

**Meeting of the Vilonia City Council
August 20, 2024**

Members present: Jim King, Joe Maxwell, Mike Matos, James Firestone, Lacosta Beene, and Steven Craig.

Meeting Prayer: Led by Preston Scroggin

Pledge of Allegiance: By all.

Meeting called to order by Mayor Preston Scroggin.

Established quorum.

Approval of corrected minutes for June 18, 2024, Minutes: Motion of approval made by Maxwell, seconded by Craig.

Minutes for July 16, 2024, postponed until August 20, 2024 meeting.

Approval of Financial Statement for July 2024: Mayor Scroggin mentioned \$1500 line item for Mr. Rick Maynard, was for a water line breakage during the Church St work. Maxwell motioned to approve, seconded by King, approved by all, motion passed.

Reports of City Departments:

- (A) Fire Department:** Jimmy Hoofman stated there have 744 runs, Building permits 73 for the year, July had 12 permits with one being commercial, August had 9 permits with one being commercial. The events the fire department has participated in was Hilltop funeral, water day Christian Academy, Upcoming events are September 17 Fair Parade, training for August will be focus on skills, stop the bleed class, September will be inspector one and arson training with advanced auto training.
- (B) Code Enforcement:** Enforcing property and grass ordinances.
- (C) Planning Commission:** Todd Beene stated the planning commission met on July 25, 2024, and will meet again this month. Next scheduled meeting August 29, 2024.
- (D) Police Department:** Brad McNew stated they finally have the 800 system up and running for Faulkner County. It's been a long process.
- (E) Sewer Department:** Maxwell stated there is a problem in Qual Hollow power spike knocked out two pumps. Brandon brought in a spare pump in place to keep grey water flowing. Two new pumps will be here Friday. Mayor Scroggin stated they are working on Barnard with issues with concrete; they are near the end of that project. Matos asked if sewage was being pumped into ditch. Mayor Scroggin reassured Matos it was only grey water. Mayor Scroggin stated the sewer department will be looking at hiring some extra help because it is too much for just two men.

(F) Street Department: Mayor Scroggin stated they have been working on the drainage issues in Saddle Creek with the storm drainage. Waiting on Rogers Group and contractor for completion on Church St project. Did receive reimbursement from Arkansas Department of Transportation in the amount of \$172,013.68 for Church St Project. They have moved into Dove Creek to work on the intersections. Roadside Consulting LLC out of Hot Springs that provides services to surrounding areas for vegetation management on drainage ditches. \$25,000 was quoted for the City of Vilonia to do the vegetation management for the City of Vilonia. Craig motioned to approve; King seconded the motion. Approval by all. Matos asked if all the storm sirens had been repaired, Mayor Scroggin asked Jimmy Hoofman, and he stated the siren on North Mount Olive was in the process of being repaired.

(G) Parks & Rec: Terry Shannon stated Fall baseball and softball sign ups ended last Friday August 16 and coaches have been selected. Teams are being formed this week. Fall Ball schedules will be out later next week. Over 100 kids signed up for Fall Ball. Working on the budgets for the field renovations at softball complex. He will present next month at city council meeting. Playground equipment for the softball complex and Remembrance Park will be shipped in September. Working on Movies in the Park for September and October.

Mayor Scroggin stated that the school district reached out about the resurfacing of the tennis courts. The city of Vilonia helped the school put in the tennis courts several years ago. The school will go ahead and have the tennis courts resurfaced, and the city's part will be \$22,700.00. This will be put in the budget for Parks and Recreation in 2025.

Announcements: City Hall will be closed on Monday September 2, 2024, for Labor Day
Mayor Scroggin wants to remind residents the city is open for transparency and to download the app: Connect Vilonia

Public Comment: None

(A) Department recognition by Lacosta Beene: Beene wants to recognize Sherri Lee and what an asset she is to the city.

(B) Chamber of Commerce: On behalf of the Vilonia Chamber of Commerce, Tanya Hendrix, Board President, stated:

The Monthly luncheons are opened to the public, both members and non-members. This is a great way to network, meet others and enjoy a delicious meal and beverage for a low price of \$8.75. Simple Simon's Upcoming guest speakers are as follows: September 19th Jackie Fowlkes with Vilonia Realty October 17th John Keith with THINK Coffee If anyone would like to be our guest speaker you may contact the Chamber. Fall Fest is set for: Saturday October 12th 10am-4pm at the Veterans Museum. Booth fees are \$25.00 for members and \$35.00 nonmembers, more details will be posted on our website and social media closer to the event. We plan to have live music, arts & craft booths, food and drinks. The Fall Festival is a community event, open to the public and free to attend. In November we will be looking to add new board members for the upcoming 2025-2026 year, if you know of anyone interested, please have them contact one of the Board Members for more information.

