

**Meeting of the Vilonia City Council
December 17, 2024**

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

Meeting Prayer: Led by King

Pledge of Allegiance: By all.

Meeting called to order by Mayor Preston Scroggin.

Established quorum.

Approval of minutes for November 19, 2024 meeting: Motion of approval made by Maxwell, seconded by King, all in favor, motion passed.

Approval of minutes for November 26, 2024 special meeting: Motion of approval made by Matos, seconded by Criag, all in favor, motion passed.

Approval of Financial Statement for November: Motion of approval made by Firestone, seconded by Craig/King, all in favor, motion passed.

Reports of City Departments:

(A) Fire Department: Jimmy Hoofman presented. There were 4 permits last month and 2 so far this month, bringing the total for the year to 94 permits. There have been 1063 runs. Recently completed training: five members passed FF2 testing. Limited activities right now due to the holidays.

(B) Code Enforcement: none.

(C) Planning Commission: no report presented. The December meeting has been cancelled due to lack of business.

(D) Police Department: Brad McNew presented. Was notified early this month we received the \$75,000 Department of Public Safety grant to pay for equipment. That money will pay for new tasers, to replace the outdated computers in the cars, and new cameras in City Hall, installed today. That total expenditure will exceed the \$75,000 grant monies, so the rest will be paid for through the equipment budget, some this year and some next year. We are hiring again; one officer has left (Jones). We also received a grant for vests; we purchased six this year and the other six will be purchased next year. We purchase the vests and then send for reimbursement; it's not quite fifty percent. I'll get a Chief's Association grant for \$1,000 for it this year and next year I'll apply for that grant again for another \$1,000.

(E) Sewer Department: Joe Maxwell presented.

- a. The Sewer Committee approved the 2023 Audit Report this year and we wanted to call out Darlene Conner who has worked for the Vilonia Sewer Department for

25 years and for 25 years, the Sewer Department has not had any negative comments concerning the annual budget.

- b. We purchased land around the sewer plant on Stanley Road for future expansion. We bought it now not only to avoid future inflation in land prices, but also because Charlie Weaver sold it to us below the appraised value.
- c. They're still working on the headworks at the plant. It's taking some time.
- d. The pump on Barnard Lane is currently waiting on a bracket. When they began the pump replacement work, they found one of the brackets was broken, so they're having to get a contractor to manufacture that bracket so they can properly reattach the pump. The contractor will put the bracket in for us.

(F) Street Department: Mayor presented. Finishing a few ongoing projects before the cold weather sets in.

(G) Parks & Rec: Mayor presented. They're working on Softball/Baseball scheduling for next year. The sidewalk at the new Softball playground has been poured. Lots of positive feedback on the new playground equipment and once again, I'd like to thank the city staff on their efforts in saving the money so we could do that.

Regarding National Fitness Campaign Grant – The grant has been awarded and Director Terry Shannon is working on raising money. No update on how much has been raised at this time.

Public Comment:

- A. Saddle Creek Residents** – waited to speak during the discussion on Ordinance 2024-3 (See Old Business, subsection A)

Announcements:

(A) 6 Green Meadows Property Sale Update – We did get that offer and acceptance signed. Will notify council when we have a closing date.

(B) 14th Annual Christmas Parade, “Winter Nights & Magical Lights” was a great success and we had a wonderful turnout. The winners of the float contest were:

1. **First Place – The V-Town Cloggers**
2. **Second Place – City of Vilonia**
3. **Third Place – Botanicals Florist**

(C) Reception to recognize Councilman Jim King and his 18 years of service to the Vilonia Community *Correction, in the meeting, it was stated 17 years. The correct number is 18 years, January 2007 through December 2024.

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

(E) Vilonia Area Chamber of Commerce: On behalf of the Vilonia Chamber of Commerce, Landon Runyan presented:

- 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 at Simple Simon's Pizza of Vilonia.
 - Upcoming guest speakers are as follows:
 - December 19th Eagle Bank
 - 2025 Speakers are
 - January 18th Lindsey with Pathfinders

- February 20th Charlotte with Faulkner County Republican Women
 - If anyone would like to be our guest speaker you may contact the Chamber
 - November 30th was Shop Small Shop Local Saturday.
 - We had eighteen businesses participate and seven winners.
 - Our Annual Awards Banquet is set for Saturday, February 22nd, at the Eagles Nook with Renewal Ranch catering. Tickets are \$40 and you can find that on our website (New website: <http://sites.google.com/view/viloniachamber/home>). Our special guest speaker is now announced on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/viloniachambercommerce).
 - Nominations for School Employee of the Year, Student of the Year, along with other categories will be available for voting on Facebook.
- (F) The Planning Commission will NOT meet in December.**
- (G) City Hall Offices will be closed on December 24th and 25th for Christmas Holiday, January 1st for New Year's Day, and January 20th for Martin Luther King Jr Day.**

