

NORTH VERNON CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
NORTH VERNON EDUCATION & TRAINING CENTER  
AND VIA ZOOM  
MARCH 22, 2021

The meeting was opened at 6:00 by Mayor Mike Ochs with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Clerk-Treasurer Gerkin completed roll call:

Mayor- Mike Ochs

Clerk-Treasurer- R Shawn Gerkin

Attorney- Larry Greathouse

Councilmembers:	Brian Hatfield	Baron Wilder
	Jack Kelley	Trent Wisner
	Jerry Lamb	

Guests Present: Russell Vaught, Kathy Ertel, Robin Brown, Rick Marksberry, Tara Hagan, James Webster, Keith Messer, Natalie Messer, Joshua Carlton, Ray Hughes, Tim Hunt, Shana Richmond, Andrew Richmond, Adam Jackson, Randall Marshall, Adam Driver, Gary Driver, Ivory Sandefur, Gretchen Mitchell, Annetia Doll, Sandra Graham, Brenda Messer, Nicholas Messer, Jeff Day, Sarah Day, Anne Lawson, Cory Lawson, Kylan Higgs, Lisa Higgs, Wes Thayer, Craig Kipper, Lucas Newsom, Max Marcoux, Mike Holliday, Seth Beville, Austin Grunden, and Shannon Grunden.

Jack noted that the minutes from the March 8, 2021 minutes needed the word “Shaw” changed to “King” on the first paragraph of page 2. Jack made the motion to approve the minutes after the amendment and the motion was seconded by Baron. Motion carried 5-0.

Police Chief James Webster ceremoniously passed on his police chief badge to Keith Messer, who was recently named the new chief of police by Mayor Ochs after Chief Webster announced his retirement from the department at the March 8<sup>th</sup> city council meeting. Mayor Ochs performed the oath of office to the new chief with his family, friends, and fellow officers in attendance. Messer’s first official day as chief of the department will be on Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Tara Hagan, representing ARA, opened the public hearing portion of the meeting. She explained that the city plans to apply to the Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs for a grant from the State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) on or about June 25, 2021. The total amount of funds being requested is \$600,000.00. The amount of funds proposed to be used for activities that will benefit low and moderate-income persons is \$337,620.00. \$171,200.00, or approximately 22%, will be derived from the Utility Stormwater Fund. The meeting was opened for public comment. With no public comment, Baron made the motion to close the public hearing portion of the meeting and the motion was seconded by Jack. Motion carried 5-0.

Shawn presented the council with Resolution #2021-688, a resolution authorizing an additional appropriation of \$80,000.00 in the 2021 police pension budget. Shawn explained an error in advertising caused the budget to be adopted at a lower than needed amount to pay the pensioners still paid directly by the city. The additional appropriation was advertised as required in the March 4<sup>th</sup> issue of the Plain Dealer & Sun. Jack made the motion to adopt Resolution #2021-688 and the motion was seconded by Trent. Motion carried 5-0.

Park Director Chad Speer informed council that the park board had recently voted 4-0 in favor of requesting a nuisance permit from DNR for the removal of geese in Tripton Park. As such, they were requesting from council a temporary lift of the ordinance restricting the discharge of firearms inside the city limits for a day and time yet to be determined. Trent made the motion to approve the waiving of the ordinance and the motion was seconded by Jerry. After discussion, the motion carried 4-1 (Jack).

Police Chief James Webster requested an amended to Ordinance #995, an ordinance fixing the salaries of employees for 2021. With the promotion of Lt. Messer to Chief comes an increase in pay per the police salary matrix from \$27.77/hour to \$30.95/hour. The chief's position is a salaried, exempt position and comes to an annual salary of \$64,376.00. Baron made the motion to approve the amendment and the motion was seconded by Trent. Motion carried 5-0.

Joshua Carlton, business owner at 227 East Walnut Street, was present to request the use of the ally next to his building for a dumpster to remove trash from the building. Jack made the motion to allow Mr. Carlton to work with Brian to establish dates and times the dumpster would be needed for approval during the ongoing process of the work being completed on the building, and the motion was seconded by Trent. Motion carried 5-0. Further discussion with Mr. Carlton included disputed utility bills. No motions or action took place.

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

Trent made the motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Jerry. Motion carried 5-0.

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R Shawn Gerkin, Clerk-Treasurer

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Mike Ochs, Mayor