

February 18, 2016

The Common Council met as the Water Utility Board at 7:00 pm on the above date in the Meeting Room at City Hall Annex with Mayor Tucker presiding and members Williams, Hoehn, Curtis, and Higgins attending. Board member Jeffries was not present. Others attending were Attorney Higgins; Supt. Gray; Acting Supt. Moss; Gene Carroll; Chief Beloit; Capt. Angel; Chief Dixon; Asst. St. Comm. Miller; Code Enforcement Officer Amanda Green-Adams; Elaine Springer; Cecil Waters; and Corey Woolsey – Mount Vernon Democrat.

Mayor Tucker called the meeting to order by stating members were either mailed or hand carried copies of the minutes of their previous meeting and by asking if there were any corrections or additions. He added if not, he entertains a motion to waive their reading and to approve the minutes as presented. Board member Curtis moved the reading of the minutes be waived and they be approved as presented. Seconded by Board member Williams.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Tucker requested action on the claims presented.

Board member Higgins moved the claims presented be allowed for payment. Seconded by Board member Curtis.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Tucker stated they will now hear the report of the Water Chairman.

Water Chairman Curtis stated he has no report.

Supt. Gray stated the UV disinfection was on line as of Tuesday and the numbers are great. They have 99.968% inactivation. He then stated the filters are all on line and everything seems to be running as well as can be expected.

Mayor Tucker asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Mayor Tucker asked if the Clerk-Treasurer had any Communications for the Board ?

Clerk-Treasurer Sitzman replied not at this time.

Mayor Tucker stated they are now ready for the Legal portion of the Agenda.

Attorney Higgins stated they have before them the proposed Ordinance to Amend the City of Mount Vernon, IN Code of Ordinances, Title V-Public Works, Chapter 51-Water, Section 51.02 (C) – Adjustments, as they had discussed at their previous meeting. She added she did put a dollar amount in the ordinance, after talking with the water department employees, and one was never listed in the original ordinance. Again, this is to give Supt. Gray more leeway in making adjustments at the office.

Board member Curtis moved passage of the ordinance be recommended to the Council. Seconded by Board member Hoehn.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

Supt. Gray stated they currently give 30 days for folks to fix a leak if the water department discovers it. He asked if that would still be a part of the ordinance ?

Attorney Higgins replied yes.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Board voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Tucker asked if anyone in the Audience wished to address the Board ?

There was no response.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any Old Business ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any New Business ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker stated if there was no further business, he entertains a motion to adjourn.

Board member Williams moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Board member Higgins.

Mayor Tucker stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously and adjourned the meeting.

John Tucker, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cristi L. Sitzman

Clerk-Treasurer

The Common Council met immediately following the Water Utility Board on the above date in the Meeting Room at City Hall Annex with Mayor Tucker presiding and members Williams, Hoehn, Curtis, and Higgins attending. Councilman Jeffries was not present. Others attending were Attorney Higgins; Supt. Gray; Acting Supt. Moss; Gene Carroll; Chief Beloit; Capt. Angel; Chief Dixon; Asst. St. Comm. Miller; Code Enforcement Officer Amanda Green-Adams; Elaine Springer; Cecil Waters; and Corey Woolsey – Mount Vernon Democrat.

Mayor Tucker called the meeting to order by stating members were either mailed or hand carried copies of the minutes of their previous meeting and by asking if there were any corrections or additions. He added if not, he entertains a motion to waive their reading and to approve the minutes as presented.

Councilman Hoehn moved the reading of the minutes be waived and they be approved as presented.

Seconded by Councilman Williams.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Tucker stated they will now hear the reports of the Standing Committees.

Street & Light Chairwoman Higgins stated she has no report.

Asst. St. Comm. Miller stated he has no report.
Mayor Tucker asked if there were any questions ?
There were none.

Police & Dog Chairman Jeffries was not present.

