

NORTH VERNON CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
CARNEGIE GOVERNMENT CENTER
FEBRUARY 8, 2016

The meeting was opened 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 (absent)

Councilmembers-Brian Hatfield

Jack Kelley

Jerry Lamb

Connie Rayburn

Trent Wisner

Street Commissioner- Rick Marksberry

Chief of Police- James Webster

Fire Chief- Mike Cole

Park Director- Chad Speer

Water Superintendent- Mike Hess

Wastewater Superintendent- Russell Vaught (absent)

Golf Course Manager- Robin Brown (absent)

Assistant Clerk-Treasurer- Rita Elmore (absent)

Guests present: Kathy Ertel, Brandon Smith, Randall Marshall, Jeff Shinolt, Dan Bates, Brad Bender, Larry Wasson, Kevin Dougherty, and Cory Whitesell.

Councilman Wisner made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2016 City Council meeting, seconded by Councilwoman Rayburn. Motion carried 5-0.

The first item on the agenda was the opening of quotes for work on the cold storage building, the remaining portion of the old Moose building on 5th Street. Quotes were received from Harmon Construction at a price of \$32,450.00, Bradshaw Building Specialists at a price of \$23,145.00, and Woodhall's Construction at a price of \$28,425.00. Councilwoman Rayburn made the motion that the quotes be reviewed by FPBH at this time, seconded by Councilman Kelley. Motion carried 5-0.

Dan Bates, president and CEO of Windstream Technologies, was present to give Council an update on the status of the company, as well as introduce himself to the new Council members. Mr. Bates explained to Council that the company was expanding business in Argentina and that work in Jamaica continued. Mr. Bates, after being questioned by Councilman Kelley about company financials and falling stock prices, explained to Council why he believed stock prices were being driven now, but added that he did not believe the stock price was an accurate reflection of the value of the company. Mr. Bates also acknowledged that the company's plan continues to be being able to pay off the loan to the City of North Vernon by August of 2016.

Clerk-Treasurer Gerkin completed the second reading of amended Ordinance #950, an ordinance fixing the annual salaries of employees of the City of North Vernon. Changes included adding the position of assistant fire chief, adding an employee with the street department, fixing a clerical error for part time help at the park, and changes in hourly pay to reflect position changes within the police department. Councilwoman Rayburn made the motion to approve the amended ordinance, seconded by Councilman Lamb. Motion carried 5-0.

Clerk-Treasurer Gerkin completed the first reading of Ordinance #952, an ordinance clarifying the billing of vacant properties for storm water, hydrant, and trash fees. After a discussion on the topic, Council asked

Chris Doran, filling in for attorney Larry Greathouse, to amend the ordinance to include only those properties with buildings still standing and add a timeframe for how long billing would occur after services were disconnected. No motion or actions took place.

Larry Wasson and Kathy Ertel, representing the City's Bicentennial planning committee, informed Council that the Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay was scheduled to come through the City of North Vernon on September 16, 2016, at approximately 3:00 P.M. The committee continues to work on the logistics of the relay, along with safety issues, etc., but told Council that portions of State Street and Main Street would likely need closed for a time during the ceremony. The two also explained to Council and discussed ideas for the City to create a Legacy Project, a project or program to be endorsed by the Indiana Bicentennial Commission.

Kevin Dougherty discussed with Council an idea to hold the 3rd Annual Pork in the Park BBQ cook off in and around Stellar Plaza. The event is planned for the month of May, although the exact weekend has yet to be determined. The project would benefit the Jennings County Hope Foundation and also be a kickoff event for the City's new downtown plaza. Madison Avenue, and potentially part of Main Street, would need to be closed from 5:00 PM the Friday night before the event, and most of the next day. Plans would include vendors, food booths, bouncy houses, a beer garden, etc. All Council members were in favor of holding the event downtown, but Mayor Ochs and Councilman Lamb spoke out in opposition of having a beer garden. Plans for the event would be finalized at a later date.

Cory Whitesell, engineer with HWC Engineering, provided Council with a status report on the Stellar project, including updates on the Trail Project, the Façade Project, and work to be done on Phase III of the Streetscape Project.

Councilwoman Rayburn informed the Council that their current appointment to the Tourism Board, Amber Fields, was willing to continue that role.

Councilman Kelley, Clerk-Treasurer Gerkin, and Park Director Chad Speer told the Council they had met to discuss ideas and duties of a golf course board. Those were presented in writing to Council with the request Council review before having City Attorney Larry Greathouse create an ordinance to form the board.

Airport Manager Ryan Curry told Council that the corporate/overnight hangar was now complete and had its first two occupants. He also said he was making plans for Airport Awareness Day, tentatively scheduled for August 27th.

Water Superintendent Mike Hess explained that the main break that occurred the previous week had been fixed and the water was suitable to drink. He also told Council that the repair work on 4th Street would begin next week and the road would be closed until repairs were completed.

Fire Chief Mike Cole said he had been working with Assistant Chief Rick McGill on doing inspections. Also, the aerial work was nearly complete and the truck would be back in service as early as Wednesday. Finally, interviews and testing was taking place for the new firefighter applicant this week and he was hopeful a hire could be made by the first of March.

Police Chief James Webster said he would have an ordinance prepared for the February 25, 2016 meeting regarding speed limit changes on State Road 3 north of town. He also asked Council for permission to do additional work at the old city garage in hopes of creating more workout space for the officers. Councilman Hatfield made the motion to allow the department to look into cleaning up more of the property, seconded by Councilman Lamb. Motion carried 5-0.

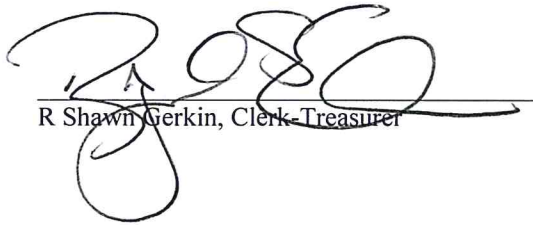
City Engineer Brad Bender told the Council that he was working on the Title VI Implementation Plan for the City of North Vernon. The plan will be presented and need adopted by the Council at the February 25, 2016 Council meeting.

Clerk-Treasurer Gerkin gave a "Conflict of Interest" form for each member of the Council and advised them all to fill out and have a copy on file.

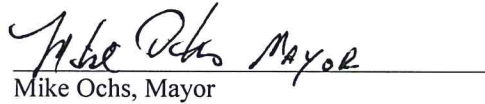
Councilwoman Rayburn made the motion to pay the claims presented, seconded by Councilman Wisner. Motion to pay the claims passed 5-0.

Councilman Wisner made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Hatfield. Motion to adjourn carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 P.M.



R Shawn Gerkin, Clerk-Treasurer



Mike Ochs, Mayor