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**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois  
City Council Workshop Meeting  
Monday, January 9, 2012**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Workshop Meeting on Monday, January 9, 2011, at 3:00 p.m. at City Hall, 1100 Main Street, Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

Mayor Mary Jane Chesley called the Workshop Meeting to order.

Roll call showed present: Council Member Ron Lash, Council Member Dennis McEnaney, Council Member Todd Piper and Mayor Mary Jane Chesley. Council Member David Wood was absent. Also present: City Manager Ron Neibert and City Clerk Jerilee Hopkins.

**Comprehensive Plan Project Update**

City Manager Ron Neibert presented a report to the Council containing tables extracted from the City's Comprehensive Plan listing the status of various City projects. Items highlighted in yellow are completed and items highlighted in pink are in progress.

Transportation Projects — The North Davidson Avenue Extension (Pepsi) and the Shiloh Drive Overlay (Magnum Steel) are completed. Both these projects were grant funded and have been instrumental in bringing job growth to Mt. Vernon.

The Veterans Memorial Drive Extension and the South Davidson Avenue Extension should be let out for bid in February, 2012. They are expected to be completed by July, 2013.

The South 34<sup>th</sup> Street project is expected to go out for bid in late spring 2012. The City's new Project Engineer is working to obtain all the rights of way and easements for this project. Approximately 55% of the rights of way and easements have been acquired.

Council Member Lash inquired as to how the priority is set for completing the projects. City Manager Neibert noted that the Council and Mayor give their input during the budgeting process for the next fiscal year.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Trail Projects — Cedarhurst to Downtown Trails Project is underway and anticipate construction to begin in the summer of 2013. City Manager Neibert noted that the City has received about \$370,000 in grant money for this project.

Sidewalk Replacement Plan — City Manager Neibert commented that none of the sidewalks on the list have been completed. He anticipates the Council will review the list and schedule work on this list. Council Member Piper stated that he received a summary of possible new sidewalks from Public Works Director Matt Fauss sorted by “safety importance”.

Storm water Improvement Projects — The following projects have been completed: Country Club Road Culvert, 15<sup>th</sup> & Conger Ditch, Kingsridge Estates Detention, Potomac Ditch, Woodglen Acres, McDermott’s Ditch, Dawson Park Ditch, Lime Street Culvert, Strawberry Detention, South 13<sup>th</sup> Street, S. Water Tower Property, Burns & Harrison St., B. Dare Storm Sewer and Mateer Road Drainage. The following projects are in progress and have been budgeted for: Hardee’s Detention Basin, L & N Reservoir Lake, Neubauer’s Storm Sewer, Harlan Road Ditches, Michel’s Fertilizer Ditch, and Hoits Addition.

Public Utilities Department Water Main Replacements — Completed projects are: Conger Avenue – 12<sup>th</sup> St. to 26<sup>th</sup> St., Apple – from Peach to Cherry, 9<sup>th</sup> Street – Perkins Ave. to Cleveland St., Blackberry – Cherry St. to Apricot Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> St. & Opdyke Ave. to 3<sup>rd</sup> St. & Castleton, and 27<sup>th</sup> St. – Jones St. to Wescott St. Under construction are Grand Alley – Vaught to Veterans Memorial Drive and N. 17<sup>th</sup> St. – by Lincoln School. The replacement of water mains is reducing the amount of lost water by five or six percent.

Manhole Re-Linings — City Manager Neibert advised that every year the City re-lines old manholes that have cracked or are made of brick with a plastic fiber that extends the life of the manhole by ten to 15 years. In the last two years 35 manholes have been relined. Council Member McEnaney inquired about the savings incurred by the City because of stopping the infiltration of storm water into the City’s sanitary system. He also inquired about the percentage of manhole linings completed. City Manager Neibert will obtain that information and forward to the Council Members.

Dead End Water Mains — The N. Davidson Drive is completed and the Hillside Drive to N. Highland East is in progress creating a more efficient loop system for the residents in the area.

Future Water Main Projects — S. Water Tower Extension to 34<sup>th</sup> St. is complete. The Wells Bypass to S. Davidson extension is under design and will be put out for bid this spring or summer.

Water Tower Information — the Times Square water Tower is under construction and should be complete in May or June 2012.

