

**CITY OF MT. VERNON, ILLINOIS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, April 20, 2015
7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Regular City Council Meeting on Monday, April 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rolland W. Lewis Community Building, Veterans Park, 800 South 27th Street, Mt. Vernon, IL.

The invocation was given by Rev. Brad Henson of the West Salem Trinity United Methodist Church.

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 April 6, 2015 City Council Meeting was presented to Council for any additions, deletions or corrections. **Council Member Piper made a motion to approve the Journals as presented. Seconded by Council Member Lash. 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 to give additional information on the following items: Item 1 Ameren IP - \$15,183.01 – electric for month of March, 2015. Neibert reported that he continues to have discussions with Ameren IP regarding the need for a street light at 10th Street and Oakland. Item 18 Joseph Zanola - \$6,441.59 – housing marketing program. This represents the final payment to Zanola. The City received one property developer as a result of the housing marketing program. Item 29 Rollie Excavating - \$30,871.35 – Richview Road sidewalks 24th Street to Wilshire Drive. Road blocks are in place now in order to complete the sidewalk project on the north side of Richview Road. A special check written to Amalgamated Bank in the amount of \$195,366.26 for 2010A Bond interest payments. These bonds paid for many of the quality of life capital projects, sidewalks, roads, water and sewer projects.

Council Member Wood made a motion to approve the Consolidated Vouchers for Accounts Payable in the amount of \$1,321,716.00. Seconded by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

BIDS & QUOTES

No bids and quotes were presented.

CITY MANAGER

Neibert reported that residents of Mt. Vernon are receiving letters from Affordable Gas & Electric with City letterhead regarding the City's electric aggregation process. Constellation Energy submitted the lowest bid of 5.4 Kw and the Council approved that bid now the City is informing the residents about the aggregation program. Residents can "not" respond to the letter and become a part of the Constellation program or opt out of the program and stay with Ameren as your electricity providers. Jordan Haarmann of Affordable Gas & Electric appeared. He noted this contract with begin June 1, 2015 and run through December, 2016. Affordable Gas & Electric recommends that resident wait until Ameren's rate announcement in June before they make a decision because they may opt out at any time without penalty. Haarmann will appear at the first Council meeting after Ameren announces their new rate to inform the Council.

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney David Leggans presented for Council's consideration Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending Section 11.17 Raffles & Poker Runs. One change was made to the Ordinance – The fine was \$5000 for each violation. Mayor proposed to change the language to read, "Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) and no more than \$500 per violation. The application form will be placed on the City's website.

Council Member McEnaney motion to approve the Ordinance No. 2015-6 Amending Section 11.17 Raffles & Poker Runs. Seconded by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a First Reading of an Ordinance Authorizing the Ceding of Private Activity Bonding Authority. A similar Ordinance is adopted by the Council annually. The City Agrees to reallocate to the Southeastern Illinois Economic Development Authority its 2015 private activity volume bonding cap in the amount of \$1,523,900. Said private activity volume bonding cap shall be used to support projects that will provide job opportunities and new investments.

Council Member Wood made a motion to suspend the rules and vote on this ordinance. Seconded by Council Member Piper. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

Council Member Wood made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2015-7 Authorizing the Ceding of Private Activity Bonding Authority. Seconded by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration First Reading of an Ordinance Granting a Franchise to Rifkin Acquisition Partners, LLC dba Charter Communication to Erect, maintain and Operate a Cable System in the City of Mt. Vernon. This is a license's term is for five years with five year renewables that allows Charter to use the City's rights-of-way for their services. It is non-exclusive which means another cable company may come into the City to ask for a franchise agreement as well. **FIRST READING.**

