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**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois  
Regular City Council Meeting  
Monday, March 18, 2024  
7:00 p.m.**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, March 18, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber at City Hall, 1100 Main Street, Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/MtVernonIL>.

Mayor John Lewis opened the meeting.

Pastor Randy Steele with Southwest Christian Church led the Invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ROLL CALL**

**Roll call showed present: Council Member Joe Gliosci, Council Member Donte Moore, Council Member Mike Young, and Mayor John Lewis. Absent: Council Member Ray Botch.**

**PRESENTATION OF JOURNALS**

The Journal from March 4, 2024 Regular City Council Meeting was presented for approval.

**Council Member Joe Gliosci motioned to approve the Journal as presented. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

**VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE**

None.

**APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED VOUCHERS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

The Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable were presented to the Council for approval.

**Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable in the amount of \$1,454,128.25. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

## **BIDS AND QUOTES**

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented Bid Results for the Improvements for 911 Broadway for the Downtown Greenspace. There were four bidders for the green space redevelopment. Staff recommends awarding the project to the low bidder, Shores Builders, Inc. in the amount of \$1,366,100.00.

Shores Builders, Inc.	\$1,366,100.00
Bevis Construction	\$1,663,000.00
Evrard Company	\$1,588,821.00
Johannes Construction	\$2,135,700.00

**Council Member Donte Moore motioned to grant permission to accept the Bid Results for the Improvements for 911 Broadway for the Downtown Greenspace from Shores Builders, Inc. in the amount of \$1,366,100.00. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

## **CITY MANAGER**

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested permission to Consent to an Assignment of a Miller Lake Lease from Jeri Webb to Troy J. Parrish. Staff recommendation is to approve the Assignment.

**Council Member Mike Young motioned to grant permission to Consent to an Assignment of a Miller Lake Lease from Jeri Webb to Troy J. Parrish. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested permission to Waive Bidding and Purchase One Trackhoe from McCoy Construction and Forestry. An employee had an accident with the City's trackhoe. The City's insurance company totaled the trackhoe and will be paying the City about \$47,000. Fleet Services Director Mike Shannon was unable to find a used trackhoe in our region. There is a new trackhoe at McCoy Construction and Forestry and the City would like to move forward with the purchase. The quote is \$244,000. The City was scheduled to purchase a new trackhoe in next year's budget. The City has the funds for this capital purchase in the General Corporate Capital Fund.

**Council Member Donte Moore motioned to Waive Bidding and Purchase One Trackhoe from McCoy Construction and Forestry in the amount of \$244,000.00. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

## **CITY ATTORNEY**

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented an Ordinance Rezoning Property at 1300 Tolle Lane from F-P (Flood Plain) to A-G (General Agriculture). Petitioning Party: Leo and Anita Leneave. They have a five-acre parcel on Tolle Lane that is zoned Flood Plain but is not in the Flood Plain. It is a developable lot, and they want to sell it. This was reviewed by Planning and Zoning, and this passed 3–0.

**Council Member Mike Young motioned to approve Ordinance #2024-09, an Ordinance Rezoning Property at 1300 Tolle Lane from F-P (Flood Plain) to A-G (General Agriculture). Petitioning Party: Leo and Anita Leneave. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented a Resolution Approving Designated Employees' Authority to Purchase Through State Contracts. The State of Illinois is requiring this Resolution be in place in order to purchase through the State of Illinois contracts. The designated employees given authority includes City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel, Assistant City Manager Nathan McKenna, Public Works Director Matt Fauss, Fleet Services Director Mike Shannon, Police Chief Trent Page, and Fire Chief Kevin Sargent. Staff recommends approving the Resolution.

