

**City Council Minutes
Legislative Session**



August 10, 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
August 10, 2026

Time	Topic Under Discussion	Committee
6:00 – 6:30 p.m.	Arista Villas Development and Financial Incentives	Land Use & Development - Jacklin
6:30 – 7:00 p.m.	Public Hearing on Arista Villas Proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement	Land Use & Development - Jacklin
7:00 – 7:10 p.m.	Ordinance 2026-28 Renaming 407 Fund, Creating 409 Fund, and Reallocating Municipal Income Tax Distributions	Finance & Budget - Mahan
7:10 – 7:13 p.m.	Resolution 2026-81 Donating Surplus Supplies	Police, Fire, and Civil Defense - Miller

MEETING WILL RECESS UNTIL 7:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Present	Excused
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, Public Information Officer Madison Sarver, Sam Filkins, Darby Dooley, Cheryl Splain, Maureen Hall, David Hall, Joshua Morrison, Jennifer Shoman, Greg Yashnyk, Zach Green, Gary Kester, Don Carr, Mike Hillier, Jeff Dalp, Janet White, Robin Stevison, Vickie Adams, 8 others

INVOCATION

Invocation given by Mel Severns

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Minutes City Council July 27, 2026

Hager noted that in the minutes, Jay Soreno should be corrected to Dave Sorrino. Keener made a motion to approve the minutes with the stated correction. Severns seconded. Approved by unanimous voice vote.

RECEIVE PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Land Use and Development Public Hearing Minutes July 27, 2026
Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes July 27, 2026

Received without comment.

LIQUOR CONTROL LICENSE

PROCLAMATION

PERSONS SPEAKING ON MATTERS OF CITY CONCERN

Jennifer Shoman: Stated that she understands why the developer and the City want the incentives. But as a representative of the people, how will Council vote? With this development, will people actually be able to afford these homes? As a homeowner, she would prefer to see the cost of the home up front, not as extra rent. TIFs redirect money. Where would that money go otherwise? Is it being pulled from the City to go to the developer? If people are going to pay more, why does the developer get 8 mills, when the City only gets 2?

Zach Green, Knox County Health Commissioner

Quarterly report. Handed out statistics to Council. Lyme disease is peaking. If not addressed in a timely manner, it can become a lifelong chronic health issue. Kathy Miller has been with the agency for forty-two years. She is set to retire soon. Thankful for her work. Salmonella with jalapeños is under investigation. CDC and FDA shortages will continue to lead to outbreaks. Local food stuffs tend to be much safer. There is a confirmed measles case in Knox County. Keener requested that births and deaths be reported next quarter.

Janet White: asked where are the flock cameras located?

Miller responded that that information is available online.

Carol Kuninger: Spoke regarding the football field. Her friend, Robin, was a victim of a five-dog attack at the old football field on the west-end of town. Since that attack, the football field was closed. She asked who made that decision? Many people enjoy the field, kids playing soccer, people bringing their dogs, folks bringing their lawn chairs. She would like it to be reopened. She noted that trash cans in parks are overflowing.

Salyers responded that that was his decision. He clarified that, traditionally, there is not a back-and-forth during the public comment portion. This is the public's time to speak, and then the opportunity for administration and/or Council to respond is later.

Robin Stevison: Spoke regarding unlocking the gate at the old football field on West Gambier Street. She and her dog were attacked. She has been working with Deputy Moore on charges. It went to court recently, and the dogs were deemed malicious. The old football field is a beautiful space. The gates have been unlocked for about forty years. Stevison is willing to donate \$2,000 to put up cameras. When the dog warden was looking for tape, there was none, except from the motorcycle club.

Don Carr: Spoke regarding the Arista Villas TIF. He appreciated the time to speak and finish his presentation from earlier. Streets that have one-way in or out are not a public purpose. 100-600 living units will be a burden on the City and schools. He asked Council to remove the emergency clause and vote no. He held the microphone to a video from London, Ohio, where the TIF area was zoned commercial.

Vickie Adams: Spoke regarding E-Bike. People driving through sidewalks and streets without looking are causing traffic problems, and are dangerous. Some of these vehicles can go 35 MPH. E-Bikes are operated without insurance, license, or training. They shouldn't be allowed on City Streets, and operators should follow City rules. Helmets should be worn. Class Two and Three E-Bikes need to be marked, by law, and registered. Spoke regarding Ordinance 2026-24. She asked that it be amended so that no incentive funds be used within the Arista Villas development. Also, asked that Council think about the burden on City-wide infrastructure

before welcoming in new developments.

