

City of Corunna  
Regular Council Meeting  
Monday, April 16, 2001

Present: Billis, Bayless, Dumond, Mehigh, Ockerman, Runyan.

Absent: Hornus (excused).

Guests: Joe Sawyer, City Manager; Keith & Diane Johnson; Janeene Cenkush; Fred & Betty Bates; Gene Sanderson; Dick Sanderson; Robert Gilman; Don Runyon; Larry LeCureux; Clark Long; Judy Horton; Millie Taute; Joe DeCaire; Janet Washburn, Parks and Recreation Director; Sam Burwell; Frank Svrcek; Sgt. Kevin Clark, Police Department; Jackie Leone, The Argus Press; Bill & Bernice Lulham; Bob Morehouse; Bob Striggow; Chief Mark Hetfield, Police Department; and other concerned citizens.

The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers by Mayor Billis at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING: Runyan moved, Ockerman seconded to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Dumond, Runyan, Bayless, Mehigh.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING: Dumond moved, Bayless seconded to approve the minutes of the special meeting.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Mehigh, Ockerman, Dumond.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

AGENDA APPROVAL: Ockerman moved, Bayless seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman, Bayless, Mehigh, Dumond.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

APPROVAL OF VENDOR DISBURSEMENTS: Dumond moved, Runyan seconded to approve the vendor disbursements as presented. Councilperson Ockerman questioned the invoices for the door and new lock at Mitchell Fields. Joe Sawyer advised the door was kicked in when the facility was vandalized. Councilperson Ockerman asked why the costs were not charged to the softball commission and suggested holding the bill until the next meeting. Councilperson Bayless stated the softball complex falls under the parks and recreation commission during the off-season. Councilperson Ockerman stated that is not the way the softball commission was set up. The softball commission was suppose to pay for

itself with no charge back to the city. Councilperson Ockerman suggested pulling the invoice or charging the invoice to the proper fund, which would be the softball budget. Mr. Sawyer advised the softball fund could not be charged because it is not a General Fund. Councilperson Ockerman asked why not. Mr. Sawyer advised the city has no control over that account whatsoever. Councilperson Ockerman stated someone is authorizing work that should not be done if the work relates to the softball complex. He further stated the situation needs to be straightened out and suggested advising the parks and recreation commission that they cannot do that. Councilperson Bayless advised that would be fine, but the city has always taken care of the ball fields during the off-season. Councilperson Ockerman suggested letting Ms. Washburn advise council, since she was present, when the softball concept was first started. Ms. Washburn advised she believed there was a line item for Mitchell Fields, and the door and lock should be charged to Mitchell Fields. She further advised she agreed that the softball commission was primarily responsible for Mitchell Fields. She also advised the softball commission would be meeting on Sunday, and she would get clarification since there seems to be a change in the relationship between the softball commission and the city. Councilperson Dumond stated the repair of a facility on city property should fall under the parks and recreation commission. Councilperson Ockerman stated he wants the situation clarified. Council has been told one thing for three years and council needs to know where the items should be charged. Mr. Sawyer stated he agreed with Councilperson Bayless that the ball fields are treated differently during the off-season. Councilperson Ockerman suggested again holding the check until the next meeting. Councilperson Bayless stated the question seems to be what account the repairs should be charged to and asked if the account could be changed at a later time. Mr. Sawyer advised yes, the city could pay the bill and then bill the softball account if council does not feel the expense is something the city should pay for. Councilperson Ockerman questioned the invoice for 15-watt bulbs for the scoreboard. Mr. Sawyer advised the city has a contract, which he has been asked to sign, that indicates the city is responsible for maintaining the scoreboards.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Mehigh, Dumond, Bayless, Ockerman, Runyan.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Frank Svrcek stated the city is responsible for maintaining the ball fields according to the letter he read today that is dated 1999. Mayor Billis asked Mr. Svrcek how he found out the ball fields would be an issue at the meeting tonight. Mr. Svrcek advised he asked the question this morning. Mayor Billis asked whom he asked. Mr. Svrcek advised his supervisor, Tim Crawford. Mayor Billis stated Mr. Svrcek had obviously heard the ball fields would be an issue tonight. Mr. Svrcek advised no, he asked Mr. Crawford when the softball commission would take over the ball fields. The softball commission leases the ball fields from the city, and it is their responsibility to lime the fields and mow the grass. Mr. Svrcek further advised it is the city's responsibility to maintain the sprinkler system and scoreboards. Councilperson Runyan stated he believed the city's ordinance book states the city is to maintain the buildings and grounds and suggested checking the ordinance. Mayor Billis asked Mr. Sawyer to check out the situation. Councilperson Bayless stated he agreed with Mr. Svrcek. Councilperson Bayless further stated the Mitchell Field line item has been in place since he has been involved with the parks and recreation commission. Gene

