

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 09, 2022. Scheduled for 7:00 pm. In the City Council Chambers City Hall, Mount Vernon, New York.

*** Due to the ongoing pandemic this meeting was held in the council chambers, with virtual participation via ZOOM and CMVNY Facebook. The meeting was not closed to the public however, the maximum number of in-person occupant was limited ***

PRESENT: Lisa A. Copeland, Danielle Browne Esq., Cathlin Gleason, Edward Poteat

ABSENT: None

PRESIDING: Derrick Thompson, President

OTHERS: Tanesia M. Walters, City Clerk, Elias Gootzeit, Legislative Assistant and Brian G. Johnson, Corporation Counsel

Council President Derrick Thompson called the meeting to order and provided house-keeping rules, including in case of emergency. He then asked councilman Poteat to lead the council in the Pledge of Allegiance. Council President then proceeded to the Public Speakers session of the evening (listed below as public comment).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cynthia Crenshaw - residing at 315 Mundy Lane, Mount Vernon, NY, appeared via person. She spoke about a cannabis site being placed in Mount Vernon. She stressed that she is not against the project, but it must be placed in an appropriate spot. In addition, she states that another charter school is coming to Mt. Vernon, but there was no public notice for this. Also, there is news about a Boys' group home being placed across from the elementary school, this home will be between two schools; grimes and Washington School, which is on the South side. She asked that the council be more transparent about Mount Vernon issues. She asked that the council and residents try to work together. She stated that the showdown between the commissioner and the police department was disgraceful and there must be a change in Mount Vernon.

Synethia Karnegay – residing at 254 South 1st Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY – appeared in person. Concerns about new neighbors who purchased their homes and perform renovations to their homes without permits from the city for the renovation projects. Which then cause the City to issue stop work orders. One particular incident is a neighbor who installed a fence with no permit, however the building department issued him a stop work order on his property. This left a gap between his fence and his and this will cause damage to her home foundation. It also concerns her of the predatory buyers who preys on the older homeowners to buy their properties.

Then she asked that the new neighbors have some consideration for the existing neighbors. She asked that the council members visit 39 E. 4th Street, there is no upkeep to this property it brings down the neighborhood and there are rats and other rodents coming from that property.

Paula Smith – *residing at 550 Front Street Hempstead, NY* – appeared in person. Representing Value Care Home Care Agency. She is the owner of a health care facility and is soliciting business here in the city.

Jacene Thomas -*residing at 25 University Avenue, Yonkers, NY, 10704* - *appeared via zoom*. She asked if there was a protocol to re-employ City employees that were laid off by the City. She asked this question because she was laid off and was given reasons why, which she chooses not to share at this time but stated that a lot of community members contacted her via social media and in person and inquire of her whereabouts, and the community are now starting to complain that there are not a lot of events in the community thought she understands that everything was at a standstill because of the pandemic. She is grateful that the community watches her at times, on social media events hosted by her. She feels that the community is feeling left out of all the fun after watching her on her various media platforms and realizing that the shows goes on elsewhere. So, she is curious if there is a protocol to bring back laid off employees as she ready, able, and willing to work. She reached out to pertinent personnel, but she is confident that they are busy and will respond to her query at an opportune time.

Wilma Frank *residing at 239 S. Columbus Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY* -*appeared in person*. Reminded the Council that we are still in a pandemic and the effects of the pandemic on people and their household. She laments that she is a landlord and since September 1st she has not received rent from her tenant, she state that she knows it's not the council problem but just wanted them to be aware that she has a tenant that is not paying rent, but even though she gets no rent from the tenant she still has to pay her mortgage and other bills. The taxes are extremely high. The budget must be revised, there is too much burden on the homeowners.

Mary Harris *residing at 222 West 2nd Street, Mount Vernon, NY*. Ms. Harris said that the lack of transparency is stifling. It is insulting to her and the aged supporters of Mount Vernon who have upheld the City. She feels they are not regarded as important as everything is technology based and she struggles with technology. The aged community does not have access or does not know how to properly use technology. A date stamped February 10th. letter talk about four virtual meetings scheduled to be held in April to solicit input from the public in regard to broadband input. A survey must be submitted on March 18th, yet she has not heard anything about it. She stressed that the aged community needs broadband access and the City needs to communicate better to the residents.

Andrea Haynes – *Director of Economic Development for the City of Mount Vernon* – *appeared in person* – Introduced herself as a new employee of the City and spoke briefly about her intentions in her role.

