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**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois  
Regular City Council Meeting  
Monday, December 02, 2019  
7:00 p.m.  
MINUTES**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, December 02, 2019 at the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building, Veterans Park, 800 South 27th Street, Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

Mayor John Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pastor Harold Quick from the West Salem Trinity United Methodist Church gave the Invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**PRESENTATION OF JOURNALS**

The Journals for the November 18, 2019 Public Hearing and the November 18, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting were presented for approval.

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

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

Dan Black, President of the Concerned Citizens of Jefferson County (CCJC), said that any tax increase is not warranted. He explained that each department can make cuts without placing the public in harm's way. The CCJC feels that the 13.11% levy increase is unfair, and the proposed .25% Sales Tax increase is unwarranted. He urges the Council to postpone action on the levy and sales tax increases and to find ways to reduce the City's budget.

Jere Shaw stated that the citizens have had enough taxes. He suggested that any tax increase should be approved by the voters. Shaw stated that a solution would be attrition of employees. He distributed copies of a 2012 comparative study between Mt. Vernon, Centralia and Marion



## **CITY MANAGER**

No report.

## **CITY ATTORNEY**

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Second Reading an Ordinance Concerning the Levy and Collection of Taxes for the City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois for the Fiscal Year Beginning May 1, 2019 and Ending April 30, 2020. Howard presented two versions of the Levy Ordinance. One Ordinance has no increase from last year's Levy rate and the second Ordinance contains an increase in the City's portion of the property tax bill by 13.11%.

**Council Member Ray Botch motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-48, an Ordinance Concerning the Levy and Collection of Taxes for the City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois for the Fiscal Year Beginning May 1, 2019 and Ending April 30, 2020 with no increase from last year's Levy rate. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.**

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for First Reading an Ordinance Amending Article 23, the Mt. Vernon Home Rule Municipal Retailers' and Service Occupation Tax. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that all proceeds from the imposition of the one fourth percent (0.25%) increase will be deposited into and maintained as a separate dedicated fund to be expended solely for contributions to the Firefighters' Pension Fund, to the Police Pension Fund, to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund, and to Social Security and Medicare obligations (FICA, Federal Insurance Contributions Act).

Council Member Donte Moore stated that many people talk about cuts and he invites anyone to come to City Hall to see what cuts have already been made over the last six years. He spoke on the importance of maintaining the staffing levels especially in the Fire and Police Departments. Moore voted against the last Sales Tax increase, but he is for this increase for the pension purposes. Former Councilman Jim Rippey asked Moore to share what has been cut from City expenses. Moore replied that City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel has the numbers in her office.

Mayor John Lewis stated that three weeks ago, the City notified the public on the pension situation and asked for suggestions on how to proceed. Only one person came up to City Hall to review the budget. Lewis explained that City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel has done a good job cutting expenses by eliminating thirty-one (31) positions and combining departments. The City's priorities are the health, safety, and welfare of the community. **First Reading was held.**

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for First Reading an Ordinance Declaring Surplus Municipal Property. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that the property to be sold are four (4) vehicles.

002	2B3AA4CTXAH288610	2010 Dodge Charger
021	2B3KA43T49H591589	2009 Dodge Charger
050	1FMEU738X7UB85158	2007 Ford Explorer
026	1FMZU72K75ZA37130	2005 Ford Explorer

**Council Member Donte Moore motioned to suspend the rules to vote on an Ordinance. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.**

**Council Member Donte Moore motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-49, an Ordinance Declaring Surplus Municipal Property. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.**

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving the Assignment of Jason Wheeler Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Interest to Community First Bank of the Heartland. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that this allows the TIF payments to be assigned to Community First Bank of the Heartland.

**Council Member Ray Botch motioned to approve the Resolution Approving the Assignment of Jason Wheeler Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Interest to Community First Bank of the Heartland. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.**

## **MAYOR**

Mayor John Lewis reported on the November 2019 statistics from the various City Departments.