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council consideration First Reading of an Ordinance Terminating the Designation of the Homestead Tax Increment Redevelopment Project Area, as Created by Ordinance No. 2007-47, Ordinance No. 2007-08, and Ordinance No. 2007-49 Adopted September 4, 2007, as a Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Project Area and Dissolving the Tax Increment Allocation Fund. There was a developer who had plans to build residential housing. Unfortunately, due to financial difficulties, no development was ever built. Since no building project was completed within the 8 year limitation, the municipality is required to decertify the TIF district. The TIF Board recommended that the district be decertified. **FIRST READING.**

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council consideration First Reading of an Ordinance Amending Article 6, Section 6.9 of the Revised Code of Ordinance regarding the number of Liquor Licenses. Greg Patel is interested in purchasing a restaurant in the City and has requested a restaurant with lounge liquor license. Mr. Patel's business plan was distributed to the Council members. The license classification for Grandfathered Restaurant with Package Sales will be eliminated. **FIRST READING.**

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council consideration an Ordinance Approving a Conditional Use for Property at 224 N. 11th Street for a Pet Shop/Kennel. The Petitioning Parties are Randy and Connie Olson. Mr. and Mrs. Olson appeared to state that they plan to open a "doggie daycare" facility named "Jagger's Doggie Day Care". They anticipate being open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. six days a week and closed on Sundays. This is not a kennel and is not designed to keep dogs overnight. Neibert will refer the issue of the wording "Pet Shop/Kennel" to the Zoning and Planning Commission.

Council Member Wood made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2015-8 Approving a Conditional Use for Property at 224 N. 11th Street for a Pet Shop/Kennel (doggie daycare). Seconded by Council Member Piper. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council consideration an Ordinance Rezoning Property Located at 701 Prairie and Properties having Parcel Index Numbers 07-32-176-015 and 07-32-176-005 from B-1; Primary Business R-3; High Density Residential to I-2; General Industrial. The Petitioning Party is Jefferson County Holdings LLC. Steven Beal, owner of National Railway, purchased the old Big Lots building and plan to renovate the building for use as a warehouse with seven to ten additional skilled jobs.

Council Member Wood made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2015-9 Rezoning Property Located at 701 Prairie and Properties having Parcel Index Numbers 07-32-176-015 and 07-32-176-005 from B-1; Primary Business R-3; High Density Residential to I-2; General Industrial. Seconded by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council consideration an Ordinance Approving a Conditional Use for Property Located at 1111 Veterans Memorial Drive for Self Storage Units. The Petition Party is BLT Properties, Inc. Leo Miller, Vice President, appeared and stated that their company has four other self-storage units in other communities. He's looking to add climate controlled storage and regular storage to the 40 acres.

Council Member Piper made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2015-10 Approving a Conditional Use for Property Located at 1111 Veterans Memorial Drive for Self Storage Units. Seconded by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council consideration an Ordinance Approving a Conditional Use for Property Located at N. Campground Lane with a Parcel Index Number: 07-23-201-008 for an Electrical Substation in an Agricultural District. The Petitioning Party is Ameren Illinois Company. A representative from Ameren appeared and stated that the new distribution sub-station will provide services to the east side of the City and Bluford.

Council Member McEnaney made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2015-11 Approving a Conditional Use for Property Located at N. Campground Lane with a Parcel Index Number: 07-23-201-008 for an Electrical Substation in an Agricultural District. Seconded by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving Lease Agreement with Barnard Farms LLC. This property is located at the City's proposed industrial park. The Barnard's are the previous owners of the property. Because of various design engineering requirements before construction can begin at the industrial park, the City will take advantage of another growing season by entering into a Cash Farm Lease with the Barnard's.

Council Member Lash made a motion to approve a resolution Approving Lease Agreement with Barnard Farms LLC. Seconded by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Wood and Chesley. Abstain: Piper.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving an Agreement to Convey Real Estate between the City of Mt. Vernon and Mt. Vernon Neon Sign. Neibert noted that Mt. Vernon Neon Sign's driveway exits onto Illinois Route 15 directly across from Shiloh Drive it seemed a natural location to utilize for the City. Thank you goes to Neon Sign for dedicating a right-of-way to the City for use of the entrance. The City will improve their entrances onto their parking area from the City's new road and perform some storm water improvements adjacent to the property.