Chief Beloit approached and stated he presented Mayor Tucker with his letter of resignation today. His will be retiring after 25 years with the department to take another position. His retirement date will be April 28, 2016.

Mayor Tucker stated it has been good working with Chief Beloit, who advanced through the ranks from patrolman to detective to chief. He added it has been a pleasure.

Councilman Williams congratulated him on his new appointment.

Mayor Tucker asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Fire Chairman Hoehn stated he has no report.

Chief Dixon stated he has no report.

Mayor Tucker asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Sewer Chairman Williams stated he has no report.

Supt. Moss stated he has no report.

Mayor Tucker asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Mayor Tucker asked if the Clerk-Treasurer had any Communications for the Council ?

Clerk-Treasurer Sitzman stated she has none.

Mayor Tucker stated they are now ready for the Legal portion of the Agenda.

Attorney Higgins stated the first item is the Ordinance to Amend the City of Mount Vernon, IN Code of Ordinances Title V-Public Works, Chapter 51-Water, Section 51.02 (C) –Adjustments, as recommended by the Water Utility Board.

Councilman Curtis moved the ordinance pass on first reading. Seconded by Councilman Hoehn.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Council voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Curtis moved the rules be suspended. Seconded by Councilman Hoehn.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Council voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Curtis moved the ordinance pass on second reading. Seconded by Councilman Hoehn.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Council voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Higgins moved the rules be suspended. Seconded by Councilman Curtis.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Council voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Higgins moved the ordinance pass on final reading. Seconded by Councilman Williams.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Council voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Clerk-Treasurer Sitzman added it will be numbered 16-2.

Attorney Higgins stated the Income Tax Council has presented this ordinance, in reference to the public safety tax for the new jail. She added this type of tax needs to approval of that body per the State Legislature. She stated this will pay for the expansion/improvements at the jail. The County Council held a meeting/public hearing in February and voted for the tax. The amount of money the City could receive from this tax, per Umbaugh December 18, 2015, is \$384,000.00 per year.

Councilwoman Higgins stated based on the fact that there are 100 votes, and the County has over 70, if the city says NO, does it really matter ?

Councilman Curtis asked the duration of the tax ?

Attorney Higgins replied there is no sunset on the tax.

Councilman Williams asked if it could be canceled ?

Attorney Higgins replied if there is no need for it and a new Board in the future decided they want to repeal it. It is for a 20 year bond.

Councilman Curtis stated the Board of Works just authorized the purchase of a new fire truck, as well as replacement of two police vehicles. This tax could really help the General Fund.

Councilman Williams added it makes sense.

Councilman Curtis then moved the Ordinance to Adopt a Public Safety Tax pass on first reading.

Seconded by Councilman Williams.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

Attorney Higgins stated the City of Mount Vernon has 19.03 votes of the 100, according to population.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Council voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Higgins stated the final item is an amendment to the weed ordinance, an Ordinance to Amend the City of Mount Vernon, IN Code of Ordinances Title IX-General Regulations, Chapter 98-Weeds, Section 98.03 (A)-Notice of Violation and Section 98.04(A)-Removal by City; Collection of Costs; and 98.05 Lien on Property. She stated this comes about with changes in the Indiana Code.

Ms. Green-Adams approached the podium and submitted the following :

Last year I received 167 complaints on weed properties. All of which were sent letters via certified mail. The problem with sending the property owner letters via certified mail is that postage is costing the city \$6.74 per letter, and also takes up time preparing the certified letters. The city paid over \$2,000 last year in postage alone. With sending out certified letters the property owner has to sign for the letter. In which case, he/she has 20 days to come sign for the letter or the letter will be returned to city hall. If they receive the letter, they then have 5 extra days to mow. So the city is giving them roughly 25 days to cut their grass. If the letter comes back as undeliverable, I then issue a work order for the street department to come and mow the property. By the time the city comes to mow the grass, the grass has grown tremendously which in turn causes extra wear and tear on the city's equipment. This amendment to the weed ordinance would save time by eliminating making out certified letters for each offense. The ordinance states that letters have to be sent to the property owner's address which is listed on the property card. In some cases, the owner's address listed on the property card is incorrect or they have moved and left no forwarding address, but they city still has to send a certified letter to what is on the property card, and wait for the letter to return which is causing wasted time and money. By sending a first class letter and posting a notice at the property that remains in effect for the rest of the calendar year, the city is saving time, money and wear and tear on the city equipment.

