Meeting of the Vilonia City Council
April 15, 2025

Members present: Mike Matos, Brady Zweifel, James Firestone, Lacosta Beene, Steven Craig

Meeting Prayer: Led by Mayor Scroggin

Pledge of Allegiance: By all.

Meeting called to order by Mayor Preston Scroggin.

Established quorum.

Approval of minutes for March 18, 2025, meeting and March 26, 2025 special meeting: Motion to approve made by Firestone, seconded by Matos with the amendment that page 5, section C, Resolution for 2024 Budget Amendment, subsection E, last sentence "Matos states the city is not in debt yet and is in bad shape," be stricken. All in favor, motion passed.

Approval of Financial Statement for March: Motion to approve made by Craig, seconded by Zweifel, all in favor, motion passed.

Reports of City Departments:

(A) Fire Department: Fire Chief Jimmy Hoofman presented. There were 12 permits in March and 8 so far in April, for a total of 40 this year. Fire Department has had 357 runs so far this year.

(B) Planning Commission: Next meeting is Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 7PM, at City Hall. There will be a public hearing prior to the meeting regarding a proposed data facility on Energy Way. The Mayor urged anyone concerned to attend the public hearing or to email City Hall or fill out the Report a Concern form on the website and app. Robert Hepner also submitted plans for Hepner Addition subdivision, located off Saye Street and Weaver Street.

(C) Police Department: Chief McNew is still recovering. Lieutenant Tony Hartwick has passed away. Zweifel mentioned a weapon was found today at the middle school. The police department responded and handled it very well – per his daughter at the middle school, there was no panic, the police came in, handled it, and got out.

(D) Sewer Department: The Mayor presented. The panel was put in at Fox Run today. Pumps will be online Thursday. Panel rebuild at the main plant, which wind had knocked down, will be reinstalled Friday. In coming weeks, they will be replacing all the panels for Saddle Creek, Quail Hollow #2, Industrial, Elementary, Dove Creek, and Energy Way, as well as the pump for Industrial. Mayor mentioned some state legislation had just passed that may affect requirements going forward which Brandon (Sewer Superintendent Brandon Betts) had mentioned to him. Matos requested confirmation the 107 pump was fixed, to which Mayor responded it was his understanding. Craig mentioned the Sewer Meeting Minutes talked about a rate study and presenting at the following month's council – he suggested asking Sewer if they wanted to wait so they

would not be presenting at the same meeting as the data center. Mayor stated he thought they were waiting on some legislation, as that was a rate study requirement by the state for water and sewer.

(E) Street Department: Mayor presented. Working on several projects. Trying to get a turning lane at Church Street, had to get permission from the Highway Department and get utilities moved. Recent 12-inches of rain, drainage did good. We put out the bid for the year for asphalt, when we do need it, we budgeted $300,000. He visited with different mayors across the county and across the state and sales tax is flat, the economy is sluggish. City received a bid from CK Asphalt LLC out of Quitman, BKC Construction, $109.75 a ton. Mayor recommended to the council to accept this bid, for $109.75/ton on an as needed basis, which includes laid down and everything. Motion to approve made by Matos, seconded by Zweifel, Craig confirmed it was the only bid received, all in favor, motion passed.

(F) Parks & Rec: Mayor presented. Terry Shannon (Parks and Recreation Director) is at the complex because they're having games tonight. Spring Softball started Monday night, though they played at baseball due to water standing on the fields at softball. They played at softball on Thursday. In total, they played 9 softball games this week. Baseball started the spring season on Tuesday night, also played Thursday night, for a total of 15 games played at the field with 3 of the 6U games played at softball on Thursday. No major issues or complaints were reported, but a few small complaints with some umpires which have been addressed by Shannon. Fields with the amount of rain received last week, were still able to get the regularly scheduled games in without having to reschedule. Base pegs were installed and grass cut at Field 2 to have ten new games played on Field 2. Scheduled with Corey and Jack to work on Field 1 in Softball Complex on Wednesday to remove the berm built up around the infield. All fields and the playground on Cemetery Street have been mowed this week. Craig stated he had driven around today and everything looked good; he'd told Shannon that everything looked good but mentioned he might want to look at the pond on picking up trash and mowing around it for the people that are fishing on the weekends and stuff.

