

**City Council Minutes  
Legislative Session**



**June 22, 2026**

**VIDEO BROADCASTING & RECORDING**

Meeting videos are broadcast live and published on YouTube.com  
<https://www.youtube.com/@cityofmountvernon3369>

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Mount Vernon City Council  
 Committee Meeting Schedule  
 June 22, 2026

Taylor Jacklin made a motion to enter executive session at 6:20 p.m to discuss financial incentives, as required by HB 184. Keener seconded. Entered executive session by unanimous roll call vote. Executive session was held from 6:20 - 6:58 p.m.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic Under Discussion</b>	<b>Committee</b>
6:20 – 6:45 p.m.	Proposed Arista Villas Incentives (Res. 2026-67, Ord. 2026-21 &22)	Land Use & Development - Jacklin
6:45 – 6:55 p.m.	Ordinance 2026-23 Founder’s Grove TIF	Land Use & Development - Jacklin
6:55 – 7:05 p.m.	Ordinance 2026-25 Fixing the Number of Employees in the Police Department	Employee & Comm. Relations - Keener
7:05 – 7:15 p.m.	Res 2026-68 Urban Renewal Area	Streets & Public Buildings - Severns

**MEETING WILL RECESS UNTIL 7:30 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

Others in Attendance: Mayor Matt Starr, Safety Service Director Tanner Salyers, Auditor Dan Brinkman, Treasurer David Stuller, Law Director Rob Broeren, City Clerk Zac Sherman, City Inspector Scott Zimmerman, Police Chief Morgan, Public Utilities Director Aaron Reinhart, Madison Sarver, Sam Filkins, Greg Yashnyk, Darby Dooley, Will Graumlich, Rick Graumlich, Cheryl Splain

**INVOCATION**

Invocation: Pastor Rich Graumlich, Proclamation Church

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All recited in unison.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Minutes City Council Legislative Session June 8, 2026

Severns made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 8, 2026 legislative session of City Council. Keener seconded. Accepted by unanimous voice vote.

**RECEIVE PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Employee and Comm Relations Committee Minutes May 26, 2026 a  
Employee and Comm Relations Committee Minutes May 26, 2026 b  
Streets & Public Buildings Committee Minutes May 26, 2026  
Streets & Public Buildings Committee Minutes June 8, 2026

**LIQUOR CONTROL LICENSE**

**PROCLAMATION**

**PERSONS SPEAKING ON MATTERS OF CITY CONCERN**

**RESOLUTIONS FOR THIRD READING**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-60**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, OHIO TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN TO LEASE THE PROPERTY WITH THE STREET ADDRESS OF 9 ½ EAST HIGH STREET; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Streets & Public Buildings: Severns, Mahan

Severns made a motion to adopt. Mahan seconded. Severns noted that this sounded like a good idea and group for the space. The matter had been discussed in committee meeting prior.

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-63**

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ABOLITION OF THE CLINTON TOWNSHIP WATER & SEWER DISTRICT AND RELATED UTILITY GOVERNANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE MATTERS.

Utilities: Ruckman, Miller

Ruckman made a motion to adopt. Miller seconded. Ruckman noted that there was a committee meeting two weeks prior regarding this piece of legislation.  
 Salyers read a letter that will be sent to Clinton Township Residents regarding the proposed abolition of the Clinton Township Water & Sewer District.

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

**RESOLUTIONS FOR SECOND READING**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-67**

A RESOLUTION DELINEATING AN OVERLAY IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED ARISTA VILLAS INCENTIVE DISTRICTS WITHIN THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, OHIO; AND ADOPTING A WRITTEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AS TO SAME; SETTING THE TIME AND PLACE OF A PUBLIC HEARING; AUTHORIZING AND RATIFYING THE GIVING OF NOTICE TO THE MOUNT VERNON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, THE KNOX COUNTY CAREER CENTER AND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KNOX COUNTY, OHIO, ALL PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE SECTION 5709.40(C) AND ITS RELATED RULES AND LAWS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Land Use & Development: Jacklin, Keener

Jacklin made a motion to amend Section 3 of Resolution 2026-67 to change the date of the public hearing from July 13 to August 10. Keener seconded. Amended by unanimous roll call vote.  
 Jacklin made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-67 to its third and final reading. Keener seconded. Darbey Dooley, consulting attorney for the City with Bricker-Graden, explained that the reason for the suspension was so that the process could begin to consider creating an inventive district for Arista Villas. The legislation begins the process, but final approval would not come until Council votes on an Ordinance in September.  
 Broeren also noted that under HB 184, all conversations regarding financial incentives must happen in executive session. Passing this legislation allows for those conversations to be brought to the public sooner. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote.  
 Jacklin made a motion to adopt. Keener seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE</b>	<b>Motion to Adopt</b>
<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Adopted [7 TO 0]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	3rd Ward Taylor Jacklin
<b>SECONDER:</b>	At-Large Amber Keener
<b>AYES:</b>	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
<b>NAYS:</b>	None

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-68**

A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY AS AN URBAN RENEWAL AREA AND AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO RELEASE A REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR IDENTIFYING AND SELECTING A QUALIFIED FIRM OR FIRMS TO DRAFT

AN URBAN RENEWAL PLAN FOR THE DESIGNATED URBAN RENEWAL  
AREA, AND IDENTIFY AND ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH THE  
SELECTED FIRM OR FIRMS.