Sanderson stated he thought he heard Mr. Svrcek state that the city limes the ball fields. Mr. Svrcek advised no, the softball association limes the fields. Mr. Sanderson asked if the city mows the ball fields. Mr. Svrcek advised not after a certain date. Mr. Sanderson asked why a resident from Owosso limes the fields, and why the person makes that kind of money for doing the work. Ms. Washburn advised the ball fields have to be limed once or twice a night, and it is quite a job to maintain the ball fields. The softball complex has always been self-sustaining and has not cost the city a lot of money over the years. Mr. Sanderson stated if the softball commission would pay the person less money to lime the fields then they could buy their own doors and other stuff they need. Ms. Washburn advised if there were no softball association then the city would not have the ball fields or softball complex. Mayor Billis reminded the audience to address council with their statements. Judy Horton asked if the city has a deductible on their insurance. She advised most insurance companies pay for vandalism. Mr. Sawyer advised yes, but the damage was not over \$500.

Keith Johnson, 201 Hastings Street, advised the deadline for the appreciation dinner is drawing near. He further advised he contacted GiGi's and asked if there was a minimum and was told two because no one should have to eat alone.

Dick Sanderson, 224 W. McNeil Street, asked if there was an update on when the people's yards would be cleaned up. Mr. Sawyer advised the city is waiting to fix the sewer at the Finnegan home and would do four cuts at the same time. He further advised it is his understanding that Perrin Construction is responsible for any yard repair, but the department of public works will probably end up taking care of the situation. Mr. Sanderson asked why the orange barrels were removed from the street two weeks ago. People do not have a warning when they go down his street. Mayor Billis advised Perrin Construction should be contacted to find out why the barrels were removed.

Mayor Billis asked the audience if they could hear council. Don Runyon advised everybody but the mayor. Gene Sanderson suggested to the mayor that he keep his hands away from his mouth. Mayor Billis stated the reason he asked his question was because he did not know if it was necessary for council to have a microphone system or not. People have asked for it consistently, but he did not know if the taxpayers wanted to pay the money for a microphone system.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Sawyer reviewed his manager's report with council and with those in the audience. He reported he has been working steadily on the budget for the last two weeks. He provided council with a list of upcoming events so they could put the items on their calendars if they were interested in attending.

CONSIDER PURCHASE OF DEFIBRILLATOR: Mayor Billis asked Mr. Sawyer to explain why the item was on the agenda. Mr. Sawyer advised there was a grant application submitted by Memorial Healthcare Center on behalf of the county, which would pay one-half of the cost of the unit. The desire is to get a defibrillator for the squad cars. He further advised the sheriff's department is putting the units in their cars. He also advised the police chief has recommended purchasing one unit, which will cost the city approximately \$1,500. Mr. Sawyer stated there are adequate funds in the capital outlay line item in the police department. He further stated having a defibrillator in patrol cars has grown in popularity.

