

REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2012

Mayor Jeff Bearden called the Regular Meeting of the City Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, and a quorum was declared present.

Present: Mayor Jeff Bearden

Commissioners: Jimmy Dennis, Russell Brownlow, Travis Taylor and Phil McCuiston

Staff Present: City Manager Mitch Grant, City Attorney Trish Byars, Police Chief Tom Wilson, Fire Chief Kent Smead, Public Works Director Bob Cochran, Finance Director Anne Garmon, Community Development Director Monica Wilkinson, Main Street Director Dan Kelleher, Parks & Cemetery Director Tony DeHoyas, and City Secretary Linda Byers.

Commissioner Brownlow led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. and Texas flags, followed by the invocation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Bearden opened the meeting to Public Comment from those who had submitted Requests to Speak during Public Comment Forms.

There was no Public Comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Brownlow moved the following items under the Consent Agenda are approved:

- A. Minutes of the Regular City Commission Meeting held on Tuesday, December 20, 2011, and minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday, December 19, 2011.
- B. Application for Police Department Edward Byrnes Memorial Justice Assistance (JAG) Grant through the State of Texas.
- C. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1580 Amending Ambulance Charges for additional medications for the upgrade to MICU Status for our Ambulance Service.
- D. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1581 approving zoning change for Braums – a 0.4825 acre tract of land out of Section 21, Block 12, H&TC Railroad Company Surveys, Wilbarger County, Texas.
- E. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1582 approving tax resale deed to Randy Adams for the property located at 2313 Bowie St. – SW/4 Block 15, South Addition.
- F. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1583 approving sale of property at 2227 Wanderer – E ½ of Lots 7 & 8, Block 71, Original Town (0.08 acres) to Charles McArthur.
- G. Appointment of Valorie Handley as Associate Municipal Court Clerk.
- H. Financial Investment Report for the month of December, 2011 with interest earned totaling \$6,132.65 and vouchers from December 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011 in the amount of \$763,950.38.

TOURISM COMMITTEE REPORT

Tourism Chairman Joe Rogers reported that the Chamber has added three billboards to make a total of seven. Grants were made to Wilbarger County for new stalls at the Events Center, and another \$20,000 to the Palomino Club for advertising on their trip to the Rose Bowl Parade.

Fall events that were funded went well, and hearings for the 2012-2013 events will begin in July. The Chamber website is ready to launch. Visitor focus maps are almost ready, and the new advertising videos are running in the Hotel Rooms.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION REPORT

Sean Stockard, President/CEO of the Business Development Corporation reported that the 2011 Year End Audit received an unqualified opinion. The BDC has completed a grant application to the Texas Department of Agriculture World Business Entrepreneurial Enterprise Grant for a \$999,999 revolving loan fund program for Vernon. This program will work together with the Main Street Façade Improvement Grant Program to offer small loans to help with façade and equipment improvement. Average loan would be \$2500 - \$7500.

The first two retail customers have requested assistance following approval of the November ballot measure, and have requested business assistance counseling. The work being done by the Small Business Development Center was discussed.

PARK PLANNING REPORT

Community Development Director Monica Wilkinson made a power point presentation updating the status and progress of our Parks Improvement Initiative, outlining how well the City has done in their work toward the five and ten year goals set out in the Parks Improvement Plan.

The highlight of the progress would be the construction of the Aquatics Center at Orbison Park, a new play structure at Lyday Park, and increased police patrols to increase security at the parks.

AQUATICS CENTER REPORT

Parks Supervisor Tony Dehoyas reported that concrete construction continues and the shell of the pool should be complete by the end of the week, and excavation for plumbing and the mechanical/filter enclosure room has begun.

BRINE DISCHARGE LINE / BACKUP GENERATOR PURCHASE REPORT

Public Works Director Bob Cochran reported the Brine Discharge line contractor started laying pipe. He is boring north from the Nitrate Plant all the way to the railroad trestle. This project is on schedule for completion.

Digital Recording on file

The Generator Purchase Plan involves purchase of portable generators that will be used in the Winston Well Field north of town and the wastewater lift stations in town during times when we have power outages. There will be six portable generators purchased to run the most productive wells, plus any of the lift stations as needed. This plan was made in conjunction with Southwest Rural Electric Cooperative and a local electrician. Bond funds that were left over after the storage tank construction will be used for the purchase.

POLICE DEPARTMENT RACIAL PROFILING REPORT

Police Chief Tom Wilson reported that there were 1251 citations issued by the department in 2011. Those vehicle stops based on race or ethnicity were in line with the City's racial profile in the latest census. (665 - Caucasian, 114 - African, 468 - Hispanic, 2 - Middle Eastern, 2 - Native American)

Chief Wilson also reported that the department had 20,639 calls for service, which is a decrease of 3,753 from 2010. The department investigated a total of 1291 crimes, which is 140 less than last year. There were 212 assaults, and of these 109 were family violence. There were only 79 drug arrests, and 45 DWI arrests. Traffic stops totaled 5646, and there were 208 accidents. Stolen property reported for 2011 was valued at \$549,201, and the amount recovered by the Police Department was \$245,645. There were 2,596 animal calls.