Old Business:

- (A) ANNEXATION ORDINANCE 2024-3 (BENNY DALLAS) – Third Reading.**
 Attorney Landon Sanders stated they had not yet been able to obtain an easement and requested the third reading be tabled until next month to give them additional time to address the concerns of those who might be providing that easement might have. Motion to table the third reading until the next regular meeting made by Craig, second by Matos/Beene, all in favor, motion passed. Third reading will be in January.
- Saddle Creek Residents Brent Newsom and Ms. Sharon spoke. Newsom began with his concerns regarding additions to the current sewer system and their impact on Appaloosa Trail. He thanked the city for the culvert replacements, but stated Appaloosa Trail is still having ongoing issues with drainage ditches and standing water. He mentioned there is a sewer pump between 14 and 18 Appaloosa and it backs up several times a year, requiring maintenance.
 - Ms. Sharon stated she has fallen into the pipes leading from the culverts to the creeks several times, with sinkholes roughly every ten feet. The mayor stated the Street Department often dealt with the issue and the issue affects much of the city, especially Saddle Creek and Quail Hollow. It's "an over pressurization of the pipe when you get a huge rain event from the creeks flowing in both directions... there's not really a solution." We're working with landowners, but we need to get with the Corps of Engineers and get permission to clean that out on the other side of North Beryl Road. The Street Department and I are going to try to meet with that landowner after the first of the year.
 - Craig stated he had met with the three property owners who edged against Appaloosa Trail and none had concerns, but one property owner nearby (31) had some sinkholes in his area, between him and his neighbor at 27. Ms. Sharon said the area trying be annexed in was running tractors from 5AM to 10PM or 11PM to build up and level the ground, calling the area "a swamp".
- (B) ORDINANCE 2024-4 CONTRACT WITH VCDC – Second reading.** Matos submitted an amended draft of the ordinance, requesting it to replace the original draft in further readings and voting. He stated he had spoken to the Arkansas Municipal League

regarding this ordinance and Arkansas Code 14-42-107b and received a response that while “the Municipal League does not provide legal advice or assist with writing ordinance”, it was suggested “this ordinance be specific and narrow as to how we’re going to do business with said organization.” Matos stated he had also confirmed the Mayor’s statement from the previous meeting, in which the Mayor stated “the city can not appropriate funds or rent a table from the Chamber of Commerce, or any organization, unless we can prove that it benefits the entire community.” The submitted amended draft added the annotated code we’re trying to comply with and other small wording amendments. Motion to accept this copy as the amended draft of Ordinance 2024-4 to be voted on at the next city council meeting made by Matos, no second, motion failed due to lack of a second. Matos requested to be recognized for a motion; Mayor allowed. Matos stated when he spoke to the Municipal League, the Municipal League suggested the final draft of this ordinance be sent to the Arkansas Auditors and request they review it to see if they have any problem with the language. Motion to send the draft to the state auditors and that Ordinance 2024-4 lays on the table until council members receive written feedback from the state on this matter made by Matos, seconded by Maxwell, voice vote held, 2 in favor (Maxwell, Matos), 4 against, motion failed. Third reading and vote of the original ordinance will be at January meeting.

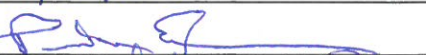
New Business:

(A) RESOLUTION 2024-9 ADOPTION OF 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET – Motion to approve as read made by Firestone, seconded by Maxwell, discussion called by Matos. Matos stated he thought the council had planned to gather to discuss the budget several months ago and he was specifically concerned about and wished to discuss about how to have the state take back over the audits to save \$19,000 a year out of the General Fund. He also stated he did not see anything in the proposed budget for a fireworks show. No other discussion held. Vote called, Matos requested confirmation from Mayor that a yes vote was for appropriating funds and a no vote was for not appropriating funds, Mayor confirmed. Voice vote, 1 against (Matos), 5 in favor, motion passed.

(B) RESOLUTION 2024-10 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT TO SPACE X FIREWORKS – resolution authorizing payment of invoice submitted/to be submitted by Space X Fireworks for services rendered during the July 4, 2024, Independence Day Celebration in the amount of \$6,200 from the Parks and Recreation Fund within 30 days of approval of resolution and receipt of invoice. Motion to approve by Maxwell, seconded by King, motion to amend resolution to add “or General Fund” to section 3, allowing payment to be from Parks and Recreation Fund or city General Fund, seconded by Firestone, all in favor, motion to amend passed. Motion to approve resolution as amended made by Firestone, seconded by Craig, all in favor, motion passed.

Motion to adjourn made by King. Meeting adjourned.

Date: 01/21/2025

Mayor: 

Recorder: 