

**VERNON CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2013**

Mayor Jeff Bearden called the Regular Meeting of the Vernon 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 McCuistion.

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. Minutes of the Regular City Commission Meeting held on Tuesday, December 18, 2012, and minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday, December 17, 2012.
- B. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1604, approving the sale of tax property at 1112 Maiden Street.
- C. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1605, accepting the bid and approving sale of seized property at 1928 Texas St.
- D. Financial Investment Report for the month of December, 2012 with interest earned totaling \$3,126.70 and vouchers from December 1, 2012 - December 31, 2012 in the amount of \$759,862.10.

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

TOURISM REPORT

Chamber of Commerce President Carrie Hawkins informed the Commission that the new Tourism Committee had met today and presented some fresh ideas. The Chamber will have a Board Training and Strategic Planning Session on February 15. The Texas Hotel

Lodging Association will have a workshop for new members on February 21 about the proper use of Hotel/Motel Funds. A Legislative Update session will be held June 13 to outline any legislative changes on HOT funds. Ms. Hawkins also informed the Commission that the marketing campaign has been submitted for an ADDY award.

VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT YEARLY REPORT

Police Chief Tom Wilson reported that the department had 17,359 calls for service in 2012, a decrease of 3280 from the prior year. There were 1430 crimes investigated, 1635 traffic citations, 2260 warnings, and 238 accidents investigated. Chief Wilson pointed out that he has five officers with less than three years' experience and one with less than two years. Drug arrests and DWI stops should increase as these officers gain experience and training.

Included in the Police Report was the Racial Profiling report. Of a total of 1102 vehicle stops, 109 were African, 2 Asian, 630 Caucasian, 360 Hispanic, and 1 Middle Eastern.

GENERAL ELECTION ORDER

Commissioner Brownlow made the motion to approve the Election Order for the May 11, 2013 General Election and designation of election judges.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 944

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF VERNON TEXAS, AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM (JAG).

Police Chief Wilson explained that there are no match requirements for this grant, and funds will be available after 10-1-2013. Requests will be made for technology (video systems for interview computers) and cell phone data extraction equipment.

Commissioner McCuiston made the motion to approve Resolution No. 944 – Application for the Edward Byrnes Justice Assistance Grant for technology for the Police Department.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 945

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 this is a required yearly review of the City's Investment Policy. The only change is to remove the City Manager as an investment officer.

Commissioner Brownlow made the motion to approve Resolution No. 945.

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

INSURANCE PROCEEDS OPTIONS

City Manager Grant explained that insurance proceeds have been received for hail damage to city vehicles. The insurance estimate totaled \$45,869.06. Local estimates set the damages at \$51,017.61. The Fire Department and Public Works vehicles have been repaired, but the damages to the 18 Police Department vehicles warranted closer scrutiny. Options for making repairs are:

1. Repair damage on all but two of the older vehicles and the city would not be out any budget funds for the deductibles.
2. We could repair the newer vehicles and replace the hoods on the worst damaged vehicles at a cost of \$33,208 leaving a balance of \$13,310 to put down on a new animal control vehicle or patrol car, thus saving the cost of replacement in the next budget cycle.

Commissioner Taylor suggested that the city file with the insurance for the difference in the estimates, fix the hoods only on the newer vehicles and use the left over proceeds to purchase a new vehicle.

Commissioner McCuistion made the motion to proceed with Option 2, with the Police Chief and City Manager making the best use of money to repair and replace city vehicles.

Commissioner Brownlow seconded the motion. Following discussion about possible future claims, the motion passed by unanimous vote.

RESIGNATION FROM BDC BOARD

Mayor Bearden explained that David Litttekin has moved from the area and has resigned from the Business Development Corporation Board.

Commissioner Dennis made the motion to accept the resignation with regret.

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

APPOINT BDC BOARD MEMBER

Mayor Bearden noted that Jim Gunn had agreed to serve the unexpired term until September 30, 2013.

Commissioner Dennis and Commissioner Taylor also said that Randy Boyd had agreed to serve.

Commissioner McCuiston made the motion to appoint Jim Gunn to the BDC Board for the unexpired term ending September 30, 2013.

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

YEAR END BUDGET REPORT

City Manager Grant informed the Commission that the preliminary audit findings for the year ending 09-30-2012 indicated a decrease in net income that had not been anticipated. Factors that contributed to that are an unusual number of fires, ambulance runs and a drop in water income caused by the drought. These costs along with money to comply with new mandates like Nitrate removal and wastewater discharge are cause for concern.

Mr. Grant recommended that we consider major cost reduction such as scaling back on paving plans; an increase in rates for water, sewer and sanitation; and possibly encumbering costs mid-year instead of only at year end.

The Commission members suggested that staff bring formal recommendations for cost savings and rate increases at the next City Commission Meeting along with the formal audit findings.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

City Manager Grant explained that staff has been discussing the possibility of using Facebook and Twitter for additional City of Vernon public access. The policy as presented would be for a presence operated by city staff which would enhance out accessibility to a new sector of the community while possibly helping to communicate urgent issues and get instant feedback.

Mr. Grant suggested that there is rationale for separate sites for each department to accommodate people who are only interested in one department and can discuss only one subject. There was discussion concerning departmental Facebook sites versus a city wide Facebook presence, bad posts against employees, employee response to posts, and to make sure that we have trained responses.

Commissioner Dennis made the motion to approve the Social Media Policy on a trial basis to allow staff to test the issues of social media and bring back a report at the next regular meeting.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 1608

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 40-26 ARTICLE II - ROY ORBISON PARK, PAVILLION & AQUATICS CENTER IN CHAPTER 40, PARKS & RECREATION, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF VERNON, TEXAS; PROVIDING FOR REPEALING, A SAVINGS CLAUSE, RECORDING AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Manager Grant explained that following our first season after the opening of the Aquatic Center, staff sees some changes that need to be made. This Ordinance will incorporate the following changes to the operation of the Aquatic Center:

- Family Night on Thursday night instead of party rentals.
- Group party night once a month at a lower rental rate so that multiple parties can be held.
- Closing on Monday night for "super chlorination" of the pool and cleaning.
- Rental of tables during the day for birthday parties.
- Increase in admission prices to offset payment of sales tax.

Following discussion, Commission McCuiston made the motion to approve Ordinance No. 1608 with changes in wording to clarify Section 1a) 3) and to set a 3 hour party rate for over 100 people.

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

COMMUNITY PLANNING

City Manager Grant informed the Commission that following recent meetings with representatives from other entities it was suggested that the City take the lead in future community planning because our Community Development Director Monica Wilkinson has successfully facilitated group planning locally on different levels.

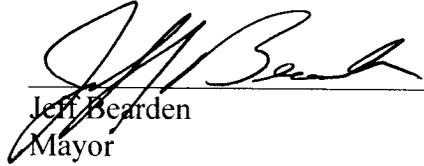
Mayor Bearden noted that all of the different entities have made suggestions about future plans, and the consensus was that the entities (City, County, BDC, Chamber, Hospital, School and College) come together as a group in a joint planning process to set goals for the future of the community.

Following lengthy discussion, it was the consensus that City Manager Grant and Mayor Bearden be given authority to go to the entities to facilitate planning and to present an action plan at a future City Commission Meeting.

ADJOURN

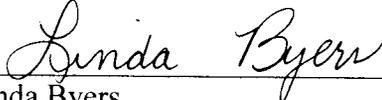
Commissioner McCuiston made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

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



Jeff Bearden
Mayor

ATTEST:



Linda Byers
City Secretary