

Meeting of the Vilonia City Council

November 15, 2016

The Vilonia City Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor James Firestone.

Members present – Clay Heslep, Skip Cates, Sherry Clements, Joe Maxwell, Jim King and Kathy French A quorum was declared.

Approval of minutes from meeting in October—Councilman King made a motion to approve, Councilwoman Clements 2nd and the motion carried.

Approval of financial statement for October—Councilman Cates made a motion to approve, Councilwoman Clements 2nd and the motion carried.

Announcements –The Mayor mentioned that congratulations are in order for the graduation of Amanda Norwood from the Faulkner County Leadership Institute class of 2016. We certainly appreciate your dedication and going the extra mile in everything you do for the city.

The Mayor said he would like to recognize a group of firefighters. On behalf of the City of Vilonia we would like to recognize the following Vilonia Fire Department Volunteers, Brandon Danner, Hunter Brady and Kevin Johnson. They have completed 12 weeks of EMT school and now are certified EMT'S with the Vilonia Fire Department. On behalf of the City of Vilonia we would like to congratulate you on the hard work in obtaining this certification.

The Mayor reminded everyone of the 6th annual Christmas parade on Saturday December 3rd at 5:30 pm. As usual there will be a soup supper and auction after the parade at the high school cafeteria to raise money for the Veterans Museum. I would like to encourage everyone to come out for this event.

The Mayor announced the 3rd annual Vilonia Veterans Museum Chili Cook-off of What's For Dinner which is located at 14 South Church Street. This cook-off will help raise money for the Veterans Museum. For more information, call Linda Hicks @ 501-796-8181 or Clint/Amy Tucker @ 501-328-7433.

Emergency Management –K. C. Williams reported that the grant for the new water tanker was submitted today but we won't hear from it until late 2017. We have 235 runs year to date. He again congratulated the firemen who went through the EMT school.

Code Enforcement – No report given.

Planning Commission –No report given.

Police Department -Chief McNew reported they still have Jordan in training. He stated the police department had an exercise with the Fire Department. He said there will be a low light training this Thursday (shooting in the dark). K. C. asked to say something, the exercise mentioned was a big deal involving Faulkner County OEU, Ark Department of Emergency Management, our Police Department, our Fire Department, Sheriff Department and other County offices. One of the things the OEM's departments around the state is turning in training records of their exercise once a year. They are using our exercises as a guide for their training. We learned there are a lot of things we can improve on. A lot of vehicles that come up our highway have some hazard materials on them. We have limited resources to utilize. We learned how to use outside resources. Our Police Department did an outstanding job. We got a+ ratings. We had people from Jonesboro, Department of Emergency Management, ASU and other agencies came down and graded us. The Mayor mentioned that we should be proud of the job our Police and Fire are doing for our community.

Parks and Rec-VSA -No report given.

Chamber of Commerce – Keith reported we had a chamber meeting last night. We had about 70 to 80 people attending. The Mayor discussed at the meeting what's coming to Vilonia. Dr. Stephens was here from the school and showed a map where tornado alley is located in the United States. They did elect a new chamber president and that is me. The Mayor mentioned a few weeks ago Dr. Stephens reached out to me and I in turn got with Fred, Keith, and some of the chamber members and we met at the school and discussed ways the city, school and chamber can partner together to reactivate the community. We've had 2 tornadoes which is unusual. Fred showed a map of

the US and tornado strikes going back to the 40's. It showed that there hasn't been any more tornadoes in this area than other parts of the US. The Mayor mentioned Joplin, MO where 5 years ago 8,000 structures were destroyed, a lot of lives lost. I had an opportunity to go back there a few weeks ago and I was amazed how that town is cleaned up. Other than trees showing some tornado damage there was no concrete slabs or driveway showing vacant. The city is cleaned up, grass is cut, and regrowth is happening. Houses are being rebuilt. The Mayor said it has been 2 1/2 years since the tornado and I encourage everyone it's time to clean up our city. Let's get the city back on the right track. I have had people who are visiting say you can still see many areas where the damage was done. Let's get our city moving again. Councilman King said we need to have better communications so more people can come to a meeting like last night. The Mayor stated we have 4 new commercial projects going on in Vilonia---ARcare, Sweet Heat, Harps and Vilonia Commons.

Senior Citizens -Councilwoman French reported the final total on the breakfast and flea market was \$2,500.00. The Lions Club will host their Thanksgiving dinner this Thursday at 11:30 a.m. Butch Money will be singing at 10:30 a.m. The center annual Thanksgiving dinner will be next Wednesday the 23rd. The center will be closed Thursday and Friday of that week. I did finally hear back from Fred's management on the sidewalks and they said it would be fine with them. I asked them to send me a letter so it will be official. I haven't gotten it yet. If I don't get a response I will call them back. The Mayor said the next step would be where do they want the sidewalk and how do we fund it.

Sewer Department -No report given. The Sewer Department did not meet last month.

Old Business -None.

New Business -(A) Audit 2015---The Mayor stated because we receive federal money and with the bond issue we have to go through the same audit as cities of the first class goes through. Because of that we are under greater scrutiny. We had 4 findings and recommendations. One is on the Mayor/Recorder-Treasurer is where the vendor was overpaid \$500.00 in 2015. That has been corrected. The second on Mayor/ Recorder-Treasurer was payment to a contractor exceeded the contract and change orders by \$20,885. The payment was not brought before the council. Several contracts where change orders were submitted were not brought before the council. In

the future these items will be brought before the council or we may pass a resolution for them. The third item was City Clerk—there was no documented remote access security policy. Failure to establish and communicate an adequate remote access security policy could result in the unnecessary exposure or misuse of information of information resources.

