

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

MINUTES

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, August 7, 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.

Don Bigham with the Jefferson County Ministerial Association 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 Journal for July 17, 2017 Regular City Council Meeting was presented to Council for any additions, deletions or corrections. **Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the journal as presented. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.**

VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

No visitors addressed the Council.

APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED VOUCHERS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

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

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable in the amount of \$1,479,625.53. Seconded by Council Member Jeff May. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

BIDS & QUOTES

No bids and quotes were presented to the Council.

CITY MANAGER

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented a request for permission to close Lamar Street from 20th Street to 19th Street on Saturday, August 12, 2017 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to hold a neighborhood block party. Linola Spann, 1905 Lamar Street, spoke about the event. Everyone is invited to attend. Book bags and school supplies will be given away to the children. During the morning on August 12th, a cleanup of the neighborhood will be held.

Council Member Jim Rippy motioned to approve the request for permission to close Lamar Street from 20th Street to 19th Street on Saturday, August 12, 2017 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney David Leggans presented for first reading an Ordinance Amending Article 19 and Article 21 Concerning Mobile Homes in R-M2 (Medium Density Residential and Mobile Home) Zoning Districts. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained the changes would apply to mobile/manufactured homes in areas zoned R-M2 (Medium Density Residential and Mobile Home). This Ordinance would allow mobile/manufactured homes to be placed on single lots. Some restrictions and requirements are:

1. The minimum setup elevation for a mobile home shall be 32 inches.
2. Each mobile home shall have all wheels, tongues, and hitch mechanisms removed or retracted.
3. Each mobile home shall have a porch at its primary access entrance having a minimum size of not less than 92 inches in width and 60 inches in depth and shall have a porch or deck at its secondary access entrance of not less than 48 inches in width and 48 inches in depth.
4. The base of the mobile home shall be completely enclosed with mortared brick, mortared concrete blocks, a poured concrete foundation on a footing of 1 foot by 1 foot, a basement wall, or other commercial skirting, provided that said skirting shall not be of vinyl, plastic or metal construction.
5. Each mobile home shall have a minimum of two off street parking sites.
6. The pitch of the roof of the mobile home shall be within a range of three-twelfths (3/12) to five-twelfths (5/12) and the mobile home shall have properly draining and functioning guttering encircling the entire roof of the mobile home.
7. Each mobile home shall have lap siding.
8. The mobile homes must have been manufactured not more than 10 years prior to the date of application for a Building Permit.

Bechtel explained that in the last several years there has been a restriction on placing mobile homes on single lots. It has been difficult for people to own affordable housing and this is a good way to expand their options. Council Member Jeff May asked if the City plans to revisit the current R-M2 areas. Some R-M2 zoning in place does not make sense anymore. Bechtel will have the Planning and Zoning Committee look at the current areas and make a recommendation. Council Member Jim Rippy met with the City Inspectors and stated that if mobile homes over 10 years old are allowed, the Inspectors will need in-detail what is to be inspected. Council Member Donte Moore stated that the inspectors need the tools to inspect mobile homes. Council Member Mike Young stated that one standard set of rules and guidelines is required for the Inspectors to use. **First Reading was held.**

City Attorney David Leggans presented for first reading of an Ordinance Amending Article 19A and Article 21 Concerning Manufactured Home Developments R-MH Zoning Districts. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained this is the identical Ordinance presented last spring with the same restrictions and requirements as the proposed RM-2 Ordinance. This Ordinance states that the mobile homes must have been manufactured not more than 3 years (instead of 10 years) prior to the date of application for a Building Permit. Any manufactured home park in existence now will be grandfathered in. Any expansions to an existing park will fall under the new Ordinance. Leggans explained the 3-year restriction only applies to Mobile Home Parks and the 10-year restriction applies to individuals placing homes on single lots. Council Member Jim Rippey stated that since the City owns about 200 vacant lots, the City could donate the lots to first time homebuyers for a down payment on a home. Bechtel replied that a subjective across the board policy could be prepared. **First Reading was held.**

City Attorney David Leggans presented for first reading of an Ordinance Amending Article 6 Alcoholic Liquor Licenses. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that there are many proposed changes to this Ordinance. Some changes include:

1. No more than one license for package liquor sales per company or individual. If a company currently has two package liquor licenses, their licenses would be grandfathered in.
2. Creation of a new "Package Sales Beer and Wine License". This will entitle the Licensee to make package sales of beer and wine only. There will be no consumption sales.
3. Creation of a new "Temporary Special Event Permit License". This will entitle the Licensee to make sales of alcoholic liquor by Licensee who holds a valid license under one of the other liquor license classifications. The permit license shall be a temporary license which shall be issued for one day and no Licensee shall be entitled to more than twenty-six (26) such temporary daily permit licenses in any one calendar year.
4. All beverages including alcoholic liquors, served for consumption during a special event shall only be served within and consumed from a paper, plastic, or Styrofoam cup or container; no beverage shall be served for consumption during a special event within a glass bottle, cup, or mug or metal can, cup or mug or similar type container.
5. The elimination of the "Sunday Sales" License and fee. License holders will automatically have the permission to sell on Sunday.
6. Creation of a new "Interchange Video Gaming License". This will entitle the Licensee to make consumption sales of beer and wine only. The license shall issue only for establishments situated within a three-fourths mile radius of the point of intersection of the center line of Interstate Route 57 Exit Ramp Number 95 and the center line of Illinois State Route 15, or the center line of interstate Route 57 Exit Ramp Number 94 and the center line of Veterans Memorial Drive, or the center line of Interstate Route 64 Exit Ramp Number 80 and the center line of Illinois State Route 37. In addition, the license shall be issued only for establishments licensed under Section 11.16 of the Revised Code of Ordinances having not less than five (5) licensed video gaming terminals.
7. Creation of a new "Retail Business Customer License". This will entitle the Licensee to make consumption sales of beer and wine; no package sales. The License shall be issued only to a retail business whose primary sales are not the sale of alcoholic liquor or food and for which the sale of alcoholic liquor is only an amenity offered for sale to customers of the retail business.
8. The elimination of the Liquor Advisory Board.
9. Downtown Sidewalk Dining Liquor Permit that entitles the Permittee to make sales of alcoholic liquor for consumption in accordance with the provision of its license within a sidewalk dining area.
10. Eliminates the \$1,000 Bond requirement

11. Increases fines for violations.
12. Increases license fees.

JoAlice Pierce spoke against increasing the number of liquor licenses. More licenses will give young people more access to liquor thus causing more problems. She urged the Council to be cautious when considering these changes.

Bob Farris spoke against increasing the number of liquor licenses because it will cause more fighting.

Richard Etienne spoke for the liquor license changes because it brings Mt. Vernon into the 21st Century.

Al Patel of King City Liquors spoke against the changes in liquor licenses because it will hurt the small business owners and cause more alcohol consumption. He stated that liquor sales should be for certain stores only, not for convenience. He requested that if the liquor changes are approved, the Council should allow gaming machines in their stores to make up for their financial losses. **First reading was held.**

City Attorney David Leggans presented for first reading, an Ordinance Amending Article 11, Section 11.16 Video Gaming Terminals. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that this Ordinance increases the license fee of each video gaming terminal from \$75 per machine to \$500 per machine. **First reading was held.**

City Attorney David Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving an Economic Development Agreement with RCSA Properties, LLC and CZH, LLC d/b/a I-57 Roadhouse Harley Davidson. The developer desires to re-develop and improve commercial property at 204 N. 44th Street. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that negotiations with the developer began last fall. Since this business is not in a TIF District or eligible for Enterprise Zone benefits, as an inducement to construct the property and continue business in Mt. Vernon, the City will rebate to the developer one hundred (100%) percent of an amount not to exceed one (1) percent of the State Retailer's Occupation Tax collected on retail sales of the store over eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) each year for a period of five (5) years.

Motion by Council Member Jim Rippy to approve the Resolution Approving an Economic Development Agreement with RCSA Properties, LLC and CZH, LLC d/b/a I-57 Roadhouse Harley Davidson. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis. Abstain: May.

City Attorney David Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving an Electric Service Agreement with Constellation Energy Services, Inc. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained this agreement is for non-residential commercial properties and it includes all the locations within the City that has electricity except street lights. Jeff Haarmann explained that the market has gone down and it is an opportunity to see savings in energy costs. Haarmann stated that the City's current contract with Homefield Energy expires in December 2017 and the rate is \$.056 /kWh. Constellation's proposed rate is \$.04759/kWh for a 36-month period. He presented additional rates for longer term lengths. Haarmann explained that for an additional \$.0007/kWh, the City could secure this rate for a 60-month period. The City should see about a \$26,000 annual savings. Council Member Jim Rippy has seen the advantages of hedging, but he is leery of the 60-month period.

Motion by Council Member Donte Moore to approve the Resolution Approving an Electric Service Agreement with Constellation Energy Services, Inc. for a 36-month period. Seconded by Council Member Jim Rippy. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.

