

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

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

**Meeting Prayer:** Led by Jim King

**Pledge of Allegiance:** By all.

Meeting called to order by Mayor Preston Scroggin.

Established quorum.

**Approval of minutes for July 16, 2024, and August 20, 2024, Minutes:** Motion of approval made by Maxwell, seconded by Beene, approved by all, motion passed.

**Approval of Financial Statement for August 2024:** Motion of approval made by King, seconded by Maxwell, approved by all, motion passed.

**Reports of City Departments:**

**(A) Fire Department:** Jimmy Hoofman presented. There were 11 permits in August and 2 so far this month (September) bringing the total for the year to 77 permits. There have been 813 runs. Five firefighters are currently training for FF1 and FF2 certification and are almost ready to test, one is currently at Camden doing a 2-week training class in arson. Hunter Brady has been promoted to Captain. Alex Merrill and Shawn Sullivan have been promoted to Lieutenant. Three new members have joined the JR Firefighter program, bringing us to five members.

**(B) Code Enforcement:** none

**(C) Planning Commission:** Todd Beene presented. The Planning Commission last met on August 29, 2024. There was a public hearing for a potential commercial contact business that is looking at property along the bypass. Next scheduled meeting September 26, 2024, at 7PM. We will be working to update the master street plan for council approval and hope to have that addressed over the next couple months. Agenda items include a Comcast site plan review (outside the city), duplex site plan review, and a zoning variance request.

**(D) Police Department:** Brad McNew stated it's been a very busy few weeks, a bit more than normal. The Police Department is still full staffed. Officer Jones is still with the FTO, he is progressing well. We still have one officer out on medical, so we're operating like we're two down, but we're expecting to get one back soon.

**(E) Sewer Department:** Maxwell presented. Several projects are in works, but currently waiting on parts and contractors to come together. Having some trouble getting specialty parts in, still waiting on the pumps for the Quail Hollow lift station. They are diverting some flow off the Barnard station. Humbard will be in to look at the Fox Run lift station. They've got the headworks in for the plant and the insulators will be ongoing on that.

Maxwell mentioned the Sewer Department and Council Member Craig had received calls but it's just a matter of getting parts and people all together. Mayor Scroggin stated his understanding of Barnard was the wet well was over 30 years old with a lot of deterioration, so they had to order concrete, rails, essentially an entire overhaul. It is taking longer than we'd like, but we're working on it.

**(F) Street Department:** Been busy mowing. The Church Street paving is expected to complete in about four weeks. There have been some contractor delays and issues. King mentioned the bad spots in Dove Creek have been covered though. The Street Department has been working on drainage, cleaning out ditches on the side roads. Mayor clarified in a recent meeting, Hard Rock has gotten a different asphalt supplier and they expect it to take about two week for the set up. The mayor mentioned he was told the suppliers are having employment issues and that is what is causing delays. Matos requested clarification on who was providing the asphalt. Mayor clarified Hard Rock would be subcontracting out to Bobby Kennedy Construction. Matos stated he had heard Rogers Group mentioned, Mayor stated they had to switch as Rogers Group could not get it in time.

**(G) Parks & Rec:** Terry Shannon presented. Fall baseball and softball season is underway and will run through the first week of October. Playground equipment update: the pad for the playground equipment at the softball complex is complete. The equipment has a ship date for September 30, 2024. It should arrive on site at the softball complex the first week of October. They will install the equipment at the softball complex first, then install the equipment at the Remembrance Park playground. Mayor thanked Matt and Glen of the Street Department for getting that pad done.

**Public Comment:** None

**Announcements:**

**(A) Department recognition by LaCosta Beene:** Beene recognized all first responders in remembrance of September 11<sup>th</sup>, including Police, Fire, Ambulance, all of them. She requested everyone let our first responders know how much you appreciate them as you see them around town or shoot them an email.

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

- Three new members joined VACC this month: Ron's Porch Furniture, Teeter Creater Design, and Kinetic.
- 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:
    - September 19th Jackie Fowlkes with Vilonia Realty
    - October 17th John Keith with THINK Coffee
    - November 21<sup>st</sup> Jessica Lingo with Kinetic
    - If anyone would like to be our guest speaker you may contact the Chamber
- Thank you to the City of Vilonia, Vilonia Fire Department, and JR Firefighters for placing the flags out on 64 (Hwy 64-B) for Labor Day and 9/11.

- 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 are 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:** Steven Craig presented. We are working on the community garden thing and cracking away at the Eagle Fest. Eagle Fest will be May 17, 2025.