Streets & Public Buildings: Severns, Mahan

Mel Severns made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-68 to its third and final reading. James Mahan seconded. Severns noted that this was discussed in Committee Meeting, and that the Urban Renewal designation will allow the properties to be put to better use by the City. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Mel Severns made a motion to adopt. James Mahan seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-69

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE SAFETY-SERVICE  
DIRECTOR OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, OHIO TO ENTER INTO  
CONTRACT WITH TOP FLIGHT REAL ESTATE (DBA BO LACEY) TO  
LEASE THE PROPERTY WITH THE STREET ADDRESS OF 9 EAST HIGH  
STREET; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Streets & Public Buildings: Severns, Mahan

Severns gave Resolution 2026-69 it's second reading and requested a 5-minuted committee meeting on July 13.

**RESOLUTIONS FOR FIRST READING**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-70

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO  
DISPOSE OF VEHICLES IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT NOT NEEDED FOR  
PUBLIC USE BY THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON; AND DECLARING AN  
EMERGENCY.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

James Mahan made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-70 to its third and final reading. Mel Severns seconded. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. James Mahan made a motion to adopt. Mel Severns seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-71

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF THE

CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO PAY BILLS PURSUANT TO SECTION  
5705.41 (D), THEN AND NOW CERTIFICATION.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

James Mahan made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-71 to its third and final reading. Mel Severns seconded. Mahan noted that the reason for the suspension was to render payment to vendors who are waiting. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. James Mahan made a motion to adopt. Mel Severns seconded. Auditor Brinkman briefly noted each line item on the Resolution. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-73

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF THE  
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO RENAME AN EXISTING FUND AND TO  
CREATE ADDITIONAL LINES PURSUANT TO O.R.C. 5705.09(F) & O.R.C.  
5705.40.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

Mahan gave Resolution 2026-73 its first reading and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on July 13.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-72

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF THE  
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

Mahan gave Resolution 2026-72 its first reading.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-74

A FINAL RESOLUTION ENACTED BY THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON,  
OHIO, HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE LEGISLATIVE  
AUTHORITY/LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY OR "LPA", IN THE MATTER OF  
THE STATED DESCRIBED PROJECT.

Streets & Public Buildings: Severns, Mahan

Severns gave Resolution 2026-74 its first reading and requested a 5-minute committee meeting on July 13.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-75

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO  
SEEK AND SELECT A QUALIFICATIONS-BASED CONSTRUCTION  
MANAGER-AT-RISK FOR THE MOUNT VERNON JUSTICE CENTER  
PROJECT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Police, Fire, and Civil Defense: Miller, Hager

Miller gave Resolution 2026-75 its first reading and requested a 5-minute committee meeting on July 13.

### **ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING**

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 2026-20**

#### **AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE COMPENSATION, HOURS AND BENEFITS OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON.**

Employee & Community Relations: Keener, Ruckman

Keener made a motion to adopt. Ruckman seconded. Keener noted that Ordinance 2026-20 had been discussed in prior meetings. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

### **ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING**

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 2026-21**

#### **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN APPLICATION TO ADD PROPERTY TO THE MOUNT VERNON NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY DISTRICT UNDER OHIO REVISED CODE CHAPTER 349; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Land Use & Development: Jacklin, Keener

Taylor Jacklin made a motion to suspend the rules and take Ordinance 2026-21 to its third and final reading. Amber Keener seconded. Broeren notes that this is part of three pieces discussed in the Executive Session earlier that night. Passing the pieces allows the conversation to enter the public sphere more quickly. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Taylor Jacklin made a motion to adopt. Amber Keener seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE</b>	<b>Motion to Adopt</b>
<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Adopted [7 TO 0]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	3rd Ward Taylor Jacklin
<b>SECONDER:</b>	At-Large Amber Keener
<b>AYES:</b>	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
<b>NAYS:</b>	None

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 2026-22**

#### **AN ORDINANCE DETERMINING THAT AN APPLICATION TO ADD PROPERTY TO THE MOUNT VERNON NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY DISTRICT IS SUFFICIENT AND COMPLIES WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 349.03 OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE IN FORM AND SUBSTANCE; SETTING THE TIME AND PLACE FOR A HEARING ON THE APPLICATION AND AUTHORIZING THE NOTICE BY PUBLICATION OF**

SUCH HEARING; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Land Use & Development: Jacklin, Keener