(C) Vilonia Community Development Corporation: On behalf of VCDC, Chad Hearne stated that their website (developvilonia.org) just had a 60th member join, VCDC had a Teacher Business Fair at the Vilonia high school gym, Eagle Fest will be May 17, 2025.

(D) The Planning Commission will meet August 29, 2024, at 7 PM.

Old Business: None

New Business:

(A) ORDINANCE 2024-1 AMENDING ZONING ORDINANCE 2016-2 – First reading. Ordinance was proposed by Councilman Steven Craig, and he took a moment to explain his reasons. Mayor Scroggin confirmed the second reading will be at the September meeting.


(B) RESOLUTION 2024-5 CITY COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT – presented by Joe Maxwell. Motion to approve made by Maxwell. Matos reminded to read in its entirety and not by title only. Motion to suspend the reading of the resolution in its entirety made by King, seconded by Firestone, 5 in favor, 1 opposed, motion passes. Returned to the motion to approve, second made by Firestone. Maxwell stated this resolution was recommended by the Arkansas Municipal League. Maxwell requested anyone with concerns contact him, the chief of police, or the prosecuting attorney rather than going on social media. Matos responded he agrees the document is great and he will vote to pass it, however, it does not mention social media, only public meetings, and has no teeth. Much discussion was held. Motion to approve made by Maxwell, seconded by Matos. Craig initiated more discussion referencing the resolution's origin through the Arkansas Municipal League, as well as its purpose as an ethical reminder rather than enforceable regulation. Maxwell stated the Arkansas Municipal League recommends resolutions be read before the council annually as a reminder. Motion to amend the resolution to approve with signatures within 45 days (October 4, 2024), made by Craig, seconded by Matos. Matos stated he just wanted to support the First Amendment of the United States and ensure the Vilonia City Council was not attempting to censor council members or the public from stating their grievances on whatever platform they want. More discussion was held. Matos reiterated his request for a work session. Maxwell recommended a work session, Matos refused as he is planning to contact the prosecuting attorney. Clarification was made that signatures are not required, but those wishing to sign and declare their support of the resolution do so within 45 days. Motion to pass with amendment came to vote, all in favor, motion passed. Matos made a motion to amend the resolution to require an annual reading before the council. Craig reminded resolutions are only valid for one calendar year and therefore cannot include requirements on future years. Matos then withdrew his motion. Motion to adopt the resolution came to vote, all in favor, motion passed.

(C) PROCLAMATION FOR CONSTITUTION WEEK – read before council. Designated week of September 17 through 23 of 2024 as Constitution Week.

(D) JULY FLOODING EVENT UPDATE – in July there was a rain event where the city received roughly 6 inches of rain in two hours. Our drainage system was admirable, no homes were reported with water damage. Flood control is big issue, we've spent about

\$6 million in grants to address these concerns in the last several years. We are deeply concerned about this issue, we care about everybody's problems and we're going to try to solve them the best we can. The mayor has met with the city engineer, received assistance from Firestone, who has years of experience at Port Authority dealing with wetland issues, and spoken to Street Department Superintendent Matt Rust who has gotten some good ideas from the Highway Department. The mayor reiterated the city is deeply concerned about the citizens issues with drainage and the city is working hard to keep ditches and drains clean and cleared out. Firestone mentioned the city has had drainage issues since his term as mayor, when he discussed the issues with then city engineer Freddie Fowlkes. The major issue Vilonia has is its flatness. Mayor Scroggin requested citizens send their concerns to the city by calling or emailing, as we do not check social media.

Motion to adjourn made by King. Craig raised a question to entertain scheduling a work session to discuss issues, such as those raised by Matos and next year's proposed budget. Discussion held. Matos requested list of topics to be discussed, Craig stated it would be Matos's packet and the other would be a budgetary item. Matos stated he had things he would like to discuss, specifically excluding the fireworks show and including the \$19,000 annual private audit. The work session was scheduled for Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 6pm. Meeting adjourned.

Date: 9/17/24
Mayor: 
Recorder: 