**(D) The Planning Commission will meet SEPTEMBER 26, 2024, at 7 PM.**

**(E) Mayor Notes:**

- Vilonia Senior Center** – The kitchen AC unit in the Vilonia Seniors Center is leaking freon and needs to be replaced. Estimated cost is \$7,000 plus tax and the company is Arkansas Heating and Cooling. Motion to approve made by Maxwell, seconded by Firestone, approved by all, motion passed. These monies will be paid from the City's General Fund.
- Update on traffic at intersection of Eagle Street and Hwy 107** – on Feb 3, 2024, we sent a letter to ARDOT. ARDOT responded April 22, 2024. There's been a lot of back and forth, via letters, and they are looking at it.
- We want citizens to stay informed, so we encourage everyone to download the city app.** Search "Connect Vilonia" on the Apple App or Google Play Store and receive notifications from the city directly on your phone.
- Faulkner County Clean-Up** – October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, tentatively, will be the county-wide clean up. We will have dumpsters located at the Street Maintenance building on N Mt Olive (47 N Mt Olive). More information will be available as soon as we get it. The Fire Department and Street Department will be working that, and we remind people to check the list for what is allowed to take. Elderly will be helped but we request if you are physically able, you unload your items.
- Go Pink Day** – Friday, October 4, 2024, is Go Pink For the Cure Day.
- City Closure** – Monday, October 14, 2024, all City Offices will be closed for Columbus Day.
- Trunk or Treat 2024** – Saturday, October 26, 2024, will be Trunk or Treat 2024. More details will be published soon on our website at [www.cityofvilonia.net/tot](http://www.cityofvilonia.net/tot) or you can email us at [CityHall@cityofvilonia.org](mailto:CityHall@cityofvilonia.org) or call the city clerk at 501-796-2534 ext 4.
- Maxwell mentioned he had called Faulkner County Solid Waste about a cardboard recycle trailer. There was previously one at the Vilonia Post Office, but it has since been removed. He called to ask why and how to get it back. They wanted him to be personally responsible for the trailer, flattening the cardboard, and so forth. He requested the mayor to contact them to see he could find a compromise. Firestone asked if they'd mentioned why it was taken away; Maxwell stated they had not. Firestone



mentioned there had been a trailer at City Hall, but people put yard waste in it.

**Old Business:**

- (A) **ORDINANCE 2024-1 AMENDING ZONING ORDINANCE 2016-2** – Second reading. The third reading, and vote, will be at the October meeting.

**New Business:**

- (A) **PRESENTATION OF OUTDOOR FITNESS AREA BY VILONIA PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR TERRY SHANNON** – Shannon requested permission to proceed with the process to apply for available grants from the National Fitness Campaign, a program that provides an outdoor workout area that will have permanent workout features built into that area. There are currently two available models with this campaign; the one we are looking at is just a fitness court, not the one with the studio. We are looking at installing the first one by the softball complex and Weaver Pond. There are also other locations around town. The area would be a free service for the community. Although designed to accommodate adults, there are no age restrictions and anyone can use it. It will feature a wall to display public art, providing an opportunity for local artists to be featured. There is also an app to help users with workout ideas and how to use the stations in different ways to work different muscle groups. Vilonia would be on the leading edge of outdoor fitness in the state of Arkansas, as there is only one in Little Rock at UAMS, one in the Fort Smith/Van Buren area with another on the way, and one being installed in Paragould. This would be the first installation of this outdoor fitness area in Faulkner County. The footprint is 38 ft x 38 ft. Total cost is \$224,000 before any grants. Two grants are available, one for \$30,000 and one for \$40,000, but only one can be received. Total cost after that grant is \$184,000. They also help with sponsorships with national sponsors, local sponsors, and regional sponsors. We could look into utilizing that to get that funding. If we are approved to proceed with the grant application, we will be reaching out to community businesses and individuals to help fund the project. The overall goal is to have the project completely funded through the campaign grants and sponsors. The grant is non-binding until they confirm the funding pathway.

- a. Craig requested clarification on what “funding pathway” referred to. Shannon explained it meant once being approved for a grant and starting sponsorships, but there was still a way to get out of it if we did not receive enough sponsorships by the end of 2025. Craig emphasized his worry about the \$184,000 coming out of the budget in the worst case scenario of no sponsors, as the total Parks budget is only \$287,000 last year. Firestone questioned if Shannon had considered the Rapid [sic] grant or Central Arkansas Planning. Shannon stated he had not gone that far yet. Matos stated his support for this project, citing citizen support and healthy activities, then clarified the website (NationalFitnessCampaign.com) and that only one of the \$30k/\$40k grants could be received.
- b. Much discussion held regarding funding and responsibility. Shannon stated he was requesting the community help come up with ideas for sponsors and that he did not want to have to pay anything. He suggested healthcare providers and other grant opportunities be tapped. Craig requested clarification on what Shannon’s request before the council tonight was – Shannon replied he was looking for

permission to move forward with identifying funding sources. Motion made “to allow Shannon to proceed with grant applications and determine what financial support he could garner on this project with the caveat that no city monies is pledged or expended until we have another meeting and we see what we’ve raised” by Matos, seconded by Maxwell and Beene, all in favor, motion approved.

**(B) RESOLUTION 2024-6 FOR 2025 CITY MILLAGE RATE** – This is an annual resolution required by the Arkansas Constitution to maintain the city millage rate. It does not increase tax, but allows the state to continue collecting. Craig mentioned that so far this year, the city millage has collected \$131,000; this money goes into the city’s General Fund. “A levy of three and zero tenths mil on the dollar” upon the assessment of all taxable real and personal property in the city of Vilonia, Arkansas. Motion to approve made by King, seconded by Craig and Firestone, all in favor, motion carried.

**(C) PROCLAMATION FOR GO PINK DAY** – Friday, October 4, 2024, will be Go Pink for the Cure Day to bring awareness to the importance of mammography and to renew our commitment to removing obstacles that prevent women from seeking mammograms.

Motion to adjourn made by King. Meeting adjourned.

Date: 10/15/2024

Mayor: 

Recorder: 