Attorney Higgins stated they have kept the height the same, 12".

Councilman Williams asked why 12", how was that set ?

Ms. Green-Adams stated she is not sure, it was in the original ordinance.

Attorney Higgins Council set the height in their original ordinance.

Councilman Williams asked let it get that high ?

Councilman Curtis stated he wouldn't mind lowering it. As Asst. St. Comm. Miller can attest to, when they let it go, it can be waist high and things are hidden in the grass, which can damage equipment.

Attorney Higgins stated they had discussed the height while drafting this.

Councilman Williams moved the ordinance pass on first reading, amending the height to 8". Seconded by Councilman Hoehn.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker requested a roll call vote.

Roll was called by the Clerk-Treasurer with Council voting as follows:

Jeffries – absent; Williams – yes; Hoehn – yes;

Curtis – yes; Higgins – yes.

Mayor Tucker stated the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Tucker asked if anyone in the Audience wished to address the Council ?

There was no response.

Mayor Tucker stated the nuisance ordinance is listed under Old Business.

Councilman Hoehn stated they have talked with Attorney Higgins and it is moving to draft mode.

Council may see it next month.

Mayor Tucker asked if there was any New Business ?

There was none.

Mayor Tucker stated they will now hear the reports of the Districts.

1st District Councilman Jeffries was not present.

2nd District Councilman Williams stated he has no report.

3rd District Councilman Hoehn stated he has no report.

4th District Councilman Curtis stated he has no report.

Councilwoman-at-Large Higgins stated she has no report.

Mayor Tucker stated under Mayor's Announcements, he has a tough one this evening. Due to some ongoing health issues, tonight, after eight years as Mayor, he will be resigning effective March 1, 2016. Again, due to health issues, he has made the very difficult decision to resign. He added his time here as Mayor has been very rewarding, but now he needs to focus on his health. Effective March 1, 2016. He then stated he would like to thank everyone for their support, this has been a good team. Good things have been done and continue to go on. The State will even be re-doing Hwy 62 for the City late next year. There are good things in the making. He knows he is turning the city over to a good administration. Again, this is a very tough announcement, and he will not be a stranger.

Councilman Williams thanked Mayor Tucker for his time and added Mount Vernon has a bright future. He then stated he appreciates all that Mayor Tucker has done.

Councilman Curtis stated he appreciates his being here. For 9 ½ years they have working together. He added Mayor Tucker has accomplished a lot and laid the ground work for a lot. Thank you.

Attorney Higgins stated it has been a pleasure working for Mayor Tucker. He has been a leading force in Mount Vernon and has done an outstanding job. He has vision and will be on tough act to follow.

Councilman Williams added folks don't understand how much that has been done during hard economic times.

Councilman Curtis stated, "Thank you, sir"...

Councilwoman Higgins stated before she always said that she had one favorite Mayor, now she has two.

Cecil Waters asked if as a citizen he could speak and added that he and Mayor Tucker started out on the Council together and as a citizen he appreciates Mayor Tucker's service.

Supt. Moss added he would like to thank Mayor Tucker for everything he has done and stated he is a good boss.

Mayor Tucker stated if there was no further business, he entertains a motion to adjourn.

Councilman Curtis moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Councilwoman Higgins.

Mayor Tucker stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously and adjourned the meeting.

John Tucker
Mayor

ATTEST:

Cristi L. Sitzman
Clerk-Treasurer