

**CITY OF MT. VERNON, ILLINOIS  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, March 16, 2015  
7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, March 16, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building, Veterans Park, 800 South 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Mt. Vernon, IL.

The invocation was given by Rev. Timothy Brinson.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**PRESENTATION OF JOURNALS**

The Journal for the March 2, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting was presented to Council for any additions, deletions or corrections. Mayor Chesley requested that the Journal for the March 9, 2015 City Council Workshop be placed on hold. **Council Member Wood made a motion to approve the March 2, 2015 Journal as presented. Seconded by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

**APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED VOUCHERS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

The Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable were presented to Council for approval. Council Member McEnaney asked City Manager Ron Neibert for clarification on the following items: Item #2 Ameren IP - \$8,338.56 – electric for month of February, 2015. Council Member McEnaney inquired about the repair of streetlights on Oakland Street. Neibert advised that Public Works will check with Ameren on the progress of the replacement. Item #4 Cargill - \$24,041.41 road salt. Neibert noted that with this purchase the City will have about 100 tons on hand. Item #26 Steven Giacoma - \$17,775.00 – work related to housing grant for 1205 Forest. This is the housing rehabilitation program that is granted to the City and administered by the Crosswalk Community Action Agency, West Frankfort, IL, and is run through the City's billing services. A special check was written to James and Virginia Harris in the amount of \$15,000.00 for land purchase relating to the South 42<sup>nd</sup> Street road project. All rights-of-way have been acquired by the City and the project is ready to proceed.

**Council Member McEnaney made a motion to approve the Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable in the amount of \$973,955.71. Seconded by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

**BIDS & QUOTES**

No bids and quotes were presented.

**CITY MANAGER**

City Manager Neibert presented for Council's consideration a Request to Seek Bids of the Reconstruction of Perkins Avenue from 10<sup>th</sup> Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street. This project will also include storm water work to eliminate the sewer odor and realignment of the streets. The Illinois Department of Transportation coordinated and paid for the land acquisition necessary to complete the project. A June letting is expected and the project completed before the end of the construction season this year.

**Council Member Piper made a motion to approve a Request to Seek Bids for the Reconstruction of Perkins Avenue from 10<sup>th</sup> Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Seconded by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

**CITY ATTORNEY**

City Attorney David Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Urging the Governor and General Assembly to Protect Full Funding of Local Government Distributive Fund Revenues. Mayor Chesley read aloud the following Resolution.

*WHEREAS, municipalities are front-line providers of government services to citizens and these services include police and fire protection, parks, infrastructure, water, sewer and utility services, and snow removal; and*

*WHEREAS the. State of Illinois has a long-standing tradition of collecting tax revenues on behalf of municipal governments and municipalities have relied on shared income tax revenue to provide services to taxpayers; and*

*WHEREAS, municipalities have fewer options to raise significant revenue and rely on the full amount of revenue that the State collects on their behalf in order to fund the essential quality-of-life services expected and relied upon by community residents; and*

*WHEREAS, the General Assembly increased the State income tax without providing any of the new revenues to municipalities and this loss of revenue has left the municipal share at levels collected during the Great Recession; and*

*WHEREAS, the Governor proposed a 50 percent reduction in the local share of the income tax during his FY2016 Budget Address, reducing local revenues by over \$600 million; and*

*WHEREAS, the loss of this state-shared income tax revenue- would result in elimination of countless jobs, local tax increases, program and service cuts, and could increase debt burdens that would be felt by all citizens.*

*WHEREAS, the City of Mt. Vernon would lose \$756,211.50; and*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Mt, Vernon urges the Governor and the General Assembly to protect full funding of the Local Government Distributive Fund and other revenue sources that allow local governments to provide for the health, safety and general welfare of their residents.*

**Council Member McEnaney made a motion to adopt a Resolution Urging the Governor and General Assembly to Protect Full Funding of Local Government Distributive Fund Revenues. Seconded by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper and Chesley. Abstain: Wood.**

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving an Agreement with Westport Pool for Startup and Winterization of the Aquatic Zoo. Neibert advised that a high level of expertise is necessary to protect the equipment during these two critical periods, and the work is warranted by their performance bond. The park staff will be prepping and cleaning the pool basins and equipment prior to Westport coming on site. The total cost is \$9,385.00.

**Council Member Wood made a motion to adopt a Resolution Approving an Agreement with Westport Pool for Startup and Winterization of the Aquatic Zoo. Seconded by Council Member Piper. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving a Design and Construction Engineering Services Agreement with HMG for the New Industrial Park Road Work. Neibert reported that EDA federal grant funds (\$3.25 million) and IDOT state grant funds (\$1.37 million) will be utilized for the road work. The total cost of the project is \$6.5 million. The design components are expected to be completed this year with construction in 2016.

**Council Member Piper made a motion to adopt a Resolution Approving a Design and Construction Engineering Services Agreement with HMG for the New Industrial Park Road Work. Seconded by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving a Design and Construction Engineering Services Agreement with HMG for the New Industrial Park Water and Sewer Infrastructure. Neibert reported that EDA federal grant funds will be utilized for the water and sewer work.

