

**City Council Minutes
Legislative Session**



March 23, 2026

VIDEO BROADCASTING & RECORDING

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mount Vernon City Council
 Committee Meeting Schedule
 March 23, 2026

Time	Topic Under Discussion	Committee
6:35 – 6:40 p.m.	Ord. 2026-07 Amendment to 133 of the Codified Ordinances	Employee & Community Relations - Keener
6:40 – 6:50 p.m.	Ord. 2026-05 Community Development / Public Information Officer Position	Employee & Community Relations - Keener
6:50 – 7:15 p.m.	Ordinance 2026-04 Bond Anticipation Notes	Finance & Budget - Mahan

MEETING WILL RECESS UNTIL 7:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Present	Absent	Excused
Fourth Ward LeNan Hager At-Large Amber Keener First Ward James Mahan President Pro Tem Mel Severns Second Ward John Ruckman At-Large Dale Miller 3rd Ward Taylor Jacklin		Council President Bruce Hawkins

INVOCATION

Invocation to be given by Pastor Doug Pummell, Mulberry Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All recited in unison.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Minutes City Council 2026_03_09

Keener made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 9, 2026 City Council Meeting. Hager seconded. Accepted by unanimous voice vote.

RECEIVE PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Employee & Community Relations Committee Minutes 3/09/2026
Finance and Budget Committee Minutes 03/09/2026

Committee Reports received without comment.

LIQUOR CONTROL LICENSE

PROCLAMATION

PERSONS SPEAKING ON MATTERS OF CITY CONCERN

RESOLUTIONS FOR THIRD READING

RESOLUTIONS FOR SECOND READING

RESOLUTIONS FOR FIRST READING

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-29

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND AWARD CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS FOR THE BLACKJACK WETLAND PROJECT (PID 1510202).

Parks & Recreation: Hager, Jacklin

Hager gave Resolution 2026-29 its first reading and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on April 13.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-30

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR THE VETERANS WALK OF HONOR PROJECT (PID 2541300); AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Parks & Recreation: Hager, Jacklin

Hager gave Resolution 2026-30 its first reading and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on April 13.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-31

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO CREATE ADDITIONAL LINES PURSUANT TO O.R.C. 5705.09(F); AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

Mahan made a motion to suspend the rules and take Resolution 2026-31 to its third and final reading. Ruckman seconded. Auditor Brinkman clarified that this establishes budget lines for funds already received. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Brinkman clarified that this a housekeeping measure to log grants and loans properly.

ROLL CALL VOTE	Motion to Adopt
RESULT:	Adopted [7 TO 0]
MOVER:	First Ward James Mahan
SECONDER:	Second Ward John Ruckman

AYES:	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
NAYS:	None

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-32
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF
THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL
APPROPRIATIONS.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

Mahan made a motion to suspend the rules and take Resolution 2026-32 to its third and final reading. Ruckman seconded. Auditor Brinkman clarified that this allows for expenditure of funds that have already been received. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Brinkman clarified that items 1 and 3 go to the recently created budget line (from Resolution 2026-31). Line 2 is money that carried over from the previous fiscal year. Line 4 is carryover, as well.

ROLL CALL VOTE	Motion to Adopt
RESULT:	Adopted [7 TO 0]
MOVER:	First Ward James Mahan
SECONDER:	Second Ward John Ruckman
AYES:	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
NAYS:	None

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-04
AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF NOTES IN THE AMOUNT OF NOT TO
EXCEED \$29,000,000 IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS
FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSTRUCTING A POLICE STATION AND
RELATED FACILITIES; FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING THE SAME;
IMPROVING THE SITES THEREOF; AND ACQUIRING REAL PROPERTY
AND INTERESTS THEREIN AS MAY BE NECESSARY IN CONNECTION
THEREWITH; AND AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING RELATED
MATTERS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

ROLL CALL VOTE	Motion to Adopt
RESULT:	Adopted [7 TO 0]
MOVER:	First Ward James Mahan
SECONDER:	Second Ward John Ruckman
AYES:	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
NAYS:	None

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-05
AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND
TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT/PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER; AND DECLARING
AN EMERGENCY.

