

JERILEE HOPKINS
City Clerk



CITY OF MT. VERNON
1100 Main PO Box 1708
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
618-242-5000
FAX 618-242-6867

**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois
Regular City Council Meeting
Monday, March 5, 2012**

MINUTES

The Mt. Vernon City Council met for a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, March, 5 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building at Veterans Park, Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

Mayor Mary Jane Chesley called the meeting to order.

The Invocation was given by Father Gene Tucker.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed present: Council Members Ron Lash, Dennis McEnaney, Todd Piper and Mayor Mary Jane Chesley. Council Member David Wood was absent.

JOURNAL

The Journal for the February 13, 2012 Special City Council Meeting and the February 21, 2012 Regular City Council Meeting were presented to Council for any additions, deletions or corrections. Motion by Council Member Piper to approve the Journals. Second by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

CONSOLIDATED VOUCHERS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable were presented for Council's consideration. Finance Director Merle Hollmann acted as Pro-tem for City Manager Ron Neibert. Council Member McEnaney asked Director Hollmann to highlight items 3, 8, 12, 13, 21, 22 and the special check written. Director Hollmann stated that #3 was to CB & I, Inc. in the amount of \$194,416.00 for construction of the West Elevated Tank. City Engineer Scot Prindiville had informed him that the steel is starting to go up on that project. Mayor Chesley asked how the project was progressing. Director Hollmann stated the project is about 40 percent complete. #8 is the ET Simonds Construction on the Continental Tire the Americas Truck Access Road. Engineer Prindiville stated that progress has been slower than normal; the striping put down in the winter has come up and will have to be replaced when the weather is warmer. After this payment the City will only owe about \$15,000.00 more on that contract stated Hollmann. The City owes Heneghan \$20,000.00 on the construction engineering on the project as well. #12 is to Heneghan and Associates in the amount of

\$10,550.00 for the Engineering on the Shared Use Trail and Bike Trail. The City has approximately \$66,000.00 to go to complete that project. Director Hollmann clarified that the grant from the State is for approximately half of the total. #13 is to Henry, Meisenheimer & Gende in the amount of \$108,871.77 which covers a lot of projects. Small invoices have been trickling in for the engineering on the North 8th extension. There is an ARRA Grant for this project and the paperwork is voluminous stated Hollmann, the reason behind the small invoices. Other than that the North Davidson Project is complete, he stated. The company is also doing the design engineering of the West Elevated Tank which the City has about \$4,700.00 to go on design along with construction engineering; the observation, which is about \$25,000.00. All together the City has about \$29,000.00 to go engineering wise on this West Elevated Tank project. Veterans/Davidson Drive Extension has been going on for quite some time. Director Hollmann stated the City is very close on all the engineering with only about \$35,000.00 to go after this payment. The engineering he noted is based on 10% of the total construction and the total amount is unknown at this time. The Veterans/Davidson Sanitary Sewer Extension is the design engineering on the Sanitary Sewer West past the interstate and this \$14,000.00 will be the final payment for that. #21 Rhutasel & Associates should read \$10,039.50 and there is approximately \$65,000.00 left to go on that contract. This, he stated, is the sewer project under the interstate which includes observation and construction engineering. #22 is to Round Table Design for the Engineering on Holiday Inn Sidewalk Project instead of the 27th Street Sidewalk Project, as stated in the handout, in the amount of \$4,000.00 with \$1,000.00 left to go on that project. Mayor Chesley clarified that the sidewalk is located on the West side of the Holiday Inn running North and South. Round Table is also doing the design on the South Davidson/Veterans Memorial Drive Water Main. The check here is for \$20,000.00 and there is \$4,000.00 more to go on that. The City has been billed \$8,775.00 on the 27th Street Sidewalk and there should be about \$3,000.00 to go on that project. Director Hollmann stated that approximately 75% of the project had been completed. The last item is the special check written to JK Trotter & Sons in the amount of \$205,652.22. The contract is for \$2.7 million with about \$750,000.00 still to go. Councilmen Piper asked when the bid letting would be for South Davidson/Veterans. Director Hollmann stated that he didn't know, but would check into it and let him know tomorrow. Council Member McEnaney made a motion to Approve the Consolidated Vouchers as presented in the amount of \$1,231,255.13 with the corrections on numbers 21 and 22. Second by Councilmen Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

BIDS & QUOTES

There were no bids and quotes.

CITY MANAGER

Finance Director Hollmann, acting as City Manager Pro-Tem, introduced Assistant Fire Chief Kevin Sargent of the Mt. Vernon Fire Department. Assistant Fire Chief Sargent spoke on the Request for Permission to Seek Bids for the Fire Station Alerting System. He stated that this system would improve response times and take a little bit of the load off of the telecommunicators by allowing them to simply push a button to alert the fire department of an emergency instead of having to pick up the telephone and call a line to notify them of an emergency. The department is asking to seek bids on the different types of systems available. The bid will be open for two weeks.