Public Comment: None

Announcements:

(A) Department Recognition by Council Person Beene – I think the Mayor did a great job expressing how much Tony Hartwick meant to our community and to the police department, and don't want to take anything away from his family at all, but I do want to say how much I appreciate the other officers that stepped up and they're protecting our community even though we've got Mr. McNew out with an injury and then with this Mr. Hartwick, and our community is still taken care of, and for that, we should be very thankful for. So when you see them out, sometimes they don't get the thanks they deserve, so, just tell them thank you and how much we appreciate them stepping up while they're going through their own hardship.

(B) Vilonia Area Chamber of Commerce: On behalf of the Vilonia Chamber of Commerce, President Jackie Fowlkes presented:

- Our next event will be Eagle Fest. We're working with VCDC for Eagle Fest. The Chamber is sponsoring a Kid's Corner, with bounce houses, games, face painting, and

different things for the kids there. We're also sponsoring one of the awards at the Car Show.

- This year we (VACC) are awarding two $500 scholarships to graduating seniors at Vilonia – Lauren Matos and Evan Branson.
- We have a new board member, Whitney Allred.
- Our monthly luncheon is this Thursday, April 17th, at 11:30 at Simple Simons and our speaker is Charlotte Lear with Faulkner County Republican Women.

The Mayor read into the minutes:

- The Chamber had contacted the city about adding a line to the current phone menu at City Hall. This line could be forwarded to any cellphone so the Chamber could share that responsibility by an app that the phone provider will have. We contacted our phone provider and they stated it would cost us $19.50 per month added to our current bill. The Chamber was provided this information and they stated that they would like to pay the $19.50 per month and would like to pay for a whole year at a time. I gave my approval but I want to let the council know and also that this would be reflected in the meeting minutes for future reference.
    - The Chamber thought this would be better for if somebody's calling the Chamber. They can call City Hall and then there'll be an extension just like all the other departments and that can be a more permanent phone number for the Chamber.
    - Motion to approve made by Matos, seconded by Craig/Beene, all in favor, motion passed.

(C) Vilonia Community Development Corporation: Chad Hearne presented. Excited to bring back Eagle Fest for first time since 2013. That will be on May 17th. We are working with the Vilonia Chamber of Commerce, the Veterans Museum, as well as several different entities.

i. **Eagle Fest Offerings** start early with 7:00AM 5K kicks off, registration at 6:30AM, wrap that up around 8:30AM, then move into the Fishing Derby, then 10:00AM Vilonia Car Club Annual Car Show starts. This will all be at Weaver Family Park, the Car Show will be at the Softball Complex. Then late morning/early afternoon, Sharpe Dunaway, previously of Magic 105, will be MC for the day. Around 10:00AM we're working on Vilonia Pizza Mania, a pizza eating contest highlighting all our great pizza eating establishments here in Vilonia. Then Vilonia's biggest employer, the Vilonia School District, highlighting their offerings; we're working on confirming Vilonia Jazz Band, perhaps a performance by Vilonia Choir, the cheer team. We're working with Hunter Garrett, talent show winner of 2013 Eagle Fest, he's in Nashville now, working with Dolly Parton, various other country music acts, kind of a big deal in Nashville, trying to get him to come back and perform at 2025 Eagle Fest. Vilonia Cloggers are confirmed. We'll have a demo from Carlson-Gracie Jiu Jitsu, and a lot of different businesses and vendors to really highlight our local Vilonia community businesses. No charge for the event, unless you want to register for the 5K; we have a great door prize for all early registrants of the 5K, a pair of Beats sponsored by Centennial Bank. We're working on getting a canoe as a door prize for early registrants of our fishing derby, that is sponsored by Ott Insurance.

Late in the day, we've got Ryan Harmon, country music star, American Idol contestant, closing us out from 4-6PM, with a 2-hour concert. Mayor mentioned watching Carrie Underwood perform, to which Hearne responded she is out of our league now. Beene requested clarification on how to register and the deadline. Visit developvilonia.org/eaglefest to find the 5K registration through runsignup.com and the fishing derby has a registration form you can submit those to Vilonia City Hall. Matos complimented the video ad on the VCDC Facebook page and stated if everybody in the community can get out and share that, that's one way of getting friends, family, and people from other areas into Vilonia.