Chief Wilson noted that he has six officers with less than two years experience, but even though they are young, they are eager to learn and serve the City of Vernon. He believes that with time and additional training, we can make an overall difference in bringing down some of the number of crimes being reported. A large portion of the burglaries were car burglaries, and a major factor in these burglaries was the victims left their vehicles unlocked and items in plain view. Drug arrests and DWI should increase as the younger officers gain experience and confidence.

ORDINANCE NO. 1585

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF VERNON TEXAS, AUTHORIZING BUDGET AMENDMENT NUMBER 1 TO THE 2011-2012 OPERATING BUDGET DUE TO UNFORSEEN SITUATIONS.

City Manager Grant explained that this Ordinance would include:

- The \$29,500 contingency requested by the Tourism Committee
- A \$20,000 project for the Palomino Club and the Rose Parade
- Expenditure of \$49,200 for additional stalls at the Events Center
- Set up a line item "Unscheduled Events & Projects".
- Move \$5,350 from the current line item event contingencies.

This budget amendment will allow the Tourism Committee to better accomplish their mission of putting heads in beds, and use all available funds.

Digital Recording on file

Commissioner McCuistion made the motion to approve Ordinance No. 1585.

Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

AMEND TRANSFER STATION HOURS

City Manager Grant explained that due to an unforeseen issue regarding Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) enforcement, IESI has asked to modify their hours of operation for the Transfer Station. The driving force behind this request is the fact that IESI wants to avoid the cost of modifying their Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which must be on file with TCEQ. Specifically, the SOP they have filed at this time does not allow them to stay open beyond 5:00 pm during the winter (November – February). The most recent contract changed the hours from 6:00 pm closure in the summer and 5:00 pm in the winter to 5:30 year round.

The negotiated agreement with IESI offers a contract amendment to extend the closing hour to 6:00 pm in the summer, 5:30 pm in the fall and spring, and 5:00 pm in the winter. Jeff Ash, Division Manager for IESI, explained his problems with TCEQ Requirements.

Following a short discussion Commissioner Brownlow made the motion to approve the contract amendment with IESI.

Commissioner Dennis seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION NO. 927

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF VERNON, TEXAS, THAT AUTHORIZES THE CITY OF VERNON INVESTMENT POLICY AND PROVIDING FOR RECORDING AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Manager Grant explained that the Public Funds Investment Act requires a yearly review of the investment policy.

Commissioner Taylor made the motion to approve Resolution No. 927.

Commissioner McCuistion seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

ORDER GENERAL ELECTION, APPOINT ELECTION JUDGE/ALTERNATE JUDGE

City Secretary Linda Byers noted that this order will be for the May 12, 2012 General Election for the Mayor and City Commissioner Place 1 and Place 2. Election Judge will be Don Ramsey and Alternate Judge will be Jean Graf. Election Judge will be paid \$9.00 per hour and the Alternate Judge and Election Workers will be paid \$8.00 per hour. This election will be held in conjunction with any election held by the City, Hospital District and College District.

Digital Recording on file

Commissioner McCuiston made the motion to approve the General Election Order.

Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

JANITORIAL CONTRACT

At the December, 2011 Regular Meeting the Janitorial Contract was awarded to Pruitt Building Services. There were several attempts to contact them following the December Regular Meeting, but emails and telephone calls went unanswered. Our 2011 contract expired December 31, 2011, so after consultation with the City Manager, it was agreed it was in the best interest of the City to re-hire B&L Maintenance for another two years.

Commissioner Taylor made the motion to approve the alternate Janitorial contract.

Commissioner McCuiston seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 1584

AN ORDINANCE CREATING CHAPTER 36-12 – GRAFFITI CRIMES OF ARTICLE I, CHAPTER 36 – OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS LAW ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS OF THE CITY OF VERNON CODE OF ORDINANCES; ALLOWING FOR ENFORCEMENT OF GRAFFITI CRIMES WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF VERNON, TEXAS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR PENALTY; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Manager Grant explained that this second reading of this ordinance is being considered outside of the consent agenda because there were slight modifications in the wording relating to exceptions, and numbering of the Ordinance from the version on the December, 2011 agenda.

Commissioner Dennis made the motion to approve Ordinance No. 1584.

Commissioner Brownlow seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

COMMUNITY VOICE MODULE ADDITION TO CITY WEBSITE

City Manager Grant explained that CivicPlus, the company that hosts our website, is offering a new module that will allow citizens to speak out concerning current issues. It is a no-cost module that will automatically appear unless we opt out. Mr. Grant recommends that the City opt-out of this new module until we decide which way we should provide a web presence to the public. At present, we are looking into some sort of interface between Facebook and our website to meet this demand.

The Commission took no action on this item.

FIRE STATION ALERTING EQUIPMENT

Fire Chief Kent Smead explained that the Fire Department would like to purchase equipment for improving the dispatching of Fire and EMS calls. The equipment has a supervised alarm circuit that notifies the dispatcher of any problem between the Police Department Dispatch Center and the Fire Station communications equipment. This equipment should also assist in the improvement of our ISO rating. Our ISO inspection is scheduled for the end of March.

Three bids were received, and staff recommends the bid from Price Communications in the amount of \$16,443.80. The 2011-2012 budget includes \$16,000 for purchase of this equipment.

Commissioner Brownlow made the motion to approve the purchase of the station alarm for the Fire Department from Price Communications.

Commissioner McCuistion seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

ADJOURN

Commissioner McCuistion made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.



Jeff Bearden
Mayor

ATTEST:



Linda Byers
City Secretary