*Mt. Vernon Police Department handled 1,578 calls which equals to about 53 calls each and every day. 101 people were arrested during the month. There were 102 criminal charges, 18 drug charges, and 29 warrants served. They also conducted 288 traffic stops; resulting in 153 citations, of which 2 were for use of cellphones. 18 people were arrested for D.U.I.'s, responded to 116 traffic crashes, answered 89 alarms, and had 75 community contacts. The Detective Division was assigned 34 new cases, cleared 2 by arrest, referred 8 cases to the States Attorney, and had 4 crime scene call-outs. The Tactical Unit was deployed 2 times and our K9 team had 22 deployments.*

*The Fire Department responded to 281 alarms and calls. The City Hall Station answered 142 alarms, the Airport Station answered 14 alarms, and the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Station answered 125 alarms. Of the responses, 203 were recorded as EMS related, 11 of the responses were recorded as fire related, and 10 of the responses were recorded as hazard related. They responded to 5 structure*

*fires, 1 rubbish fire, 1 cooking fire, 2 vehicle fires, 2 trash fires, 20 motor vehicle crashes, 2 power lines down, 22 false alarms, and was requested and received 2 mutual aid and gave mutual aid on 3 calls. The Fire Inspection Dept. performed 9 business site inspections, 5 consultations, and 3 Plan Reviews. The Fire Prevention Division performed 9 public education events, 1 car seat installation, performed 1 school fire drill, 1 fire extinguisher training, and conducted CPR classes to the telecommunicators. As December arrives, the Christmas Holiday is upon us. As you prepare your homes for the holiday with decorations, we remind you to utilize decorations as intended. Do not overload electrical outlets. If you utilize a real Christmas tree, be sure to water it so it does not dry out. Never leave decorations on while you are away from home. As always, if you ever need us in an emergency, dial 9. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

*The Public Utilities Department responded to 14 water breaks, repaired or replaced 18 services, 480 lineal feet of main was replaced, 48 water samples were collected, 1 hydrant was repaired, 2 valves were repaired or replaced, processed 235 work orders, processed 121 JULIE locates, completed 22 site restorations, and had 124 red letter disconnects. On the sewer side, they responded to 12 service calls resulting in 8 backed up sewer mains, 2 manholes were raised, 1 new tap inspection, and 15 routine sanitary and storm mains cleaned and/or televised resulting in 4,552 linear feet of sanitary sewer main cleaned and 450 linear feet of sanitary sewer televised.*

*Engineering and Inspection Department. They conducted 48 10A Inspections, out of 48 inspections, 25 properties received occupancy certificates, there have been 3 nuisance postings, and 1 was abated by the City. There were 4 properties condemned, 5 properties demolished, and there were 14 building permits totaling \$374,600.*

Mayor John Lewis advised the public that the Jefferson County Historical Society is hosting their chocolate event on Thursday, December 05, 2019 at the Elks Club.

### **CITY COUNCIL**

No comments were heard.

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

Jere Shaw asked how much money the City currently has in the bank from the previous Sales Tax increase. Mayor John Lewis explained that the 2017 Sales Tax increase is split between the accounts for Water and Sewer capital construction, capital equipment purchases, Public Works capital construction, indebtedness, and nuisance abatement.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:40 p.m., City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested an Executive Session under 5 ILCS 120/2

(c) (5) – The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body and 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)  
(6) – The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the City.

**Council Member Mike Young motioned to go into Executive Session under 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (5) – The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body and 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (6) – The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the City. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.**

At 7:54 p.m., Mayor John Lewis reconvened the Regular City Council Meeting.

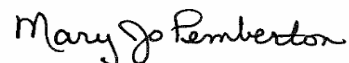
Roll call showed present: Council Member Ray Botch, Council Member Joe Gliosci, Council Member Donte Moore, Council Member Mike Young, and Mayor John Lewis.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Jo Pemberton, City Clerk