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**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois
Regular City Council Meeting
Monday, December 16, 2019
7:00 p.m.
MINUTES**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, December 16, 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.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard 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 December 2, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting and the December 6, 2019 Special 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

No comments were heard.

APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED VOUCHERS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable were presented to Council for approval. Council Member Ray Botch reported that included in the payables is the final payment for the refurbishment of the Opdyke Water Tower Tank. In the last two years, the City refurbished the 1.5 million-gallon Vernwood Tank and the .5 million-gallon Opdyke Water Tower Tank. With routine maintenance, the tanks should last 40 to 45 years.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable in the amount of \$2,345,659.24. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

BIDS AND QUOTES

No bids and quotes were presented.

CITY MANAGER

No report.

CITY ATTORNEY

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Second Reading an Ordinance Amending Article 23, the Mt. Vernon Home Rule Municipal Retailers' and Service Occupation Tax. 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 Ray Botch motioned to approve Ordinance #2019-50, an Ordinance Amending Article 23, the Mt. Vernon Home Rule Municipal Retailers' and Service Occupation Tax. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration an Ordinance granting a Conditional Use for a Cannabis Dispensary Located at 1000/1002/1004 Main Street. The petitioning partying is SB IL, LLC (Starbuds). City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel stated that the Zoning and Planning Commission voted to deny this request by a vote of 2 to 3. Marty Atieh gave a presentation with a video regarding the Starbuds proposed facility. He spoke on parking issues, the generation of income and life to downtown Mt. Vernon, security, clientele, and job creation.

Robert Blades spoke against the cannabis dispensary because it is morally wrong to have its presence in the downtown area.

Rex Cusumano, President of the Downtown Development Corporation, spoke in favor of the dispensary. He feels that the additional foot traffic would produce an economic boost for the downtown area by creating a destination spot. Cusumano reported that Starbuds plans to invest \$1 million in downtown without asking for any incentives. He stated that he met with the Starbuds representatives and investigated their backgrounds. He feels that they are a class act.

Mayor John Lewis spoke with many of the downtown property owners and no one spoke against the cannabis dispensary. He has received several calls in favor of the business.

Council Member Donte Moore stated that the parking, overflow crowd, loitering, security, signage, and other issues have been addressed and handled. Starbuds must follow all City Ordinances and State Statutes. Moore reported that one of the Zoning Board Members who voted against this request would have voted for it, if he would have seen their presentation beforehand.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-51, an Ordinance granting a Conditional Use for a Cannabis Dispensary Located at 1000/1002/1004 Main Street. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration an Ordinance approving the Rezoning of Property at 320 S. 7th Street from R-1, Low Density Residential to I-2, General Industrial. The petitioning party is the Mt. Vernon Township High School. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that the sale of the property is pending on the rezoning to Class Industrial. The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved this request.

Council Member Joe Gliosci motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-52, an Ordinance approving the Rezoning of Property at 320 S. 7th Street from R-1, Low Density Residential to I-2, General Industrial. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration an Ordinance approving the Rezoning of Property at 736—830 Park Plaza from B-1, Primary Business to I-2, General Industrial. The petitioning party is the City of Mt. Vernon. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that this is in anticipation of new development in this area. The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved this request.

Council Member Ray Botch motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-53, an Ordinance approving the Rezoning of Property at 736—830 Park Plaza from B-1, Primary Business to I-2, General Industrial. Seconded by Council Member Donte Moore. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration an Ordinance approving the Rezoning of Property at Unassigned Lamar Avenue from R-3, High Density Residential, to I-2, General Industrial. The petitioning party is Milano Railcar Services, LLC. The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved this request.

Council Member Ray Botch motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-54, an Ordinance approving the Rezoning of Property at Unassigned Lamar Avenue from R-3, High Density Residential, to I-2, General Industrial. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Moore, Young, and Lewis. Abstain: Gliosci.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration the First Reading of an Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Municipal Real Property at 1310 Conger. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that this lot has been for sale for a long time. City lots are priced at \$500. There has been no interest in this lot until Black and Sons approached the City to use the lot for the storage of their equipment and materials. Bechtel recommended transferring the property at no cost since they are expanding a business. Council Member Donte Moore asked if the I-1 Zoning requires a fence around the property. Bechtel replied that it requires a six-foot privacy fence.

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

Council Member Ray Botch motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-55, an Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Municipal Real Property at 1310 Conger. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, and Lewis. Abstain: Young.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration the First Reading of an Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to make a Draw on the Line of Credit with Banterra Bank by December 31, 2019 to be used for Capital Expenses for the new Post Office Building. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel requested a \$50,000 draw on the Line of Credit with Banterra Bank to use for the construction of the new Post Office Building. This Ordinance will also designate a \$5 million Line of Credit as bank qualified debit for 2019 to give the City flexibility next year regarding a bank qualification limit of \$10 million.

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

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to adopt Ordinance #2019-56, an Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to make a Draw on the Line of Credit with Banterra Bank by December 31, 2019 to be used for Capital Expenses for the new Post Office Building. 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 a Lease Amendment and Work Letter with the United States Postal Service. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that this transfers the lease of the old Post Office to the new Post Office and allows the project to move forward.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Resolution approving a Lease Amendment and Work Letter with the United States Postal Service. Seconded by Council Member Joe Gliosci. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for Council's consideration a Resolution approving the Subscription Documents from Contrarian Holdings, LLC regarding Participation in the Captive Health Insurance Plan. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that the City is self-insured for their health insurance. Every year the City purchases a re-insurance policy for claims over \$60,000 per employee. This year, Bechtel recommends joining a captive fund for the re-insurance. No increase in health insurance premiums is planned for this year.

Council Member Donte Moore motioned to approve the Resolution approving the Subscription Documents from Contrarian Holdings, LLC regarding Participation in the Captive Health Insurance Plan. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

MAYOR

Mayor John Lewis wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year's.

CITY COUNCIL

Council Member Ray Botch spoke on the Mt. Vernon Police Academy. The police academy is designed to give attendees information about the various divisions and assignments within the police department. This includes information about the dispatch center, patrol division, detective division, narcotics division, K9 division and other specialties like the High-Risk Team and Bike Patrol. The deadline to apply is January 7, 2020.

Council Member Donte Moore asked when the new cannabis dispensary is scheduled to be opened. Marty Atieh of SB IL, LLC (Starbuds) replied that if they receive the approval from the State of Illinois, the business should open in October 2020.

VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

James Rippy stated that the City Council made a big mistake by increasing the sales tax instead of cutting expenses. If there is not enough income, then cut expenses. He recommended that the City visit other communities to see how they can operate cheaper and with less police and fire officers. Rippy said that the City needs to explain in detail why Mt. Vernon has more employees.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session was held.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Jo Pemberton, City Clerk