(D) The Planning Commission will next meet on April 24, 2025, at 7PM. The public is encouraged to attend. The data center will be there. Robert Hepner will also have plans.

(E) App – Download the Connect Vilonia app on the Apple and Android App Store to get notifications directly on your phone.

(F) City Hall will be closed Friday, April 18th, for Good Friday.

(G) Reading into the record: As of today, General Fund Balance $190,765.50, Street Department Fund Balance $408,000 (some of which is grant money), Fire Department Fund Balance $60,878.78, Act 833 Fund Balance (which is a grant program from insurance premiums which fire department keeps) $44,731.21, Parks and Recreation General Fund Balance $54,557.82, and Parks and Recreation Registration Fund Balance $22,790.49. These do not reflect CDs and stuff.

Old Business: None

New Business:

(A) Resolution 2025-PDR-2 National Day of Prayer, submitted by Council Person Matos – read in full. Motion to approve made by Matos, seconded by Craig, all in favor, motion passed.

(B) Resolution 2025-PDR-3 Publication of Monthly Financial Statement, submitted by Council Person Matos – Motion to read by title only made by Matos. Matos introduced resolution: basically a revision of last month's proposal on putting approved monthly financial statements, due to colleagues concerns last month wanting to put unapproved on the website, so I redrafted this, so basically the clerk would put the unapproved financial statements, at their suggestion, and write unapproved out here so the public knows they are unapproved, and then replace them with the approved statements when they are passed. Mayor asked if anyone was against reading by title only, no one responded, read by title only. Motion to approve made by Matos, failed for lack of a second.

(C) Resolution 2025-PDR-4 Adding Items to the Website, submitted by Council Person Craig – read in full. Motion to approve made by Matos with adding the words "unapproved and approved" to the minutes and "unapproved and approved" on the financial statements, seconded by Zweifel, discussion called by Craig. Much discussion was held. Voice vote called on motion: Matos – Yes, Zweifel – No, Firestone – No, Beene – No, Craig – No, motion failed.

Motion to pass as presented made by Beene, seconded by Craig, motion to amend by adding approved financial statements to Minutes tab made by Zweifel, seconded by Matos. Voice vote: Matos – Yes, Zweifel – Yes, Firestone – No, Beene – Yes, Craig – Yes, motion passed.

Council person Beene stated that having these online could cause confusion because of a lack of documentation, so the council should "stand up for each other and our city, make sure the information that's out there is correct." Matos stated he agreed with Beene and that "this is a great opportunity to educate."

(D) Resolution 2025-PDR-5 TAP Funding for Sidewalks – read in full. Mayor offered a quick explanation: this is the Transportation Alternative Program, which the city has used four or five times in the past, including part of the funding for Church Street. The city will try to put one section of sidewalk in on its own, from the High School to the Dollar General (1190 Main Street). This section is not paid for by Metroplan or TAP funding, we are paying it from city funds, and we expect it to be under $50,000. Mayor predicted, based on meetings he's attended on behalf of the city where there's been a lot of other cities, federal funding is about to dry up. He stated one of the things he has taken pride in during his tenure as Mayor of Vilonia has been our ability to improve our infrastructure: our bridges, sidewalks, and roads. Matos requested and Mayor confirmed if the application for $400,000 would be for Phase 2 and that the amount was equal to the estimated cost. Matos requested and Mayor confirmed there were funds from Dollar General available for Phase 1. Matos requested clarification on the $400,000, to which Mayor stated it was $400,000 with 20% match (which in past, we've used personnel labor). The entire project will extend the sidewalk to Vilsonia Way. Beene pointed out a typo on the map, wherein the map was labeled "64B" but the top said "49B". Motion to approve made by Zweifel, seconded by Beene, all in favor, motion passed.

Motion to adjourn made by Firestone. Meeting adjourned.

Date: 5/20/2025

Mayor: _____

Recorder: _____