He also stated the sheriff's department has a trainer so the city will not have expenses on training its employees to use the system. Councilperson Ockerman asked if the county cars have defibrillators. Mr. Sawyer advised yes. Councilperson Ockerman asked how many county cars have defibrillators. Mr. Sawyer advised he did not know how many units the sheriff's department purchased. Curtis Zondervan advised eight units. He showed council what the defibrillator looked like and explained how the unit operates. He further advised the units do not require any maintenance and the battery will last five-years. Councilperson Mehig asked if the machine would tell the operator if the machine was needed. Mr. Zondervan advised yes. Councilperson Ockerman asked if there would be any liability problems. Mr. Zondervan advised Public Act 173 states the person, who gives medical authorization and does the training, and the agency that owns, occupies, or manages the premises where the units are located cannot be held liable. He further advised Public Act 170 states law enforcement agencies do not have to meet the medical first response service requirement as long as the agency does not provide that level of care. Mayor Billis asked who would be trained and responsible enough to put the device on him. Mr. Zondervan advised the person would have to go through AED/CPR course. He further advised if a person walking through Meijers sees a defibrillator hanging on the wall and the person in front of him goes down, the person that grabs the defibrillator off the wall and uses it properly would not have any liability, but if a person does not use the defibrillator properly then that person could be sued for being negligent. He also advised all of the policing agencies that use the defibrillators send their employees through an AED/CPR class. Councilperson Ockerman asked if the patient has to give approval. Mr. Zondervan advised no. Councilperson Ockerman asked how long the unit has been on the market and how long the unit had been in use. Mr. Zondervan advised the unit has been on the market for four years and has been in use for two years. He further advised parts and service are guaranteed for eight years from the last day of manufacture. Councilperson Mehig stated it appeared the city was purchasing a refurbished defibrillator and asked if the refurbished defibrillator would be checked over before the city purchases the equipment. Mr. Zondervan advised yes. Mayor Billis asked if the hospital wanted to get the defibrillators for the community. Mr. Zondervan advised yes. Mayor Billis asked if the hospital was getting any equipment for itself. Mr. Zondervan advised yes, this was the second grant the hospital received, and they have received at least four units. Councilperson Ockerman asked Mr. Sawyer if the city was looking at purchasing one unit. Mr. Sawyer advised that was the request from the police chief. Councilperson Ockerman asked if the battery pack was included. Mr. Zondervan advised yes. Councilperson Dumond asked if the defibrillator came with a carrying case. Mr. Zondervan advised yes. Councilperson Dumond asked if the city would pay 50 percent of \$2,155.84. Mr. Zondervan advised yes, the grant is a 50/50 grant and the total cost is \$2,155.84. Councilperson Ockerman asked what the exact cost figure was. Councilperson Dumond advised \$1,077.92, which is 50 percent of \$2,155.84. Mayor Billis asked if the same price was offered to the City of Owosso. Mr. Zondervan advised yes. Councilperson

Bayless advised the Corunna Ambulance Service took advantage of the grant and purchased two of the defibrillators. The total cost is paid upfront, and the grant money comes in later. Dumond moved, Bayless seconded to purchase one defibrillator in the amount of \$2,155.84

with monies to be taken from line item 101-301-977, and the city is to get back \$1,077.92 as a rebate.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Mehigh, Bayless, Runyan, Dumond, Ockerman.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER APPOINTMENT TO LABOR NEGOTIATING TEAM: Dumond moved, Ockerman seconded to appoint Don Mehigh to the labor negotiating team.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Dumond, Ockerman, Mehigh, Runyan, Bayless.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

AMBULANCE SERVICE CONTRACT: Councilperson Bayless stated a question came up during the public hearing about a budget so he reformulated the numbers and put them in the format of a budget. Councilperson Bayless stated the city should take the lead and set the standard by approving the city's portion of the agreement at the \$30 per household assessment based on what was heard at the public hearing. He suggested agreeing to the Corunna portion of the agreement even though the city does not have the final language. Councilperson Ockerman stated he had a problem with Corunna leading the way. He does not have a problem with the city paying its share, but he wants everyone to pay his or her fair share. He further stated he had a problem with Caledonia Township paying \$15.00 per household and Corunna paying \$30.00 per household. Councilperson Bayless advised Caledonia Township would pay \$15.00 per household for 2001-2002 and Corunna would pay \$30.00 per household for 2002-2003. Councilperson Ockerman stated he had no problem with the city paying \$15.00 per household until more commitment is received from the other municipalities. Councilperson Bayless advised \$15.00 would help, but the ambulance service would still have red ink. Councilperson Ockerman stated he is afraid of leading the way with the city's dollars if the other dollars do not follow. Councilperson Bayless advised he is confident that Venice Township and Shiawassee Township will pay \$25.00 per household because they want to pay all of their ambulance services the same amount. Councilperson Ockerman stated the other big entity should come forward and be just as fair as Corunna will be. Councilperson Bayless stated Caledonia Township was looking into doing an assessment for 2002-2003. He further stated somebody has to go first. All of the governments are not going to make a decision on the agreement at the same time. He also stated the ambulance board could make up five contracts so each government can have their own language if that is what council wants to do. Councilperson Mehigh suggested having a joint meeting with the other municipalities in order to come up with a dollar amount in order to see how much money will be generated. Councilperson Bayless stated if all of the municipalities pay \$25.00 per household then the figures for the proposed budget would go down a little bit. Councilperson Mehigh asked if \$25.00 per household would be the breakeven area. Councilperson Bayless advised yes. Mayor Billis stated he did not think council could make a motion on the contract. Even though there was a public hearing and the public indicated they were willing to pay, he wants to find another way to pay for the ambulance service that would eliminate the taxpayers from having to pay \$30.00 per household. He asked if there was another way to fix the problem without assessing people.