Recommendation was for management draft and implement a policy identifying the risks associated with remote access, and establishing guidance for remote connections to local resources. This has been corrected. The fourth item for City Clerk was the Disaster Recovery Plan in place was inadequate (both technical and end user) for restoring from short-term or long term interruptions of computer processing. This situation could cause the entity to be without computer processing for an extended period of time in the event of a disaster or major interruption and could also place a financial and personnel burden on the resources of the entity.

Recommendation—Management should ensure that a written plan is developed and maintained in accordance with the Information Systems Best Practices for restoring critical information services in the event of a major failure. The disaster recovery plan should minimize the effect of disruptions. Procedures should require that the plan be reviewed and revised annually or when significant changes occur. This has been corrected. Councilman King made a motion to accept the recommendation of the audit, Councilman Maxwell 2nd and the motion carried.

(B) Replacement of Bridge on N. College Paving Projects 2017-The Mayor said you gave me permission to apply for a street aid grant. We got approved for \$250,000.00 which will give our street program a big boost. To get approval they prefer overlay projects. We looked at the north central area of Vilonia. We're going to do a half-mile overlay from Sage Street down to Jones Loop. Then we're going down Goff street and doing a half mile overlay and widen it a little. Then we're going to do Wicker Street around and come up to N. College and do 7/10 of a mile. We'll be doing a total of 1 mile 7/10.

At one time we had 4 bridges which were low graded. The highway department comes in and inspects them every year. These bridges give the highway department heart burn. We replaced 2 of them. One on North Street, and one on North Church Street. We still have one on Elizabeth Street and one on North College. Since we will be doing the paving over there and also the projects will go out for bid in February or March we want to replace the bridge on North College. I have asked Civil Engineering to look at it and get a rough estimate on what the cost would be. It probably will be in the range of \$100,000.00.

Councilwoman French asked about Whispering Wind Street. The Mayor said that will be a minor project we will do. I was talking about the large overlay projects.

(C) Update on Jump Start Project- The Mayor said back when we were doing the 2030 plan looking at the ordinance for Jump Start for the streets Metro Plan came in and recommended that we rezone from Highway 107 to Industrial Blvd. north and south of the road. Since construction had been started with Keith's, Harps, and the church on the south side of Hwy 64 we decided not to do any rezoning on the north side of Hwy 64. We decided to rezone from Cemetery street to Industrial Blvd which is about 80 acres where the Village Square is. Metro Plan didn't think we included enough acreage and therefore didn't approve a grant for us. At one time \$750,000.00 was mentioned to do streets, utilities, sidewalks, etc. I am very disappointed in Metro Plan and have expressed that to them. One thing I would like to do next year is to widen the South College Street entrance. This would look like at least we are making an effort to get interest in the project. Councilman King stated that the Farmers Market being operating a full year they are looking to apply for a grant to build a Farmers Market Building. The Mayor said this was a good idea. After street improvements they could get a grant to buy property and build a permanent structure.

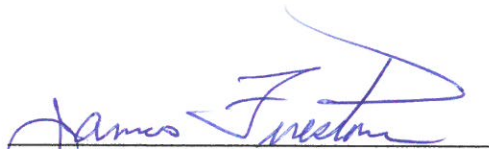
(D) Presentation of 2017 Budget—The Mayor stated I have been doing budgets for Vilonia for 18 years. This is the tightest budget we have ever done. We have taken a hit in the pocket book. We remained in the black but it's been tough and that is reflected in this budget. I called department heads in to look at revenues and expenses and get involved in the budget process. This budget does not have a raise for anybody. Some department have less money to operate on than the past years. The Mayor also said he felt like next year we could see a turnaround maybe in the third quarter or fourth quarter. I want to build a good carry over for the general fund and city fund. The only way to do this is tightening our purse strings. I appreciate all personnel who worked on this and their input to help put this budget together. Please look it over. Let me know if a special meeting is needed. I will present it again at the December meeting for approval.

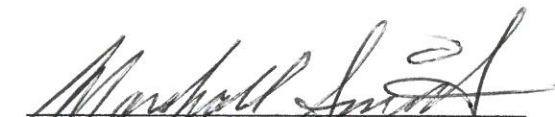
The Mayor mentioned that Mr. Don Smith who has served on our Sewer Committee for 16 to 18 years, because of personal reasons he has turned in his resignation. We are going to miss Don. Due to this if anyone is interested let me know as we will be looking to fill this position as soon as possible.

The Mayor recognized Clint Tucker who stated Thursday is What's For Dinner's 2 year anniversary. We'll be serving burgers, fries and drink for \$7.00.

The Mayor mentioned Mrs. Ruth McKennon wanted to be on the agenda. She wanted to know what is the latest on the barking dogs. The Mayor said we have an animal welfare ordinance but we don't have a dog catcher to deal with these animals, or a place to take them. The county is working to come up with a county wide ordinance for a shelter and person to handle the dogs. The Mayor asked Chief McNew the steps we have now to report said dogs. The Chief stated the resident calls the police about a certain dog. The Police goes to the owner of said dog and lets them know there is complaint. If that doesn't stop the barking dog the prosecutor needs proof by taking a picture of the dog or some other method to show proof. Mrs. McKennon discussed what was happening in her neighborhood on this subject. She also asked about her street Whispering Wind. The Mayor said this was one of the projects to be done in the summer next year.

Adjournment – There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.


Mayor


Recorder/Treasurer

Date 12-20-2016