Quality of Life Projects — Goal #1 – Improve the quality of education. The City is assisting the High School in getting a new education facility built. Goal #3 – Promote

health care services offered. The City is taking a very active role in the construction projects ongoing at both local hospitals as well as participating in various health care forums in the community. Goals #4 – Improve the quality of neighborhoods throughout the City. Several new and replacement sidewalk projects are ongoing. Goals #5 – Provide more affordable housing within the City limits. The implementation of the housing study will provide the City with guidance to bring more housing to the City. The study should be done next month. City Manager Neibert advised that if the study is complete, he will arrange for it to be discussed at the Council's Workshop Meeting in February. Goal #7 – Focus on creation and expansion of recreational entertainment. The trail system discussed earlier in the meeting and the new Aquatic Recreational Complex are in progress and working towards fulfilling this goal. Goals #8 – Significantly strengthen the reputation of the Mt. Vernon Park and Recreation Department as being the leader of quality of life services for the residents of the community. The Branding of the Department and creation of a logo is part of the Branding Study being undertaken by the City and will be complete later this summer. Objection #2 – Emphasis on creating new and developing existing relationships. The Parks Department is working with Kiwanis on improving the park shelter. Also, they are working with the neighborhood to develop and establish Dawson Park. Goal #10 – Improve the maintenance of the Parks and Recreation facilities and property. Projects completed include: Initiate a playground equipment maintenance inspection program; re-establish the shore line of Veterans Park Lake and also islands; renovate the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building. Mayor Chesley reminded Park and Recreation Director George Bryant to schedule a ribbon-cutting for the unveiling of the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building's remodel. More completed projects include replacement of south restroom in Veterans Park; budget annually for maintenance program on basketball and tennis courts utilizing protective coating; and correct poor drainage of playground equipment unit at Dawson Park. Ongoing projects are replace damage storm water drainage lines in Veterans park; devise and implement a plan for the regular replacement of mowing equipment and park vehicles; complete a detailed playground equipment replacement program for each park and begin implementation; start a program for the painting of the selected park facilities with a graffiti coating; renovate existing park restroom to aid in cleaning and maintenance; provide park tree protection with spraying and mulching program; and establish regular maintenance program schedule for every landscaped area. Remove old landscaped areas that are no longer viable.

Goal #11 — to develop the existing parks and city-owned green space areas. Development of Veterans Park including the creation and implementation of a plan to establish flowering landscape beds around the walking trail and natural plantings on the park lake island; to establish irrigation to formal landscape beds prior to planting; and begin memorial park bench and picnic table program. Memorial benches can be purchased from the Parks and Recreation Department for \$550.00. Objective #13 – Development of Dawson Park including preparing a park development plan in cooperation with the neighborhood residents; establish parking area; tree removal and new plantings; utility installation of water, sewer and electric and new restrooms. The City thanked McCarthy Construction Co. for volunteering their time and materials to complete the new restroom at Dawson Park. The City also received a donation from Cedar Point Housing towards the continuation of the Dawson Park project. Completion

of the Dawson Park project is contingent upon McCarthy Construction Co. schedule and is probably 70% to 80% complete.

Quality of Life Objective #4 – Development of Veterans Park. City Manager Neibert noted that the addition of Frisbee golf to the north section of the park is underway. Parks and Recreation Director Bryant stated the City is taking donations to make nine holes at the Frisbee golf course.

Goal #12 – Prepare a plan to address the deteriorating outdoor City swimming pool and the needs of the community. The proposed Aquatic Recreation Facility will be further discussed at this meeting.

Goal #13 – Develop a trail system that will encompass trails with parks, a City-wide network and linkages to regional and state planned trail connectors. Several trails have been discussed at today's meeting.

Goal #21 – Ensure fire department apparatus remains in good operating order. The City recently purchased a new 100 ft. platform truck which is greatly enhancing the City's ability to provide safety to the residents. Also, a new pumper truck has been ordered. The new pumper truck will help the City to maintain its Class 3 ISO (Insurance Service Organization) rating which in turn results in lower insurance rates to businesses and homeowners in the City. The City of Mt. Vernon is one of only two communities south of Springfield that is designated as Class 3.

Goal #22 – Rethink public art, urban design, and way finding strategies. Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation is doing great work in creating more attractive streets for pedestrians and passersby.

Goal #23 – Improve upon the character of the Downtown Area. City Manager Neibert advised that financing is now in place to encourage building rehabilitation through the TIF program which has been very successful. There are well over 30 projects in the TIF area. This week he will compile an update on the financial status of all the TIF projects.

