

NORTH VERNON CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
CARNEGIE BUILDING  
APRIL 11, 2022

The meeting was opened at 6:00 PM by Mayor Mike Ochs with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Clerk Treasurer Shawn Gerkin completed roll call.

Mayor- Mike Ochs

Clerk-Treasurer- R Shawn Gerkin

Attorney- Larry Greathouse

Councilmembers:        Brian Hatfield

Baron Wilder

Jack Kelley

Trent Wisner    (arrived at 6:05)

Jerry Lamb

Guests Present: Russell Vaught, Tyler Morris, Matt Hurley, Kylan Higgs, Melvin Marksberry, Robin Brown, Keith Messer, Will Spencer, Garrie Ritchie, Mike Cole, Tara Hagan, Tiger Zamora, Brandi Zamora, Bud Beesley, Wayne Stearns, Anna Walker, Tim Hunt, Terry Thompson, Warren Alexander, Rachel Christensen, and Kathy Ertel.

Jerry made the motion to accept the minutes of the March 28, 2022 city council meeting as written and presented and the motion was seconded by Jack. Motion carried 4-0.

Mayor Ochs presented a plaque to recently retired Assistant Street Superintendent Melvin Marksberry for his 25+ years of service to the City of North Vernon.

Bud Beesley, representing the Jennings County Farmer's Market, presented council the 2022 Market Rules and Violations Procedure contract for approval.

Tara Hagan, representing Administrative Resources Association (Ara), opened the floor to public comment for the city's new comprehensive plan. The plan was funded by a CDBG grant of \$50,000.00. With no comments from the public, nor any written comments sent to ARa or the clerk treasurer's office, Trent made the motion to close the public hearing portion of the meeting and the motion was seconded by Jerry. Motion carried 5-0.

Rachel Christensen, representing HWC Engineering, did a short power point presentation of the comprehensive plan and discussed with council. She explained that the plan had been approved by the Area Plan Commission on April 4, 2022 as required, and council was presented with Resolution #2022-695, a resolution of the city council for approval of a CDBG planning grant from OCRA. Jack made the motion to adopt Resolution #2022-695 and the motion was seconded by Jerry. Following discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Matt Hurley, representing Pike, requested from council permission to store materials from mid-May thru November at the city owned quarry property while the company upgrades electric service along the north side of the city. Trent made the motion to approve the request and the motion was seconded by Jerry. Motion carried 5-0.

Tyler Morris, representing the Vernon Township Volunteer Fire Department, asked council to waive the fee for rental of the city stage for a fundraising event for the department scheduled for July 9, 2022. The department has plans for a concert to be held at the county fairgrounds on that

date to raise money for the department. Jack made the motion to have the city council pay the \$300.00 rental fee for the stage from the council's civic interest fund rather than waive the fee entirely, and the motion was seconded by Trent. Following discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Wayne Stearns addressed to council his concerns on two items, the condition of the city owned parking lot on Jackson Street, and the limited access to the city bypass that is deterring future business to properties along the bypass. No motions or action took place.

Kathy Ertel, Director with the Jennings County Economic Development Commission, presented council with annual compliance with statement of benefits forms (CF-1's) for companies with abatements. Companies included Decatur Plastics, Ertel Industries, GT Industries, Injection Mold, Metaldyne, and NVIC, among others. Kathy explained nearly all companies are exceeding payroll estimates and recommended approval. Trent made the motion to approve the CF-1's presented and the motion was seconded by Brian. Motion carried 5-0.

Council discussed the erosion problem that is worsening under the solar panels at Tripton Park near the wastewater treatment plant. Dave O'Mara Contractors, Inc. provided a quote to hand place Rip Rap and concrete to stop the erosion in the amount of \$48,587.50. Council asked to table the project to discuss other options and identify a funding source for payment. Further discussion ensued about the additional solar panels that were once installed on the old city pool roof, or ones that have never been installed, and what locations might work best for additional panels. No motions or actions took place.

Police Chief Keith Messer presented council with recommended changes to police General Orders 20-25 & 26-29. The two biggest changes include changing the higher education incentive annual amount of \$1000.00 for a bachelor's degree and \$500.00 for an associate's degree from the first five years of employment to the entirety of employment with the city police department, as well as offering a \$500.00 annual incentive for officers with honorable military experience. Jerry made the motion to approve the changes to the department's general orders and the motion was seconded by Jack. Motion carried 5-0.


Trent made the motion to pay the claims presented and the motion was seconded by Baron. Motion to pay the claims carried 5-0.

Brian made the motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Trent. Motion to adjourn carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.



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R Shawn Gerkin, Clerk-Treasurer



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Mike Ochs, Mayor