Mike Hillier - Arista Villas NCA & TIF

Wanted to clarify two things: prior to this administration, there was never City money put towards development. After Hillier pushed and pushed, the developer agreed to pay for the turn-ins for Liberty Crossing. Second, the City has a big pot of money. Don't give it to developers. Use money for us, not for them.

RESOLUTIONS FOR THIRD READING

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-78

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

Land Use & Development: Jacklin, Keener

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

RESOLUTIONS FOR SECOND READING

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-81

A RESOLUTION TO DONATE SURPLUS MOUNT VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT PROPERTY TO ANOTHER PUBLIC ENTITY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Police, Fire, and Civil Defense: Miller, Hager

Dale Miller made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-81 to its third and final reading. LeNan Hager seconded. Miller referenced the earlier committee meeting regarding the legislation. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Dale Miller made a motion to adopt. LeNan Hager seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

RESOLUTIONS FOR FIRST READING

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-83

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE MAYOR'S REAPPOINTMENTS OF KATIE DELOZIER AND STEVE JEFFERSON TO THE BOARD OF PROPERTY MAINTENANCE APPEALS, AND TODD HAWKINS TO THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Employee & Community Relations: Keener, Ruckman

Amber Keener made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-83 to its third and final reading. John Ruckman

seconded. Keener noted that it is standard practice to suspend the rules on appointments. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. Amber Keener made a motion to adopt. John Ruckman seconded. Starr noted that the reappointments are for one regular member and one alternate to the Board of Property Maintenance Appeals. Todd Hawkins will be reappointed to the Library Board, where his financial expertise is valued. Adopted 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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-84

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 2026-84 to its third and final reading. Mel Severns seconded. Mahan clarified that there are invoices which need to be paid. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. James Mahan made a motion to adopt. Mel Severns seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-85

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

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

James Mahan made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-85 to its third and final reading. Mel Severns seconded. Mahan clarified that this appropriates to Police Station lines to pay for that construction. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. James Mahan made a motion to adopt. Mel Severns seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-86

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF THE
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO TRANSFER FUNDS.**

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

James Mahan made a motion to suspend the rules and take RESOLUTION 2026-86 to its third and final reading. Mel Severns seconded. Mahan clarified that this is related to storm-damaged trees. Salyers said that stoma damage as well as natural end-of-life trees are included. The funds are being redirected from planting to removal due to the amount of hazardous trees that must be immediately addressed. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. James Mahan made a motion to adopt. Mel Severns seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-87

**A RESOLUTION RENAMING SHELLMAR PARK IN HONOR OF JOHN
FRANCIS.**

Parks & Recreation: Hager, Jacklin

Hager gave Resolution 2026-87 its first reading.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-88

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO
DISPOSE OF VEHICLES IN THE PUBLIC WORKS 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 2026-88 to its third and final reading. Mel Severns seconded. Mahan clarified that this is equipment on the shelf, and not used for City purposes. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. James Mahan made a motion to adopt. Mel Severns seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING

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

ROLL CALL VOTE	Motion to Adopt
RESULT:	Adopted [6 TO 1]
MOVER:	3rd Ward Taylor Jacklin
SECONDER:	At-Large Amber Keener
AYES:	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman, Taylor Jacklin
NAYS:	Dale Miller

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-24

AN ORDINANCE 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 made a motion to amend Ordinance 2026-24 to add the appropriate dates and legislation numbers (as presented in writing) and remove the emergency clause. Keener seconded. Motion defeated by a vote of 3-4. Jacklin, Miller, and Hager voting yes; Severns, Keener, Mahan, and Ruckman voting no.

Jacklin made a motion to amend Ordinance 2026-24 to add the appropriate dates and legislation numbers (as presented in writing). Keener seconded. Ordinance amended by unanimous roll call vote.

Jacklin made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-24 as amended. Keener seconded. Dooley clarified that City dollars will be used for the NCA, because these are funds that could otherwise, potentially, be used for City purposes. For NCA, the question is: is the City willing to reimburse the development on infrastructure improvements? If the City does not, the Developer will have no interest in levying charges that do not benefit them. Adopted by a roll call vote of 5-2, with Jacklin and Miller voting no.

ROLL CALL VOTE	Motion to Adopt as Amended
RESULT:	Adopted [5 TO 2]
MOVER:	3rd Ward Taylor Jacklin
SECONDER:	At-Large Amber Keener
AYES:	LeNan Hager, Amber Keener, James Mahan, Mel Severns, John Ruckman
NAYS:	Dale Miller, Taylor Jacklin

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 made a motion to amend Ordinance 2026-26 to remove the emergency clause. Keener seconded. Jacklin stated that having the emergency clause on the Ordinance prevents the public from engaging. Motion to amend passed by a roll call vote of 4-3, with Severns, Mahan, and Ruckman voting no.