Mayor Billis advised he knows it is difficult to work with different municipalities, but he does not want it to look like the city is shoving the agreement down somebody's throat. Councilperson Bayless stated the ambulance service loses money everyday. Councilperson Dumond stated he had a problem with Corunna leading the way. The city has Pleasant View and an elderly population, but he felt the costs should be shared equally. He further stated he did not understand why the City of Corunna has to pay an extra \$5.00. Councilperson Bayless stated he would enter \$25.00 in the proposed budget to see what the money would do. Councilperson Dumond stated the city does not need to prove to the other units of government that the city is rich because the city is not rich. Councilperson Bayless offered to do an amortization on the debt to see how long it would take to pay off the debt at \$25.00 per household. Councilperson Dumond stated it looked like \$25.00 per household was the amount the other government units would pay. Councilperson Bayless stated another meeting could be held with the other government agencies. Councilperson Mehig stated he wanted to personally thank Councilperson Bayless for the amount of work he has put into the proposed agreement. Councilperson Ockerman advised Councilperson Bayless he has done a terrific job with the agreement. Councilperson Ockerman further advised he does not think there is a better way to operate the ambulance service, but all council was looking for was equality. He also advised council needs to sit down with the other government agencies to work out a fair agreement. He suggested scheduling a meeting as soon as possible. Councilperson Bayless advised okay. Mayor Billis stated he has looked at the proposed budget, but the city has other needs that are just as important to the community as the ambulance service. He further stated he was looking at all avenues to solve the problem and was also looking at the bigger picture. He also stated council needs to meet with the other entities. Councilperson Bayless asked if a Friday would work. Mayor Billis advised no, any day but Friday. Councilperson Ockerman suggested having the meeting on Wednesday or Thursday. Councilperson Bayless stated he would try to come up with a date.

BUDGET RECOMMENDATION: Mr. Sawyer went through his proposed budget. Councilperson Bayless asked what area of the budget council would start with first. Mr. Sawyer advised he was open to suggestions. Councilperson Ockerman asked how many hours council would need for each budget workshop. Mr. Sawyer advised whatever council wants.

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Gene Sanderson, 609 S. Shiawassee Street, stated council made a good choice by appointing Councilperson Mehig to the labor negotiating team, but he had a couple of questions. Mr. Sanderson asked if Councilperson Mehig had listed that he was a General Motors negotiator on his application for the council seat. Councilperson Mehig advised no. Mr. Sanderson stated when he applied for the council seat there was a two versus two vote and one councilperson made a comment that the last vote was up to him and that councilperson chose Councilperson Mehig over himself because of Councilperson Mehig's education. Mr. Sanderson further stated the same councilperson voted not to hire Mr. Sawyer as the city manager because he wanted to sit down and talk to Mr. Sawyer. Mr. Sanderson asked why the same councilperson did not ask Councilperson Mehig if he had any experience before he voted for him. Mayor Billis advised Mr. Sanderson that he made the appointment. Mr. Sanderson asked why council voted for Councilperson Mehig. Mayor Billis advised because that is the process. Mr. Sanderson asked what Mayor Billis would have done if council would have turned Councilperson Mehig down. Mayor Billis