**Council Member Joe Gliosci motioned to approve the Resolution Approving Designated Employees' Authority to Purchase Through State Contracts. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented a Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Marion, Illinois and Sesser, Illinois Regarding Development of Solar Energy Projects. City Manager Bechtel explained that the City would be entering into this Agreement with Marion and Sesser if approved by Council and the Mayor would be authorized and directed to deliver this Agreement and would be appointed to the first initial board for the not-for-profit. Bechtel then introduced Jeff Haarmann, Managing Partner of Affordable Gas & Electric Company, LLC to answer questions. Council Member Mike Young asked Haarmann if as this relates to low to moderate income households, would those households be able to participate in community solar projects. Haarmann explained that they can participate in community solar projects and still be part of the aggregation. Council Member Joe Gliosci asked if this would be for the benefit of Ameren customers and co-ops. Haarmann stated that citizens would have to be part of the aggregation programs throughout the cities that are served. Haarmann stated that from anything that is profit of the organization, 50% of that has to go to low to moderate income and at a minimum, they have to receive 20% credit above whatever they put into it from a benefit standpoint. Haarmann explained that they are hoping to get 70% of the costs associated with these projects from the federal government and additional credits when they look into the state

incentives. They would like to develop 12 to 15 sites over the next 5 years. A site would consist of 25 to 30 acres at an estimated cost of 10 to 12 million dollars per solar field. This will be financed through bonds that are issued to Southern Illinois Aggregation Partnership (SIAP) through the Southern Illinois Economic Development Group. He stated this is a non-recourse bond and bondholders are on the hook for the debt. The Mayor, nor the City or any of the communities participating are personally liable. The goal is to get an additional 20% savings and take our reliance away from the market, then that would be 40% below the utility on average. Gliosci asked what would happen if the credits weren't renewed. Haarmann stated that as long as the federal incentives are out there, the direct pay dollars from the federal government to SIAP will be a direct benefit until the deadline of when those incentives are gone. It is about a 12-month process to get those dollars back from the federal government at this point. They do go directly to the not-for-profit organization. Bechtel stated that the credits (cash) go directly to the bond payments. Haarmann stated the bond has to be paid first, then the profits will be distributed back to the residents. Council Member Donte Moore asked how long it would take for citizens to see the tax credits. Haarmann stated that with this first project being developed, aggregation customers would likely see savings on their bills in early 2026. Haarmann explained that if an individual is currently registered on Ameren's low to moderate income program, they would be eligible to receive the additional credit. Bechtel asked if with any future commitment, would there be a solar fee on the aggregation agreement. Haarmann stated that there could be but that doesn't mean there will be. The models that have been put together do not have a solar fee on future developments. However, if the board said, for instance, build ten more of these in two years, then there would have to be something for two years to show that there is some backbone behind it. Bechtel then stated that there has to be revenue that would go directly to SIAP Group. Haarmann replied yes, but as the current model stands, they have not modeled any additional fees to build additional fields. The complete goal is to keep the aggregation cost less than Ameren and get these dollars back in the pocket of the residents.

**Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Marion, Illinois and Sesser, Illinois Regarding Development of Solar Energy Projects. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented a Resolution Renewing the Line of Credit with Banterra Bank to Provide Overdraft Protection with Regard to the City of Mt. Vernon Banking Services. She explained that each year the City renews the agreement for short term financing/line of credit with Banterra Bank. This is for a \$6,000,000.00 line of credit with 6% interest for one year. The City has done this for several years. Staff recommendation is to approve the renewal of the line of credit.

**Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Resolution Renewing the Line of Credit with Banterra Bank to Provide Overdraft Protection with Regard to the City of Mt. Vernon Banking Services. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Moore, Young, and Lewis. Abstain: Gliosci. Absent: Botch.**

### **MAYOR**

Mayor John Lewis wanted to remind community members to check out Veterans Park. The fountains are in and lit up, pickleball courts are open, the new playground is open, the lake has filled up, and it is really looking nice. Also, they have started clearing 44<sup>th</sup> Street south all of the way to Culver's. You can drive down Ilberry and see that clearing. The City is proud of that and of all the hard work the Council has put in on Veterans Park.

### **CITY COUNCIL**

Council Member Donte Moore wanted to remind everyone that tomorrow (March 19) is election day and to vote and let your voice be heard.

Council Member Mike Young also wanted to reinforce what Mayor Lewis said about Veterans Park. It looks great and citizens should be proud.

Council Member Joe Gliosci agreed that Veterans Park is something to be proud of and asked citizens to be respectful when visiting the park.

Mayor Lewis also reminded everyone to go vote. This is one of the most important duties we have as Americans.

### **VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE**

None.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Council Member Joe Gliosci motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Botch.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Becky Barbour".

Becky Barbour, Deputy City Clerk