Council Member Piper asked if this was a budgeted item. Sargent stated that it was in this fiscal year's budget. He would like to state for the record that the installation process may go into the next fiscal year, but if they get everything wrapped up in this fiscal year it would stay within this budget.

Council Member Lash made a motion to Approve the Request for Permission to Seek Bids for the Fire Station Alerting System. Second by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney David Leggans presented the Second Reading on Ordinance Approving Right-of-Entry-Administrative Inspection Warrant.

Council Member Piper stated that Council had thoroughly went over this a couple of weeks ago and had decided that it was nothing out of the ordinary and that all surrounding cities have it and stated that the City is not breaking any first amendment rights. Attorney Leggans confirmed that was correct. Council Member Piper made the motion to adopt Ordinance #2012-6 Approving Right-of-Entry-Administrative Inspection Warrant. Second by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

City Attorney Leggans presented a First Reading on Ordinance Authorizing Annexation of Property Located at S. 17th Street and Veterans Memorial Drive; Petitioning party is Kenneth Aydt. Mayor Chesley asked Mr. Aydt to step forward. He stated that there is a medical supply company wanting to build on this property.

Council Member Piper congratulated Ken on his move forward and stated that it was nice to see development along Veterans Memorial Drive. Mr. Aydt stated that there is a lot of interest and it has picked up since the high school money came in as well.

Council Member Piper made a motion to Suspend the Rules to vote on the Ordinance Authorizing Annexation of Property Located at S. 17th Street and Veterans Memorial Drive. Second by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

Council Member Piper made a motion to Adopt Ordinance #2012-7 Authorizing Annexation of Property Located at S. 17th Street and Veterans Memorial Drive. Second by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

City Attorney Leggans presented the Inducement Resolution Regarding DDC Hotels, Inc. Property within the Rt. 15/I-57 Redevelopment Project TIF District.

Mayor Chesley asked Attorney Leggans to explain the purpose of the inducement resolution. Attorney Leggans stated the purpose of enacting this is so that expenditures will be eligible for TIF reimbursements in the event that the committee decides that the expenses are eligible for reimbursement.

Council Member McEnaney made a motion to Approve the Inducement Resolution Regarding DDC Hotels, Inc. Property within the Rt. 15/I-57 Redevelopment Project TIF District. Second by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

City Attorney Leggans presented a Resolution Approving Corporate Authorization Resolution from Peoples National Bank for Police Unclaimed Evidence Funds Bank Account. Mayor Chesley asked Police Chief Mendenhall to come forward and brief Council and the Public on this Resolution.

Police Chief Mendenhall stated that the creation of the checking account is needed due to excess funds in the Police Department as far as forfeited and seized funds that have been awarded back to the owner. He

explained that large amounts of funds may stay in the safe for a long period of time if the owners of the awarded funds are not residents or if they don't come back to Mt. Vernon after an encounter with the Police. In the event that the Police Department building burned down due to the age of the building, the City would still have to reimburse any owner who did come forward to claim these awarded funds. The Department does send out certified letters to notify people who have unclaimed funds and it would be better to put the money in a checking account and have the Department cut a check instead. Auditors could also check it that way as well.

Council Member McEnaney stated that he thought this was a great idea. He asked what percentage of unclaimed monies there were over a period of a year. Chief Mendenhall stated that it would be very hard to tell over a year's time. He approximated anywhere from \$2,000.00 to \$10,000.00 depending on what kind of year they had. The seizures he noted are usually small amounts which accumulate over time. Council Member McEnaney asked how long the funds were to be held before they can be claimed by someone. Chief Mendenhall stated that if it is court ordered at some point in time in the future it can become City funds, but court order funds might be indefinitely. He stated that there is a period of time that seized funds that are unclaimed property become the City's property. However, court ordered funds are a little bit different, he stated.

Council Member Lash made a motion to Approve the Resolution Approving Corporate Authorization Resolution from Peoples National Bank for a Police Unclaimed Evidence Funds Bank Account. Second by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

MAYOR

Mayor Chesley announced that there will be a dedication of the Steve Harrison Soccer Field on Tuesday, March 13th at 4:30pm at Lincoln Park. The Girl scouts are hosting a 100 Year Celebration at Times Square Mall on March 12th at 6:30pm. There will be a picture hanging dedication of the 2011 Senior Saints Inductees held at the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building on Sunday, March 11th at 2:00pm.

CITY COUNCIL

No comments from Council.