advised nothing different than what the President of the United States did when he appointed the attorney general and congress had to approve the president's appointment. Mr. Sanderson asked Mayor Billis if he promised Councilperson Mehig he would get in and if Councilperson Mehig was his man. Mayor Billis advised yes, Councilperson Mehig was his man for this appointment. Mr. Sanderson stated he was not jumping on Councilperson Mehig. Mayor Billis interrupted Mr. Sanderson and advised him that he would answer his question if Mr. Sanderson would allow him to have the floor. Mayor Billis advised Councilperson Mehig is filling Deb Bendall's role on the negotiating team. Mayor Billis further advised he asked Councilperson Mehig to fill all of the commissions and boards that Ms. Bendall had served on. Mr. Sanderson asked who asked Councilperson Mehig to step in. Mayor Billis advised himself and this council. Mr. Sanderson asked Mayor Billis if he asked Councilperson Mehig to serve on the council. Mayor Billis advised yes. Mr. Sanderson asked Mayor Billis why he would not answer him. Mayor Billis advised Councilperson Mehig was asked to fill the positions that Ms. Bendall had served on at a public meeting. Mr. Sanderson asked when. Mayor Billis advised Mr. Sanderson that he could read the council minutes. Mr. Sanderson stated he wanted to know why a councilperson did not question Councilperson Mehig to find out if he had any ability to be on that job. Mr. Sanderson further stated when he applied for the council position the same councilperson questioned him about his education and this councilperson was the deciding vote. Mayor Billis stated he thought he answered Mr. Sanderson's question, but he would ask Councilperson Bayless if he would like to respond. Councilperson Bayless stated he would make one short statement. As the mayor stated, the mayor makes the appointment to the labor negotiating team and council approves the appointment. Councilperson Bayless further stated he took his recommendation at face value and voted along with the rest of the council to approve the appointment because he was confident that Councilperson Mehig would do a good job. He also stated he did not feel it was necessary to ask Councilperson Mehig about his qualifications because they were reviewed before. Councilperson Bayless advised when the council appointment was made he weighed both applications and thought he made an intelligent decision. He further advised he was not saying the Mr. Sanderson could not have done the job, but he felt one person was more qualified based on the education. When there are two candidates, someone has to be selected. Mr. Sanderson stated he did not understand how the appointment was made. He asked Mayor Billis if he promised Councilperson Mehig the job. Councilperson Mehig advised when he spoke with council about the different boards and commissions he would be appointed to, he told council that one of the areas he felt more comfortable with was in labor negotiations because he has done that in the past. Mr. Sanderson stated that was all he was asking. He asked Councilperson Mehig if he put that information on his application. Councilperson Mehig advised no.

Bob Gilman, 597 Crestview Drive, stated he has been to several council meetings where the ambulance situation was discussed. The ambulance board has stated that \$20 to \$25 per household was needed. Mr. Gilman suggested coming up with a solid number to take to the municipalities to find out whether or not they would accept that number. Councilperson Ockerman stated the intent of meeting with the different municipalities is to come up with a number that everyone can agree to.

Sam Burwell, 314 W. Mack Street, asked where the extra revenue would come from if the ambulance service has its own advanced life support. It was his understanding that if the ambulance service has its own advanced life support unit it would be much easier to collect from Medicare. He further stated it appears Medicare does not want to pay Corunna ambulance because the ambulance service does not have advanced life support. When the ambulance bills Medicare for advanced life support services, someone in Washington, D.C. gets confused because they know Corunna ambulance does not have advanced life support. Mr. Burwell asked if this was correct. Councilperson Bayless advised yes. He further advised he believes the ambulance service will be able to collect the advanced life support fee from Medicare, but he cannot guarantee anything. He also advised if the ambulance service bills Medicare and they reject it then he cannot control that. Mr. Burwell asked if Lansing-Mason has the same problem when they bill Medicare for advanced life support services. Councilperson Bayless advised Lansing-Mason seems to be able to bill electronically and get paid within 14 days. He further advised no one at Medicare could explain why the payments are being rejected or when the system will get fixed. Councilperson Ockerman stated he was concerned with adding \$90,000 worth of expenses and not being able to collect from Medicare. Mr. Burwell stated if the Corunna ambulance gets its own advanced life support unit and it helps with the Medicare billing then this would be something to look at. Councilperson Bayless stated that was only one aspect. Councilperson Ockerman stated the advanced life support unit would have to pay for itself. Councilperson Bayless stated if the ambulance service gets its own advanced life support unit the money received from insurance companies for services would stay at the Corunna ambulance and would not be paid to Lansing-Mason. He further stated there could be additional revenues, and he would look at the situation again to find an answer.