Council Member Piper made a motion to approve an Agreement to Convey Real Estate between the City of Mt. Vernon and Mr. Vernon Neon Sign. Seconded by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving a Conditional Use Sign Permit for Property Located at 401 Central. The Petitioning Party is Mt. Vernon City Schools District 80. Mike Green, Superintendent of District 80, appeared and advised that the school has been named the Dr. Nick Osborn Primary Center and a beautiful digital sign will be erected by the Primary Center.

Council Member Wood made a motion to approve a Resolution Approving a Conditional Use Sign Permit for Property Located at 401 Central. Seconded by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

City Attorney Leggans presented for Council's consideration a Resolution Approving Employment Agreement with Mary Ellen Bechtel. Neibert noted that this is a one year agreement to appoint Ms. Bechtel as Interim City Manager effective May 1, 2015. She has previous experience as City Manager for the City as well as extensive economic development experience.

Ray Botch of Mt. Vernon commended the Mayor, City Council and City Manager Ron Neibert for their accomplishments in the last eight years. He also shared a description of the City Manager position and expressed his concern that the City start a search for a new City Manager.

Richard Acklin of Mt. Vernon expressed his concern about the one-year employment contract granted to Mary Ellen Bechtel, as Interim City Manager. She is presently an at will employee.

Council Member McEnaney made a motion to approve a Resolution Approving Employment Agreement with Mary Ellen Bechtel. Seconded by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

MAYOR

Mayor Chesley presented for Council Consideration the following Board and Commissions Reappointments:

Travis Joiner - Park Board
Kay Shaw - Fire & Police Commission
Joe Wilks - Housing Authority
Phyllis Bruce - Tourism Board
Angela Schrum - Tourism Board
Joyce Secrest - Tourism Board
Merle Hollmann - Fire Pension Board
Chris Mendenhall- Police Pension Board

Council Member Wood made a motion to approve and reappoint members of Boards and Commissions as stated. Seconded by Council Member Lash. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, In 1872 J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees; and

WHEREAS, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, 2015 is the 143rd anniversary of the holiday and Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world; and

WHEREAS, several small trees have been donated to be distributed to residents of Mt. Vernon; and

WHEREAS, trees can reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate the temperature, clean the air, produce life-giving oxygen, and provide habitat for wildlife; and

WHEREAS, trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fire, and beautify our community; and

WHEREAS, trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal, and

WHEREAS, the City of Mt. Vernon has been recognized by the National Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree City USA since 1994 and has received a Growth Award since 1997 for its continued and increasing dedication to its tree care program;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mary Jane Chesley, Mayor of the City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois, do hereby proclaim April 25, 2015 as ARBOR DAY in the City of Mt. Vernon, and I urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, and

FURTHER, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

In witness whereof I
hereunto set my hand and
caused the seal of this
City to be affixed.

Mayor Mary Jane Chesley
April 20, 2015

George Bryant, Parks & Recreation Director, appeared to invite the community to the City's 8th Annual Arbor Day celebration at the Veterans Park on Saturday, April 25, 2015. Ameren will provide free dog wood trees.

Mayor Chesley noted that a Job Search Fair will be held at the Holiday Inn on April 23, 2015 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Market Days at the Armory will begin on the first Saturday of every month (May 2) through October from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Council Member Wood was called away from the City Council meeting.

CITY COUNCIL

There were no comments from City Council members.

VISITORS/CITIZENS REQUESTS/ADDRESSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Ray Botch inquired about whether bids had been let for the water main replacements on Main and Broadway. Neibert reported the City is awaiting the Illinois Department of Transportation permits which are taking longer than expected.

Kent Southers of Mt. Vernon questioned the reasons cited for an Executive Session on the April 13, 2015 Council Workshop and cited the Open Meetings Act.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session was held.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerilee Hopkins
City Clerk