VISITORS/CITIZEN REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Mary Burgan stepped forward and introduced Jacob Schiller, a 2002 Rotary exchange student from Germany who is coming back to visit. She then presented the Mayor, City Council and Citizens of Mt. Vernon in the community 34 pages or nearly 500 signatures of people who are in favor of the bike trail and she stated that she would like to read the Petition if she may. The Petition stated:

To the Mayor, City Council and Citizens of Mt. Vernon, we the undersigned support the Trail System proposed by the Mt. Vernon City Council. We believe that the Bike, Walking and Running Trail System will help Mt. Vernon improve the quality of life of its residents, increase the ability of citizens to maintain a healthy lifestyle, will create safer access to our schools and parks and assist local businesses in recruiting employees to move to Mt. Vernon. We support the City Council's efforts to improve our City by creating a Comprehensive Trail System throughout our community.

Mary Burgan stated that she has been collecting these signatures for three weeks and the support was humbling, incredible, and since she had decided to take this petition on she started researching different communities that are doing bike trails. She stated that there is a vast amount of research out there on this topic. Her research brought to light that bike trails are no longer a luxury no matter how big your town is, but it is a quality of life necessity for the residents; the growth. She read a few quotes that she came across out of her research. "By changing nothing, nothing changes" and "All great changes are preceded by chaos", she stated that with this new project, it is a little scary, all the people who are against it are wonderful people and their fears are substantiated, but mostly their fears regard crime and property value. She stated that she has some wonderful information that it is exactly the opposite. She presented to the public a study that was done in Boulder, Colorado, which concluded that the average value of property adjacent to bike trails increased 32 percent higher than those that were 3,200 feet away from a bike trail. Places with walking and biking were among the most important factors considered when individuals chose a place to live. This is also the case for San Diego and Chicago. A University of Illinois researcher provided a study which found that criminal behavior is harder to conceal when residents are brought outdoors. A five-year strategic plan organized by the County of San Diego in 1995 stated that bike trails improve opportunities for children by providing quality time with family in a safe and close to home environment, encouraging and facilitating opportunities for exercise, providing access to outdoor classrooms for learning and community service, creating lifelong positive experiences and teaching respect and stewardship of the environment. She went on to provide that according to this study, trails promote natural resource management strategies that ensure environmental preservation, quality of life and economic development by providing a buffer between the built and natural environments, allowing passive recreational use and educational access to protected areas, increasing the value, open space to the public by providing access, enhancing property values of communities by connecting them to open space areas, providing an alternative mode of transportation, encouraging cleaner air by decreasing the air pollution by automobiles, supporting communities and businesses through ecotourism and preserving culturally and historically valuable areas. Trails also promote safe and livable communities by providing convenient, safe non-motorized traffic and travel through the community reducing crime and illegal activity through regular use and high visibility of users connecting communities to parks, schools, shopping and other recreational facilities providing affordable exercise and recreational opportunities within the community, encouraging opportunities to meet and interact with neighbors and providing emergency routes. It is really clear she stated that this would be a positive thing for our community.

Mayor Mary Jane Chesley asked if there were any questions from Council.

Council Member Piper stated that he had received a lot of positive feedback from citizens that wanted to sign the petition and who are in absolute full support and they can't wait until the Trail System comes to their neighborhood.

Mary Burgan offered that a few people that she had spoken with who were nervous about the project felt that there was not enough communication and they would like to know more about it and be more involved. They were also nervous that the project would not come to fruition in which she let them know that that would not be the case.

Council Member McEnaney thanked Mary Burgan and applauded everyone involved commenting on the huge amount of signatures recorded on the Petition. Mrs. Burgan stated that it was a team effort from about seven different people.

Council Member Lash stated that he appreciated Mrs. Burgan's efforts getting the petitions started which generated conversations with people who probably would not have been involved in the whole process

otherwise. He commented that the Trail System would provide a positive and safe place for families in the community and he applauds her.

Mrs. Burgan stated that she has another study on Tourism regarding what percentage of people stop here in Mt. Vernon, eat here, get their bikes fixed here and what type of dollars that brings into Mt. Vernon of which she will email to Council.

Stephen Casper stepped forward and stated that he feels the structure of the City Council meetings do not allow the audience to express their concerns adequately. He feels the audience should be given time at the beginning of the meeting to speak instead of at the end when Council has already voted on an issue. He asked that Council would consider having the audience heard prior to any votes. Mayor Chesley stated that on several occasions Council has workshops and invited people to come to express their concerns and they have. He stated that those who do not get the newspaper are unaware of the workshops. Mayor Chesley stated that there is a certain amount of responsibility as a citizen to be aware of what is going on within the community.

Bobbie Farris stepped forward and stated the Council has done a good job at keeping the crime down.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session was requested.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion for adjournment was made by Council Member Piper. Second by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Council Member Wood was absent.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerilee Hopkins/lb
City Clerk