MAYOR

Mayor John Lewis introduced Ray Botch to give an update on the Public Utilities Committee. Council Member Jim Rippy commented that City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel, Ray Botch, and Jonathan Younger have developed a very practical solution to the sewer issues. Botch explained that the Committee is charged with recommending a plan to bring Mt. Vernon's utilities into the 21st Century with transparency and keeping the citizens up-to-date. He stressed that the Committee Members have the same goals regarding the City's utilities. In the next several weeks, the Committee will be meeting with Water/Sewer Study vendors and Meter Companies to determine the best course of action. A contract has been signed for the Water Modeling Study and should be completed in four weeks. The purpose of this study is to find a way to more efficiently use the City's water towers. In addition, it will determine if the City can eliminate the 150,000-gallon L & N Water Tower built in 1921 by increasing the size of the Opdyke Water Tower from 500,000 gallons to 750,000 gallons. The Committee will meet tomorrow at 8:30 a.m., August 8, 2017, at City Hall to discuss the Sewer Treatment Plant Grit Chamber and Lift Stations. The City has 15 lift stations with all but one pumping into either Lift Station #14 or Lift Station #1. He encouraged the public to attend Committee meetings.

Council Member Donte Moore explained that the Opdyke Water Tower is located by the former high school and the L & N Water Tower is located by the reservoir.

CITY COUNCIL

Council Member Jim Rippy reported that the City has been trying very hard to open 7th Street at the railroad crossing. He said that the City received a proposal from Milano and the railroad. The City sent a response and is waiting for a reply. Rippy said the City will get the crossing returned to its citizens. If it does not open, there will be no question as to who kept it from being open.

Council Member Donte Moore stated that last year's neighborhood block party on Lamar Street had 100 children attend. This year, they are planning for 200 attendees. It is open to all children. On August 12th at 9:30 a.m., everyone will start the neighborhood clean-up. Central Christian Church is assisting with the Clean-up. Moore thanked Linola Spann and Jo Alice Pierce for their hard work.

Council Member Mike Young congratulated the JCSA for the wonderful job they did hosting the Youth World Series. Twenty teams from around the world participated. It was a great tournament and will be larger next year.

VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Ken Meyers spoke on the armory issue. He agrees with Council Member Jim Rippy that when the project was first proposed, he felt that it was a sewer pit. Meyers is concerned about the plan going forward and what the City is going to do with the building if the project is discontinued. He understands that the City does not want to spend another \$500,000 on the building, but what does the City have if the money is not spent and the \$1.5 million grant is declined. No one else will put \$2 million in the armory to make it usable. Demolition costs could run up to \$200,000 or \$300,000. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel reported that she spoke with Mike at the YMCA. The YMCA is interested in the building; however, they need a more accurate number on what it is going to take to get the building renovated. To obtain the renovation cost, the City needs to continue forward with the bidding process. Bids are scheduled to be submitted by the end of the month.

Ken Meyers thanked Ray Botch and the Public Utilities Committee for their work and urged the Council to continue to be transparent. Another issue is the 7th Street reopening, Meyers feels that more information should be available on this. Council Member Jim Rippy said that the City met with Milano and the railroad, and sent a counterproposal to their offer. Mayor John Lewis explained that the negotiations are private, but he plans for a win-win for both sides. Lewis assured Meyers that when negotiations are finalized it will become public.

Dan Black spoke on the armory. He stated he examined the building and estimated that it would take a base bid of \$2.6 million to renovate. With an older facility, many unpredictable problems could occur increasing the bid 10% to 20% more. Black stated the cost to maintain the building after renovation needs to be considered. The City could lose money operating the facility. Black asked what deal the YMCA would obtain to take over the building. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel said that if the grant is received, the City must maintain ownership for twenty years unless otherwise agreed to by the State. With the State's approval, the City can enter a lease or memorandum of understanding with another organization. Ken Meyers stated that if the City does not use the grant, the \$1.5 million is gone and then the City would be in a bind on what to do with the armory.

JoAlice Pierce spoke about mobile homes. She said that homes are remodeled, but mobile homes are not. Mobile homes bring down property value and it was one of the smartest things the Council did was banning mobile homes. She stated that if mobile homes are approved, neighborhoods should be given the option to petition against mobile homes in their area.

Keith Sheeler, landlord, said that considering the many empty lots in Mt. Vernon, mobile homes should be allowed if the mobile homes are up to code, inspected, and monitored. The empty lots are not being taken care of and are used as landfills. No one will build on some of the lots and mobile homes could be an asset if they are inspected and made to be kept up to code.

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 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Jo Pemberton
City Clerk