

**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois  
Regular City Council Meeting  
Tuesday, January 02, 2018  
7:00 p.m.  
MINUTES**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Tuesday, January 02, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building, Veterans Park, 800 South 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Mt. Vernon, IL.

Mayor John Lewis called the meeting to order.

Father John Iffert of St. Mary's Immaculate Conception Church 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 the December 18, 2017 Regular City Council Meeting was presented to Council for any additions, deletions or corrections.

**Council Member Jim Rippy 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**

Kent Jackson, pastor of Family Life Church, and Luther Torrez spoke on the City Ordinance relating to a Residential Facility for Homeless Persons. The Ordinance states that a Residential Facility for Homeless Persons cannot serve persons who shall be a registered sex offender or who shall have a recent criminal history of domestic or other violence or who shall have a recent history of multiple criminal convictions for other serious offenses against persons or property. No person shall be admitted who is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Jackson requested that the wording be edited to allow his ministry to address the needs of the people excluded. He stated that the revision would allow service to everyone in need.

Luther Torrez stated that a warming shelter was recently opened at the Family Life Church for everyone. He explained the current homeless shelter, Lifeboat Alliance, is great but it excludes a certain group of people. The warming shelter admitted anyone without questions. Torrez stated that for his organization to continue their ministry, he asked that the Council revise the language to allow service to everyone.

Council Member Mike Young looked at the criteria and agreed that all people should be served. Luther Torrez explained that their purpose is to help to be part of the solution.

Cindy Welch stated that she helped at the Family Life Church and it has been an awesome experience helping the people.

Charles Lamont, retired Mt. Vernon Police Captain, stated that he has dealt with homeless people for many years and wished for a homeless facility like Lifeboat Alliance. A group of local ministers formed Lifeboat Alliance after many prayer sessions and community input. Many citizens were against a homeless shelter, especially if it was going to be in their backyard. In 2011, the Lifeboat Alliance formed their policy with assistance from the City. The facility runs with volunteers because it is safe, and it runs according to policy and protocol. Lamont stated that there is no need to change the Lifeboat facility, but to build a separate facility to serve the ones excluded from Lifeboat. He volunteered to serve as security at the new facility. Lamont stated that the other speakers desire to run Lifeboat Alliance in a manner that they feel appropriate by allowing parolees, sex offenders, and others with unknown backgrounds.

Mayor John Lewis stated that earlier, he spoke with Brenda Torrez and he feels that the City should not be dictating to Lifeboat Alliance and other facilities on their policies. The policies should be up to the boards of the facilities. Charles Lamont stated that any organization needs policies and procedures to stay open and to serve people better.

Father John Iffert listed the Lifeboat Alliance's board members. He, Charles Lamont, and Joe Cummings rotated off the board on December 31, 2017. The board will meet at the end of this month to elect officers, so there is not a board leader to speak now. The director, Jenny McCarthy, consults with the board and she is the best person to speak to now.

Council Member Jim Rippy asked why the City is involved in this matter. The boards should determine their own policies.

Iffert stated that Lifeboat Alliance did not seek the City's Ordinance prohibiting certain people, but it was part of the process to get the property rezoned for a homeless shelter. The City Council at the time Lifeboat was established, was sensitive to the citizens' concerns and wrote the language into the Zoning Ordinance. He said that the absence or revision of the Ordinance language will not change Lifeboat Alliance's policies.

William Norton of Christian Outreach stated that his ministry has been open for two years. The first year, Christian Outreach help 400 people and the second year, they helped over 600 people. There were no strings attached and nothing was demanded from the people. Norton believes that Mt. Vernon should be the leader in helping others.

John Hardesty spoke against the proposed truck stop near the Northwest corner of Interstate 64, Exit 80. The location is adjacent to his property.

### **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 \$1,607,631.97. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.**

### **BIDS & QUOTES**

No bids to report.

### **CITY MANAGER**

No report from the City Manager.

### **CITY ATTORNEY**

Corporation Counsel Bill Howard presented for First Reading of an Ordinance Annexing Property Located near the Northwest Corner of Interstate 64, Exit 80 having the PIN 11-08-351-02. The petitioning party is Loves Mt. Vernon. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that a full-service truck stop with a restaurant is planned.

**First reading was held.**

### **MAYOR**

No report from the Mayor.

### **CITY COUNCIL**

Council Member Donte Moore thanked the City crews that worked on the numerous water main leaks over the weekend in the frigid weather. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel reported that there were eight water main leaks and numerous residential frozen meters.

Council Member Donte Moore thanked the Mt. Vernon Police Department with the warming shelter at Family Life Church.

Council Member Jim Rippy provided an update on the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Reopening Project. He said that he is not going to give up on this subject, because this what the citizens want. He stated that he placed a poll on Facebook and it showed that over 500 people wanted the street open and only three people that wanted any singular entity to keep it closed.

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

Debbie Bartolomucci, resident of East Reynolds Road, asked if any other residents in the proposed Loves Truck Stop area be will annexed into the City. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that there have been no other annexation requests filed in this area. The City need not ask Loves to annex. Loves petitioned the City to annex. Mayor John Lewis stated the City would love to have Bartolomucci annex, but the City will not force the annexation.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No Executive Session was held.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Council Member Mike Young motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Jeff May. Yeas: May, Moore, Rippy, Young, and Lewis.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Jo Pemberton  
City Clerk