Jacklin made a motion to amend Section 3 of Ordinance 2026-22 to change the time of the public hearing from July 13 to July 27, and the place of the public hearing from 40 Public Square to 236 S Main St. Amended by unanimous roll call vote. Taylor Jacklin made a motion to suspend the rules and take Ordinance 2026-22 to its third and final reading. Amber Keener seconded. Broeren notes that this is part of three pieces discussed in the Executive Session earlier that night. Passing the pieces allows the conversation to enter the public sphere more quickly. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Taylor Jacklin made a motion to adopt. Amber Keener seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE</b>	<b>Motion to Adopt as Amended</b>
<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Adopted [7 TO 0]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	3rd Ward Taylor Jacklin
<b>SECONDER:</b>	At-Large Amber Keener
<b>AYES:</b>	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin
<b>NAYS:</b>	None

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-23

AN ORDINANCE CONSENTING TO AND APPROVING THE EXECUTION OF A TIF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON AND RESIDENCES AT FOUNDERS GROVE, LLC FOR THE BENEFIT OF A DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT 12050 UPPER GILCHRIST ROAD.

Land Use & Development: Jacklin, Keener

Jacklin gave Ordinance 2026-23 its second reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-25

AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE NUMBER OF HOURLY EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Employee & Community Relations: Keener, Ruckman

Amber Keener made a motion to suspend the rules and take Ordinance 2026-25 to its third and final reading. Ruckman seconded. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Amber Keener made a motion to adopt. Ruckman seconded. Police Chief Morgan noted that this Ordinance creates a School Resource Office position. The cost of the position will be split 75/25% between the St. Vincent de Paul school and Police Department, respectively. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-24

APPROVING THE APPLICATION TO ADD CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY TO THE MOUNT VERNON NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND TO AMEND THE PETITION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MOUNT VERNON NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY AS A NEW COMMUNITY

AUTHORITY UNDER CHAPTER 349 OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE; AND  
DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Land Use & Development: Jacklin, Keener

Jacklin gave Ordinance 2026-24 its first reading and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on July 13.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-26

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING TWO INCENTIVE DISTRICTS AND DECLARING IMPROVEMENTS TO CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE INCENTIVE DISTRICTS TO BE A PUBLIC PURPOSE, AND EXEMPT FROM REAL PROPERTY TAXATION; IDENTIFYING CERTAIN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS MADE, TO BE MADE, OR IN THE PROCESS OF BEING MADE, THAT WILL BENEFIT OR SERVE THE PARCELS IN THE INCENTIVE DISTRICTS; REQUIRING THE OWNERS OF THOSE PARCELS TO MAKE SERVICE PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF REAL PROPERTY TAXES; ESTABLISHING A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT TAX INCREMENT EQUIVALENT FUND FOR THE DEPOSIT OF SUCH SERVICE PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF REAL PROPERTY TAXES; APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A TAX INCREMENT FINANCING AGREEMENT WITH ARISTA VILLAS MOUNT VERNON, LLC AND OTHER AGREEMENTS AND APPROVING RELATED MATTERS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Land Use & Development: Jacklin, Keener

Jacklin gave Ordinance 2026-26 its first reading and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on July 13.

**REMARKS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

Mayor Starr noted that there had been logistics meeting earlier that day for the Mount Vernon Arts & Music Festival, and the 4th of July Celebration. July 3rd is First Friday. The City will have a table explaining the State Route 13 Project.

Salyers noted that Bell Circle will be delivered on June 23. July 2nd is the ribbon cutting with CVB for the same. Debris pickup will be this week only. The next Washington Forum is on June 30, the topic is Smart Growth: Protecting Ohio's Resources.

Brinkman thanked Mr. Reinhart for a recent tour of the Water Plant. And he wished the USA a happy upcoming birthday.

**REMARKS FROM COUNCIL**

Jacklin thanked Hinkle and his team for their clean up work following the storm. He noted that the legislation from tonight was focused on growth and welcoming more voice into the Mount Vernon community. The administration is taking care of what makes Mount Vernon good, and Jacklin noted that he is proud to be a part of such work. Sevens thanked City crews for their work. He noted that Brightspeed has left areas uncured after doing work in certain neighborhoods. Salyers noted that this was due to subcontractors, rather than Brightspeed specifically. But there are conversations about how to have more stringent guidelines around subcontractor work. Salyers requested a 10-minute committee meeting on July 13 to discuss road paving progress.

Hager noted that she is really proud of the City, and wished the USA a Happy Birthday.

Ruckman wished all a Happy Independence Day.

Mahan noted he has also had residents ask about the timeline and parameters surrounding those doing outside utility work around the City. He noted that it is Solicitor season. Solicitors are required to show their permits. If they do not, call the non-emergency police line at 740-397-2222. He expressed his appreciation for the USA, and noted that it is a privilege to be part of this country.

Hawkins noted that Columbia Gas has done a good job restoring his neighborhood after completing their work. He thanked all who participated in the Front Porch Series.

**ADJOURN AT THE CALL OF THE PRESIDENT**

Keener made a motion to adjourn. Severns seconded. Adjourned at 8:19 p.m. by unanimous voice vote.

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Bruce E. Hawkins, President of Council

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Zac Sherman, Clerk of Council