

**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 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**

**Theresa Robinson** - residing at 16 North Bond St., Mount Vernon, NY, appeared in person. She spoke about the refuse fee; the refuse fee is too high, which makes her current taxes in Mount Vernon too high to own any property here. She states that she is struggling, she inherited the property from her parents, the property severely is due repair and the refuse fee is too high. She stated in length about the state of her affairs. She stated that she hired an architect to repair to drop up plans to repair the property which took over a year and was never passed. She then hired another architect (2019) to revise the plans, and then she found out the building department had changed its requirement, and now that said architect is on the advisory board of the City's building department and she lost her money. She cannot afford to keep or maintain her property.

**Cynthia Crenshaw** – residing at 315 Mundy Lane, Mount Vernon, NY – appeared via zoom. Concerns about the new group home that is coming to Mount Vernon, which will be across the street from an elementary school. It is a transit group home. They could have picked another location for this group home it is not an appropriate place. Also, there are several gangs in and around the surrounding area. There is no transparency in the planning department. What is the procedure, does a project goes to the planning board then to the City Council? Also, what is the

procedure for becoming a member of the planning board. The City and County tax are due around the same time, residents cannot afford to make two payments totaling a sum of \$6,000 at one time, is there anything that can be done to change the due date.

**Wilma Frank** – *residing at 239 South Columbus Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY* – appeared in person. Concerned about the violence going on in Mount Vernon, she understands that the Mayor has a lot of money set aside for gang violence and if this is true why isn't the Mayor using this money to help the community get rid of the gangs and violence. There should be a community forum of judges, police and other dignitaries to discuss a plan to get rid of the violence. The youths don't have the guidance at home and so the community needs to step in to help. There should be a scared straight type program, let them sit in the courthouse and at the police station to see what happens when you commit a crime. Also, the marijuana dispensary that is planned for the South side that is not fair it is wrong. Also, Ukrainian refugees coming to Mount Vernon where will they be housed can we afford to house them, how much money is the City getting to house them, why cannot they be housed in another municipality? Is Mount Vernon the dumping ground? Also, the police out operating stop and frisk is that still in place?

**Patricia Richards** -*residing at 137 S. Fulton Avenue, Mount Vernon NY, - appeared via zoom.* Heard about the \$450 garbage fee that will be imposed soon, if this is true the City must provide recycling receptacles as well as garbage receptacles, and the garbage bin must be put back in the yard and not thrown on the street, where it lands in the road. Also, is it true about Mt. Vernon not having an ambulance service readily available, and what is the status of Mount Vernon Hospital and lastly is the City going to develop any extracurricular activity programs for children 4-18 years old? We pay so much money in taxes and there is nothing available to children especially in early childhood.

**Geoff Monroe** *residing at address was not given -appeared via zoom.* Council should consider an official resolution for the cable advisory committee members to lengthen their time since they did not get to serve their entire term after oath of office. Small cell site locations have been an ongoing concern for him, and the community should know and have more aggressive from the council regarding health modality of small cell sites. Also, a community media is needed, to inform and educate the community. There must be proper oversight for the money that should be allocated to community media.

**Denise Williams** – *residing at 141 Archer Ave., Mount, NY* - appeared in person. Concerned about the high extra taxes, her bill was \$400 and another bill for \$1649.49 for sewer taxes. She cannot afford the \$16,000.00 in taxes plus the extra taxes of \$400 and \$1649.49, what can she do to alleviate this financial burden and she cannot afford it.

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 authorizing Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson Inc. - Daisies Troop2983 to use Lot 12 - 3rd Avenue between Ist. Street & 2<sup>nd</sup> Street - (May 7, 2022).
- Item No. 2 An ordinance granting permission for the Mayor to attend the African American Mayor's Association Annual Conference - (April 26-29, 2022).
- Item No. 3 An ordinance granting permission to LPW to participate in NYSERDA Community Solar and Demand Response Campaigns.
- Item No. 4 An ordinance granting permission to the Department of Recreation to co-sponsor "City Fest" (business, food and culture Expo 2022) with the Friends of Mount Vernon Arts Recreation and Youth Programs, Inc.
- Item No. 5 An ordinance granting permission to the Department of Recreation to co-sponsor the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual "Mount Vernon Day" (formerly known as Mount Vernon Proud) Event, hang banners, co-sponsor the Diabetes Awareness Walk and permission to the Department of Public Safety to close 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- Item No. 6 An ordinance granting permission to the Department of Recreation to sponsor Summer Breeze Concerts and Events, accept donations and hang banners.
- Item No. 7 An ordinance authorizing five (5) City Council members, the City Clerk and the Deputy City Clerk to attend the 2022 New York Conference of Mayors Winter Legislative Meeting and reimbursement for same.
- Item No. 8 An ordinance authorizing purchase of one (1) new Ford F-550 with 9 feet landscape dump body.

*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. 9 An ordinance authorizing the Mount Vernon Youth Bureau to accept registration fees for the Safe Haven summer program (\$500.00 per participant).

Item No. 10 An ordinance authorizing the Mayor and the Youth Bureau to host a human service event called "Spring into Health"

Item No. 11 An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an Agreement with Startup Smartup and Mount Vernon Youth Bureau. (\$8,500.00).

*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. 12 An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Letter of Intent with Freedom Productions. - **HELD**
- Item. No. 13 An ordinance authorizing the Department of Public Safety to cover the annual dues of the Executive Leadership with the International Association of Chiefs of Police - (\$380.00).
- Item No. 14 An ordinance authorizing the Department of Public Safety to cover the annual dues of the Executive Leadership with the Westchester County Chiefs of Police Association - (\$1,600.00).
- Item No. 15 An ordinance granting permission for two (2) members of the Police Department to attend a ten-day ROCO (Rope) Rescue Course.
- Item No. 16 An ordinance requesting permission to defund and fund multiple positions with the Department of Buildings.
- Item No. 17 An ordinance authorizing and directing the Comptroller to make rental payments pursuant to a Lease Agreement between the City of Mount Vernon and Macqusten Station Takeover LLC to lease 156 Mount Vernon Avenue / 20 South West Street for a temporary fire station.

*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

**Nays:** Copeland (items #16 &17)

**Absent:** None

**\*Item No. 12 was Held**

**To the Council:**

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

Item No. 18 An ordinance authorizing the Comptroller to receive CDBG funds from the Mount Vernon Urban Renewal Agency for street repaving in CDBG Census Tracts

- Item No. 19 An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to execute an application for a correction to the years 2020-2021 City, County and School tax bill - (\$27,094.63).
- Item No. 20 An ordinance amending Ordinance No. 12 adopted on March 9, 2022, entitled "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE COMPTROLLER TO MAKE PAYMENT TO GRASSI & CO. FOR AUDIT SERVICES FOR THE MOUNT VERNON URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY" - (\$28, 407.61).
- Item No. 21 An ordinance amending Ordinance No. 13 adopted on March 9, 2022, entitled "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE COMPTROLLER TO MAKE PAYMENT TO O'CONNOR DAVIES FOR AUDIT SERVICES FOR THE MOUNT VERNON URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY" - (\$60,000.00).
- Item No. 22 A resolution of the City Council of the City of Mount Vernon scheduling a public scoping session for the proposes of reviewing the draft scope pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA").
- Item No. 23 A resolution of the City Council of the City of Mount Vernon denying the zoning petition submitted by 208 North Realty LLC.

*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 asked for a moment of silence for Kayla Greene and all that was affected by this tragedy and to keep our community in prayers as we mourn her loss.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:53 p.m.

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

City Clerk