Brian Johnson – *Corporation Counsel for the City of Mount Vernon* - appeared in person. He spoke about the budget, the law department and some of the City’s advisory boards.

The council body responded to the speakers’ concerns

REFERRAL SESSION

Roll Call administered by City Clerk Tanesia M. Walters

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES AND ACTION THEREON

To the Council:

The **LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC WORKS** recommends for **ADOPTION** the following entitled legislation:

- Item No. 1 An ordinance requesting permission to create and add the position of “Inventory Control Technician” within the Board of Water Supply.
- Item No. 2 An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Anomaly Entertainment to film DPW’s sewer bureau for the Science Channel and Discovery + and accept donation
- Item No. 3 A resolution confirming the appointment of Tanesia M. Walters as City Cler

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Browne, Esq., Chair

Cathlin Gleason, Co-Chair

Received, passed and filed.

Passed by the following vote:

Ayes: President Thompson, councilmembers; Browne, Gleason, Poteat, Copeland

Nays: None

Absent: None

To the Council:

The HUMAN RESOURCES Committee recommends for **ADOPTION** the following entitled legislation:

- Item No. 4 An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an Agreement with Techieee Technology League. (Mount Vernon Youth Bureau – Strong Program)
- Item No. 5 An ordinance granting permission to the Department of Recreation to sponsor the Annual Easter Hunt Celebration.
- Item No. 6 An ordinance granting permission to the Department of Recreation to co-sponsor “Summer Fun at Hartley Park” with the Westchester Jewish Community Services.
- Item No. 7 An ordinance granting permission to the Department of Recreation to sponsor “2022 Summer Outdoor Movie Series.”
- Item No. 8 An ordinance granting permission to the Department of Recreation to sponsor the 6th Annual Pumpkin Fest and Carving Event that would include Ace Amusements City-wide Carnival.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Copeland, Chair

Edward Poteat, Co-Chair

Received, passed and filed.

Passed by the following vote:

Ayes: President Thompson, councilmembers; Browne, Gleason, Poteat, Copeland

Nays: None

Absent: None

To the Council:

The PUBLIC SAFETY AND CODES recommends for **ADOPTION** the following entitled legislation:

- Item No. 9 An ordinance rescinding “Resolution No. 13 adopted by the City of Mount Vernon City Council on December 22, 2021 “appointing a member to the Board of Ethics of the City of Mount Vernon”

Item No. 10 An ordinance rescinding “Resolution No. 2 adopted by the City of Mount Vernon City Council on September 22, 2021 “appointing Dwayne Brown as a member of the Cable Television Advisory Committee of the City of Mount Vernon.”.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathlin Gleason, Chair

Danielle Browne, Esq., Co-Chair

Received, passed and filed.

Passed by the following vote:

Ayes: President Thompson, councilmembers; Browne, Gleason, Poteat, Copeland

Nays: None

Absent: None

To the Council:

The **FINANCE AND PLANNING** recommends for **ADOPTION** the following entitled legislation:

Item No. 11 An ordinance authorizing the Comptroller to refund an overpayment of taxes to “Atlantic Title Agency Inc.” (\$15,322.03)

Item No. 12 An ordinance authorizing the Comptroller to make payment to Grassi & Co. for closing of books and audit for the Mount Vernon Urban Renewal Agency (\$28,407.61)

Item. No. 13 An ordinance authorizing the Comptroller to make payment to O’Connor Davies for closing of books and audit for the Mount Vernon Urban Renewal Agency (\$60,000.00)

Item No. 14 An ordinance amending Ordinance No. 1 adopted on July 16, 2021 “The adoption of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Budget”

Item No. 15 An ordinance amending Ordinance No. 5 adopted on November 10, 2021, entitled “AN ORDINANCE IN SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON’S GUARANTEED INCOME PILOT PROGRAM, AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND AUTHORIZING THE ALLOCATION OF \$1.2 MILLION IN AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.”

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Poteat, Chair

Lisa Copeland, Co-Chair

Received, passed and filed.

Passed by the following vote:

Ayes: President Thompson, councilmembers; Browne, Gleason, Poteat, Copeland

Nays: None

Absent: None

OTHER BUSINESS

Council President Thompson advised that he will be paying the refuse fee for 10 seniors for the year. The fees are annually, he stated that people are welcome to show their support by pitching in and financially sponsoring some seniors. Councilman Poteat said that he will sponsor twenty families, Council President Thompson cheerily welcomed councilman Poteat's sponsorship and asked if there were anyone else that would like to sponsor could do so.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Tanesia M. Walters, *J.D., M.P.A*

City Clerk