Jacklin made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-26. Miller seconded. Dooley spoke, clarifying that, by law, the Ordinance is not eligible for approval until the Council meeting on September 14. Various Council members claimed that they were not aware of this. Jacklin retracted his motion.

Jacklin made a motion to postpone Ordinance 2026-26 to September 14. Keener seconded. Postponed by unanimous roll call vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-27

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CREMATION SCATTERING GARDEN WITHIN MOUND VIEW CEMETERY; AUTHORIZING THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF CERTAIN INDIGENT CREMATED REMAINS THEREIN; AND ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR THE CARE AND DISPOSITION OF SUCH REMAINS.

Parks & Recreation: Hager, Jacklin

LeNan Hager made a motion to adopt. Amber Keener seconded. Salyers noted that an updated map had been provided to Council regarding the site placement. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-28

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CERTAIN MUNICIPAL FUNDS AND APPROPRIATION LINES RELATED TO THE CITY'S PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, RENAMING FUND 407, CREATING FUND 409, REALLOCATING MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX DISTRIBUTIONS AND AUTHORIZING CERTAIN TRANSFERS.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

James Mahan made a motion to suspend the rules and take to its third and final reading. Mel Severns seconded. Mahan noted this was discussed in committee early that day. Rules suspended by unanimous roll call vote. James Mahan made a motion to adopt. Mel Severns seconded. Adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

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

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-29

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

Employee & Community Relations: Keener, Ruckman

Keener gave Ordinance 2026-29 its first reading, and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on August 24.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-30

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT FOR THE LEASING OF CITY VEHICLES.

Finance & Budget: Mahan, Severns

Mahan gave Ordinance 2026-30 its first reading, and requested a 10-minute committee meeting on August 24.

REMARKS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mayor Starr: Noted that First Friday was another success. During the event, Jerry Scott, Marcie Rienhart, and Randy Cronk were honored for outstanding work to the community. The Workforce development awards luncheon was last Wednesday. Jonny May retired after 31 years with the City. Demo work is underway on S Sandusky St. Congratulations to Chief Morgan on his award from Community's Coming Together regarding his leadership in providing training to the police force on crisis prevention. The Music and Arts Festival is this weekend. Recently, there was a ribbon cutting on the Behavioral Treatment Center on Blackjack Rd. He reminded Council that the Ohio Municipal League conference is coming.

Safety Service Director Salyers: Noted that there have been 430 responses to the City's E-Bike survey. His department will share, and use those responses to plan. The reason for the West Gambier gate closure is that it is not a park, officially. There need to be dual-entry gates, enclosures, etc. The area can still be reserved for activity, but not left wide-open without controls in place. This was recommended by the dog warden. The police department leadership met with the administrative team and Councilman Miller to discuss a review of Flock policy (ALPR). The City will be restricting blanket federal agency access and will review audit measures, and the placement of polls at thruways.

Auditor Daniel Brinkman: noted that the City received a check today for \$700,000 from a previous TIF. If they hadn't taken advantage of TIF incentives thirty years ago, this would not be the case.

Law Director Broeren: Noted that no bicycles are allowed on sidewalks in the central business district. Pedaled bikes may be on

sidewalks in other areas, but not E-Bikes. The Police are endeavoring to be vigilant about this.

REMARKS FROM COUNCIL

Dale Miller: noted that sensible legislation for E-Bikes is important. Thank you to the crowd for being here tonight. Thank you to Mr. Jacklin for his leadership on Arista Villas matters..

Mel Severns: Thank you to Mr. Brinkman for sharing. Noted that thirty years ago, approving financial incentives benefited the City today.

Taylor Jacklin: Noted that he had an email reminding him about postponing Ordinance 2026-26, and forgot during the moment that voting was occurring. Noted, regarding E-Bikes, that this is an affordable means of transportation for many, but doesn't want to see children harmed by using E-Bikes.

Jay Mahan: The difference of opinion seems to be on whether to incentivize a development or not. Let us disagree amiably. Appreciative of the homework of all who have spoken on the matter.

LeNan Hager: Thank you to everyone for being here. She noted that Council wants to hear from people and wants to make them happy, but can't always make everyone happy. It is hard work to be on Council, but she is proud of everyone who is on the dais and those who are participating in the democratic process.

President Hawkins: Reminded all about a repair café at St. Paul's this Saturday. They both need people who have broken things and fix things. 1-4 p.m. The purpose is to keep things out of the junkyards and landfills.

ADJOURN AT THE CALL OF THE PRESIDENT

Keener made a motion to adjourn. Severns seconded. Adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 8:56 p.m.

Bruce E. Hawkins, President of Council

Zac Sherman, Clerk of Council