Mayor Chesley noted that the City Council takes the Comprehensive Plan very seriously and makes decisions based on information and direction in the Comprehensive Plan. She noted the Department Directors, City Council, and City Manager have worked very hard to adhere to the Comprehensive Plan, and thanked them for their efforts.

Council Member Piper congratulated City Manager Neibert for being very responsible and extremely efficient in carrying out the plan.

### **HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION PRESENTATION**

Nick LeMay, Laura Thacker, Jeff Howard, Rick Kirkpatrick, Rick Marlow and Barb Hengle were all present to request that the City Council adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance in order to apply with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency for "Certified Local Government" status. Seventy communities throughout the State have been granted this status by the State of Illinois which is one component necessary to be

eligible for historic preservation tax credits and also consulting grants. The grants would enable the Commission to contract with professional consultants to identify historic areas in our community. All federal grants require the CLG status. The purpose of the ordinance is to promote the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of improvements of special character or historical interest or value in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety, and welfare of the community. It was noted that the City Council would always make the final decision regarding historical preservation issues. The Historical Preservation Commission acts in an advisory capacity. The following documents were distributed by Jeff Howard: sample ordinance, outline and myth sheet about the benefits and implementation of the ordinance.

Benton, Centralia and Carbondale have adopted a similar ordinance. Benton's means of implementing the ordinance is limited due to the size of the City's staff and community. Carbondale has seen a considerable amount of improvement in saving older structures and received several grants which they were not able to secure prior to receiving CLG status. In Carbondale 25% of all property owners in any designated historic preservation district must agree, sign and notarize an application for a district to be recommended. The local Historical Preservation Commission will recommend that 51% of all property owners in any designated district must agree. Nick LeMay will inquire as to when Centralia received CLG status and how many districts they have designated.

This ordinance isn't designed to inhibit development in any way or restrict any changes. The Commission focuses on adaptive reuse and creative integration of historic property. Restrictions on the property owner within the district would be minimal and limited to cosmetic work on the outside of the building. The local Historical Preservation Commission is recommending a certificate of appropriateness which is much less restrictive when authorizing plans for alterations, construction, removal or demolition of a landmark or site within a designated historic district.

In order to fulfill the requirements for the Illinois Main Street Community status, the City should apply for certified local government status.

Portions of the City that have been looked at as possible historical preservation districts are downtown and the Johnson Alley area.

Council Member McEnaney thanked the Commission members for their efforts.

### **AQUATIC STUDY PRESENTATION**

Parks and Recreation Director George Bryant stated last fall the City commissioned an aquatic study to be completed in order to evaluate the existing facility that we have and also to obtain input from the community about the type of aquatic facility they desire. A Steering Committee was appointed to assist in this process. Steering Committee members Bernie Dickneite and Travis Perry are attending today's Workshop. Several stakeholder meetings were held in order to obtain input from different segments of the community.

FGM Architects/Councilman-Hunsaker presented the Aquatic Feasibility Mid-Point Review study and three conceptual plans. Presenting the results of the aquatic study were John Dzarnowski, Scott Hester and Kevin Post.

Topics for discussion include review of the Feasibility Study process, Demographic Overview, Options for Consideration, Revenue, Expenses, and Operations Summary. Goals of the Feasibility Study include Market Analysis, review of the City's Existing Facility, User Group Meetings, Program Development, Conceptual Planning and Financial Analysis.

The following criteria were analyzed: population by distance, demographics, market area age distribution, market area income, and climatological data.

Option A — outdoor pool — water sprayground, lap pool, leisure/plunge pool, lazy river, bathhouse, zero depth entry, play features, floatable structures and waterslides.

Option B — outdoor pool with indoor therapy pool — therapy pool, spa pool, bathhouse, zero depth entry, and natatorium, leisure/lap pool, lazy river, and bathhouse.