**Council Member Lash made a motion to adopt a Resolution Approving a Design and Construction Engineering Services Agreement with HMG for the New Industrial Park Water and Sewer Infrastructure. Seconded by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Motion to Authorize the Mayor to Sign Electrical Supply Agreement for the City's Aggregation Program for a Rate not to Exceed 0.54/Kw Hour and not to Exceed 18 months. Neibert explained that this agreement authorizes Affordable Gas & Electric to seek bids for the local aggregation project. The original contract with Homefield Energy will expire in June, 2015. Jeff Haarmann of Affordable Gas & Electric appeared. He noted that letters on the City's letterhead will be mailed the first week of April announcing the new supplier and rate to the residents. Haarmann recommended that residents wait until Ameren announces their rate on June 1 before deciding to opt out of the aggregation program. Electrical aggregation saved City residents 15-20 percent over the last two years. Mr. Haarmann will appear at the first council meeting in June to inform residents of their options. Neibert emphasized that the only authorized new electric supplier will be announced on the City's letterhead.

**Council Member McEnaney made a motion to approve a Motion to Authorize the Mayor to Sign Electrical Supply Agreement for the City's Aggregation Program for a Rate not to Exceed 0.54/Kw Hour and not to Exceed 18 months. Seconded by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

### MAYOR

Mayor Chesley advised that the City Council will hold the quarterly workshop meeting on Monday, March 23, 2015 at City Hall to begin at 3:00 p.m. to review the budget. The Mayor proposed that City Council establish a schedule of workshops to discuss the FY 2015-2016 budget.

### CITY COUNCIL

Council Member McEnaney advised that he contacted several community leaders to ask their opinion regarding the sale of the City's water system. About half of the individuals he spoke to indicated they were in favor of the sale; about one-quarter would vote no because they didn't have enough information about the sale; and about one-quarter indicated they trust the City Council and were comfortable with the Council's decision. However, when asked about the timing of the sale, everyone said more time and study is needed. He told the Mayor he would vote no at that time.

Council Member McEnaney suggested that once the new City Council is seated in April, two groups of citizens should be selected. One team would thoroughly study the water and sanitary sewer system. Another team would study the projects listed in the Comprehensive Plan and ways to pay for them with input from all citizens. Results, prioritization of projects and recommendations from each of these groups would be presented to the City Council.

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

Jeff Haarmann, Mt. Vernon, informed that a class entitled "CEO: Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities." It will be launched in the fall of 2016 and will be open to area high school seniors. The hope is that some of the students who complete the course will come back to Jefferson County after college to start their own business. CEO is being sponsored by local business professionals, with cooperation from Mt. Vernon Township High School, Waltonville High School, Woodlawn High School, Webber Township High School, the Regional Office of Education and Rend Lake College.

John Scriver, North 11<sup>th</sup> St., thanked the Council for agreeing to delay the sale of the City's water system. He wants to be part of a positive movement from this point forward to see that the City has the best water possible. He volunteered his time to the City Council to help. He created a Facebook forum entitled "Better Water for Mt. Vernon" and invited everyone to participate.

Richard Acklin, 23 Country Club Rd, questioned why the City was contracting with Westport Pool and not having the City workers perform the opening and closing of the Aquatic Zoo. Neibert explained that the process is technical and should be performed by trained professionals. In addition, the work is warranted by Westport Pool. He also inquired if the Council is willing to give the citizens 12 to six months for others to review the sale of the water system. Mayor Chesley advised that once the new Council is on board then the Council will discuss what direction to take.

Michael Bullard, Bluford, has served as a Trustee on the Village Board of Bluford for nearly 40 years and a spokesman for what he calls, the Team of Mayors, composed of Mayors, commissioners and trustees from the villages of Bluford, Belle Rive, Waltonville, Woodlawn, Dix/Kell and Northeast Water. First, thank you for listening to the voices of the residents of Mt. Vernon and Jefferson County. Second, today is a new beginning and he asked the citizens of Jefferson County to show respect and support the outstanding achievements that have been accomplished over the years by this Council and Mayor. Finally, we all face many fiscal challenges so he asked that all citizens of Jefferson County come together and defeat these challenges as a united community. Let's put the King back in "King City".

Hortin Petties, 609 Perkins, questioned the realignment of Perkins Street at 10<sup>th</sup> Street. A portion of the parking lot at the Chinese Restaurant will be taken and the cinderblock building will be removed. IDOT negotiated the acquisition of this property. He also suggested that all schools should adopt the wearing of school uniforms.

Nancy Herbert, 820 North St, commended the CEO: Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities program.

Angela Moore, 1018 Maple St, congratulated the Police Department for their program, "Coffee with a Cop", event. It was outstanding.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No Executive Session was held.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Council Member Lash made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerilee Hopkins  
City Clerk