like to develop new priorities with the Council. With that in mind, he requested that the City Manager not move forward on any of the proposed projects until the new Council comes to a consensus on merits of the projects.

Mayor Lewis plans to revamp the City's budget/audit format with the help of one of his mentors, Ray Botch. It is important the any citizen without CPA training understand the budget/audit. Botch has experience producing a clear and understandable report. Lewis presented City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel with a copy of a budget prepared by Botch to see if this could be accomplished here.

Mayor John Lewis presented to the Council the Appointment of Shirilyn Holt to the Mt. Vernon City Housing Authority Board. Holt replaces Pastor Brad Henson on the board. Lewis said that he noticed that the board did not represent the community's demographics and this is the first step to achieve that goal.

Motion by Council Member Jim Rippy to approve the Appointment of Shirilyn Holt to the Mt. Vernon City Housing Authority Board. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Mayor John Lewis presented to the Council the Appointment of a Blue-Ribbon Committee for the Study of the Public Utilities System. Lewis explained the new Council will not spend thousands of dollars for consulting services to prepare a study of the City's water system unless it is for the betterment of the City. He proposed the appointment of City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel, Council Member Jim Rippy, Public Utilities Director Jeff Wielt, and Raymond P. Botch to this exploratory committee. Council Member Jeff May said that he would be happy to participate on the committee, too. Council Member Jim Rippy stated that it behooves the City to study the Public Utilities System to find a solution to the water leaks by using the latest technology.

Motion by Council Member Mike Young to approve the Appointment of a Blue-Ribbon Committee for the Study of the Public Utilities System. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Mayor John Lewis announced that former Mayor David Keen has invited the Council and the public to the dedication of the Veterans Memorial fence on Wednesday, May 3, 2017 at the Veteran's Memorial Park.

CITY COUNCIL

Council Member Jim Rippy requested to direct the City Manager to draft an Ordinance Amending the Public Forum Rules of Participation. Rippy explained that he has no problem with limiting a speaker to five (5) minutes per person, but recommends eliminating the thirty (30) total minutes per meeting for all speakers. Council Member Donte Moore asked that time be allowed at the end of the meeting for citizens to ask for clarification of items discussed during the meeting. Mayor Lewis agreed to public input at the end of the meeting.

Council Member Jim Rippy motioned to direct the City Manager to draft an Ordinance Amending the Public Forum Rules of Participation. Seconded by Council Member Jeff May. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Council Member Mike Young thanked everyone for their support in the election especially his wife, Monica. He said that he will represent all citizens of Mt. Vernon. His door will always be open and he will be accessible by phone, e-mail, or social media.

Council Member Mike Young discussed the ban on open burning. He would like to direct the City Manager to draft an Ordinance Amending Article 13, Section 13.8 regarding open burning. Council Member Jeff May stated that this issue should be opened for public debate again. Council Member Donte Moore said the issue is about burning leaves, not sticks. Young feels that there should be some dedicated days for burning.

Council Member Mike Young motioned to direct the City Manager to draft an Ordinance Amending Article 13, Section 13.8 regarding Open Burning. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Council Member Jim Rippy requested to direct the City Manager to determine what is necessary to open South 7th Street Rail Crossing. Rippy said that over 1,000 people signed a petition and responded to an Internet poll to reopen 7th Street. Council Member Jeff May said that City's legal ramifications and the Council's personal liability be determined if the contract is broken. Council Member Mike Young stated that there is a huge disconnect between the public and what transpired. Young said that the facts need to be determined and reported back to the public as to why or why not the roadway is reopened. Council Member Donte Moore said that the cost of crossing arms and the switching station need to be determined. Rippy said that the existing contract states that the railroad crossing could be opened in case of an emergency. He would like to see the concrete results coming about since its closing in 2012.

Council Member Jim Rippy motioned to direct the City Manager to determine what is necessary to open South 7th Street Rail Crossing. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

Council Member Donte Moore thanked the Public Works and Public Utilities employees for their hard work over the weekend's heavy rains and flooding.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

City Manager Bechtel requested an Executive Session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11) – Litigation. **Council Member Donte Moore made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11) – Litigation. Seconded by Council Member Jim Rippy. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.**

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Donte Moore made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jo Pemberton
City Clerk