Option C — indoor pool — lap/leisure pool, natatorium, zero depth entry, and vortex.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>OPTION A - Outdoor</b>					
Project Cost	\$5,995,357				
Attendance	50,041				
Revenue	\$327,319	\$335,975	\$344,578	\$353,129	\$361,626
Expense	\$303,918	\$311,516	\$319,304	\$327,286	\$335,468
Operating Cashflow	23,402	\$24,460	\$25,275	\$25,842	\$26,158
Recapture Rate	108%	108%	108%	108%	108%
Capital Replacement Fund	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Debt Service	(\$460,900)	(\$460,900)	(\$460,900)	(\$460,900)	(\$460,900)
Cashflow	(\$467,498)	(\$466,440)	(\$465,625)	(\$465,057)	(\$464,742)
<b>OPTION B -Outdoor with Therapy</b>					
Project Cost	\$5,999,974				
Attendance	46,198				
Revenue	\$316,089	\$324,124	\$332,113	\$340,055	\$347,952
Expense	\$521,915	\$534,963	\$548,337	\$562,045	\$576,096
Operating Cashflow	(\$205,826)	(\$210,839)	(\$216,224)	(\$221,990)	(\$228,144)
Recapture Rate	61%	61%	61%	61%	60%
Capital Replacement Fund	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Debt Service	(\$461,255)	(\$461,255)	(\$461,255)	(\$461,255)	(\$461,255)
Cashflow	(\$697,081)	(\$702,094)	(\$707,479)	(\$713,245)	(\$719,399)

<b>OPTION C - Indoor</b>					
Project Cost	\$6,797,061				
Attendance	66,331				
Revenue	\$395,719	\$405,760	\$415,760	\$425,719	\$435,638
Expense	\$667,348	\$684,031	\$701,132	\$718,660	\$736,627
Operating Cashflow	(\$271,628)	(\$278,272)	(\$285,372)	(\$292,941)	(\$300,989)
<b>Recapture Rate</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>59%</b>
Capital Replacement Fund	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$34,000
Debt Service	(\$522,532)	(\$522,532)	(\$522,532)	(\$522,532)	(\$522,532)
<b>Cashflow</b>	<b>(\$828,160)</b>	<b>(\$834,803)</b>	<b>(\$841,904)</b>	<b>(\$849,473)</b>	<b>(\$857,521)</b>

Note: Reducing daily rates by \$1.00 will result in a 97% recap (\$10,626 subsidy) for the Outdoor option.

Visits per program day, programming days, per capital spending (net), opinion of revenue (net), user-group revenue, fee structure/per capita spending chart, revenue, expenses, labor costs, and debt were analyzed for each option. Also, a facility comparison was provided covering Mt. Vernon, Urbana, Salem, Collinsville, Baton Rouge, LA, Killeen, TX, Independence, KS, and Lewisville, TX.

Council Member Piper inquired how the \$6 million figure was chosen. According to City Manager Neibert the Salem facility cost about \$4 million. The Steering Committee, Architects, City Manager Neibert and Parks and Recreation Director Bryant considered the features that are desired at the facility as well as the City's financial status. After careful consideration, the Committee determined not to exceed \$6 million.

Land acquisition is not included in the financial spreadsheets that were provided. The life expectancy for an outdoor pool is 30-50 years.

Considering the City's finances, the overriding desire of the community for an outdoor pool, and the proposed positive cash flow, the Aquatic Steering Committee is recommending Option A, the outdoor pool, to the City Council. It is also noted that Option A will be a unique facility unlike any other in Southern Illinois.

The proposed location is at 34<sup>th</sup> St. and Veteran's Memorial Drive. The largest unknown factors are: how far away are the utilities coming from and what are the ground conditions? City Manager Neibert noted that the utilities are nearby and won't pose a problem. However, the ground soil condition is unknown but contingency funds in the facility budget will cover any added soil expense.

The Steering Committee asks that the City Council favorably consider the Committee's recommendation and ask the Council to consider at its' next meeting only the design/engineering contract with Counsilman-Hunsaker taking the project up to the bidding process. If the City has a problem with a contingency expense then the City can make a determination to proceed or not to proceed at that time. The approximate cost of design/engineering is \$340,000 which would be paid out of capital funds.

It is anticipated that construction on the aquatic facility will begin Labor Day 2012 and will be ready for business on opening day in May 2013.

Parks and Recreation Director Bryant commented that it's a gamble whether or not the current pool will continue to operate this summer because of its' deteriorated condition.

Motion by Council Member Piper to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel.  
Second by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, and Chesley.  
Absent Council Member Wood.

The Council came back into Regular Session at 5:20 p.m.

Motion by Council Member Lash to adjourn the City Council Workshop Meeting.  
Second by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley.  
Absent Council Member Wood.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerilee Hopkins  
City Clerk