Employee & Community Relations: Keener, Ruckman

Keener noted that this seems like an important roll for the City, and the position has been discussed in committee meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE	Motion to Adopt
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RESULT:	Adopted [7 TO 0]
MOVER:	At-Large Amber Keener
SECONDER:	Second Ward John Ruckman
AYES:	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
NAYS:	None

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-06

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 755.04 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON REGARDING CURB-SIDE RECYCLING; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Utilities: Ruckman, Miller

Ruckman gave Ordinance 2026-08 its second reading, and requested a 5-minute committee meeting on April 13.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-07

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 133 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON REGARDING CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Employee & Community Relations: Keener, Ruckman

Keener made a motion to suspend the rules and take Ordinance 2026-07 to its third and final reading. Ruckman seconded. Keener noted that the reason for the suspension is because this committee is not currently able to function. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE	Motion to Adopt
RESULT:	Adopted [7 TO 0]
MOVER:	At-Large Amber Keener
SECONDER:	Second Ward John Ruckman
AYES:	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
NAYS:	None

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-08

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE SERVICES AND RESOURCE COORDINATOR; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Employee & Community Relations: Keener, Ruckman

Keener gave Ordinance 2026-08 its first reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-09

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTERS 763 AND 773 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON REGARDING TAXI CABS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Utilities: Ruckman, Miller

Ruckman gave Ordinance 2026-09 its first reading, and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on April 13.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-10
AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 183.013 OF THE CODIFIED
ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON; AND DECLARING
AN EMERGENCY.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

Mahan gave Ordinance 2026-10 its first reading, and requested a 20-minute committee meeting on April 13.

REMARKS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

- Mayor Starr noted that Jacklin will replace Mahan on the Patriotic Memorial Committee. Certain software will assist in some of the heavy lifting for event planning associated with parades. The Next Washington Forum is March 31st at 6 p.m. Titled: The Room Where it Happens. The Mayor's first State of the City Address will be on March 25. He has received other requests for the address, and is happy to take the address on the road. Last Friday was the MORPC state of the region address. In terms of development and transportation, there are exciting improvements coming. It is a hopeful time.
- Treasurer Stuller noted that the process to approve the Police Station has been very deliberative. He thanked Council for asking good questions and their work throughout that process.
- Auditor Brinkman echoed the Treasure's sentiments, and thanked Council for their feedback.
- Law Director Broeren reminded City parties to get legislation out to him and the City Clerk as soon as possible. He noted that the Board of Property Maintenance Appeals will meet on March 24 at 4:00 p.m. There is scaffolding around the buildings damaged by the recent windstorm to prevent additional pieces from falling into the sidewalk or street. There is interest in setting up a taxi cab company in the city. Ride-sharing is exempted from local legislation.

REMARKS FROM COUNCIL

- Hager noted that there will be an Easter Egg Hunt at Hiawatha on Saturday at 9:30 a.m with staggered starts for various age groups. The event is rain or shine.
- Mahan thanked council and administration for their work on city facilities. Administration has been looking for the best way to do the work, and has labored to make it happen.
- Keener expressed appreciation for administration's flexibility with the various facilities projects. Knox County Convention and Visitor's Bureau has a new Adventure Guide. Keener encouraged residents to engage with the guide, and thanked Olivia Toth for her work.
- Jacklin noted the resiliency of the community following the windstorm, and how neighbors were helping neighbors clean, clear, and repair. It was encouraging.
- Ruckman wished all a Happy Easter.
- Miller noted that he toured the old police station, noting its state, and expressing gratitude that a new one will be built to replace the current building.
- Severns noted that the Police Station project has been in the works since 2021. He is glad to see it moving forward. After the storm, he thanked neighbors and City crews who cleared multiple roads that had trees and branches in them. The crews already have full work loads, but then demonstrate adaptability when they need to address emergency situations.
- Scott Zimmerman noted that there is tire recycling on Saturday, March 28 from 8 - Noon at Ariel Foundation Park. The cost is \$2 per tire.

ADJOURN AT THE CALL OF THE PRESIDENT

Keener made a motion to adjourn. Hager seconded. Adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Bruce E. Hawkins, President of Council

Zac Sherman, Clerk of Council

