

**CITY OF MT. VERNON, ILLINOIS
EMERGENCY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2019
4:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held an Emergency City Council Meeting on Thursday, May 23, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at the City Maintenance Building, 1201 Casey Avenue, Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

Mayor John Lewis called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

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

CITY MANAGER

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel reported that since Tuesday, May 21, 2019, the City is experiencing a water loss of over 3,500 gallons per minute. This is a significant leak that is not coming to the surface and must be leaking into another body of water, storm water drain, or sanitary sewer line. This is a serious situation and the City is asking the residents and businesses to notify the City as soon as possible if the business or household is experiencing significant reduction in water pressure. Call 618-242-6851 to report low water pressure or leaks.

The steps that the City has taken include:

- Employees physically searched areas with larger water lines and responded to calls and reports.
- Many agencies and private businesses are assisting with finding the leak
- Illinois State Police engaged their aircraft with thermal imaging to fly over in search of the leak

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel presented an Ordinance Declaring a State of Emergency in the City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois and Authorizing the Mayor to Undertake Such Actions as may be Necessary to Protect Public Health and Safety.

The proposed Ordinance authorizes the Mayor to impose regulations as he may deem advisable on the use of water and potable water in the City and to impose regulations as he may deem advisable to address the State of Emergency. The authority of the Mayor will continue until the Mayor and/or Council determines that the State of Emergency has ceased to exist.

Council Member Ray Botch motioned to suspend the rules on voting on an Ordinance. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: Botch, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Rippy.

Council Member Ray Botch motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-20, an Ordinance Declaring a State of Emergency in the City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois and Authorizing the Mayor to Undertake Such Actions as may be Necessary to Protect Public Health and Safety. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Rippy.

Due to the major water leak not being found, the City of Mt. Vernon will be turning off the Rend Lake Conservatory District transmission line today at 6 p.m., then systematically returning service to each feeder line to isolate this leak. When the water is shut off, the remaining water in our towers will be used. At this time, Bechtel reported that there may be enough water to last about 16 hours at the current usage rate. All businesses and residents are asked to conserve water.

Waltonville, Woodlawn, Dix/Kell, Northeast, Belle-Rive, and Bluford Villages are affected by the situation. Mt. Vernon and the Villages are under a boil water order. A boil water order means that water must be boiled for 5 minutes, if used for consumption, which includes cooking or drinking.

Fire Chief Kevin Sargent reported that the two local hospitals have not been affected, but the 6 p.m. water shut will affect them. Healthcare will be the first priority for service. IEMA is ready to assist the City and a plan is prepared if bottle water is needed for the community.

Updates on the water situation will be posted on the City's Facebook/Website. News media will receive all updates. The City will utilize the new weather sirens by making announcements regarding this situation. Chief Sargent suggested that businesses contact their alarm companies regarding this situation.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Ray Botch motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Absent: Rippy.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Jo Pemberton
City Clerk