Don Runyon, 563 Cary Street, asked why the ambulance service would be billed for the two runs that were made in town instead of billing the people who were transported. Councilperson Bayless advised the transporting agency does the billing. Mr. Runyon advised the police chief stated that Owosso transported the people and Corunna ambulance would get billed. Councilperson Bayless advised Owosso would bill the patient's insurance for the ambulance run. Mr. Runyon advised he must have misunderstood what was said earlier. He asked why Corunna ambulance needed an advanced life support echo unit if Corunna ambulance has its own advanced life support vehicle. Councilperson Bayless advised there were two ways to do advanced life support. There can be an advanced life support ambulance or an advanced life support echo unit, which is a following vehicle. He further advised if an ambulance service has an advanced life support ambulance then that ambulance has to be the first one to go on the run, which takes the ambulance out of service for another call that might come in, but an echo unit could go on a call and if advanced life support was not needed then they would be free to go on another call. He also advised it is less expensive to operate an echo unit than an ambulance. Mr. Runyon stated the echo unit cannot haul anybody. Councilperson Bayless advised not all of the cases the ambulance is dispatched to are transporting cases. Mr. Runyon stated it sounded like the ambulance board wanted its employees to be advanced life support trained so no matter who wins there would be advanced life support service available. Councilperson Bayless advised no, the ambulance service would still have medical first responders and emergency medical technicians in the ambulance plus a paramedic in the echo unit. Mr. Runyon stated at the last meeting, the people were told there was going to be advanced life support.

Councilperson Bayless advised the Corunna ambulance would provide a full range of services to the community in addition to what is provided now. Mr. Runyon asked why Pleasant View could not have their own ambulance to transport their own people to the hospital. Councilperson Bayless advised Pleasant View is not in that business.

Bob Gilman, 597 Crestview Drive, asked if there had been any meetings with the downtown business people about the streetscape project and how the project will affect their businesses. Councilperson Ockerman advised yes, there have been many, many, many meetings. Mr. Gilman advised he has talked to a few of the business owners last week, and they stated they do not know what is going to happen. Councilperson Ockerman stated that was pretty unfair. Councilperson Dumond stated the business owners are all members of the downtown development authority.

Janet Washburn advised council she has hired a little league director and reported that all of the baseball/softball registrations have been delivered to the schools. She further advised most of the equipment is intact and looks good. Mayor Billis asked who was hired to run the little league. Ms. Washburn advised Luke Kurrle. Mayor Billis asked if Mr. Kurrle was a college kid. Ms. Washburn advised yes.

Judy Horton asked council if anybody received any bad comments about the Easter egg hunt and if council had seen the front page of the Argus Press. Mayor Billis advised the 0-3 age group had the most people there, and the park was very crowded with all of the people who came to participate. He further advised there was mother, who was handicapped, that wanted her 12 year old to participate in the 0-3 age group in order to get eggs for a six month old. There was another mother who was upset that her daughters were pushed out of the way by the 12 year old and this mother did not think it was fair. Ms. Horton advised there would be something done about that next year. Councilperson Mehig stated the young lady who dressed up as the Easter bunny was fantastic. She had a high energy level and made her way around the entire park. Ms. Horton advised the young lady would be back next year. Mayor Billis stated the Easter egg hunt was a great event.

ADJOURN: Runyan moved to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Mehig, Ockerman, Dumond.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED Time was 10:00 p.m.

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DR. JAMES BILLIS, MAYOR

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YVONNE F. LONG, CITY CLERK