

CITY OF VERGAS
COUNCIL MINUTES
CDH-Vergas Fire Hall Meeting Room
Wednesday, February 15, 2023

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:30 pm, on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at the CDH-Vergas Fire Hall for a hybrid regular council meeting with the following members present: Mayor Julie Bruhn, Council Members: Bruce Albright, Paul Pinke, Dean Haarstick and Natalie Fischer. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers, Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane, Liquor Store Manager Kyle Theisen and Sherri Hanson.

Call to Order

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the meeting to order.

Citizens' Concerns

None.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to approve the agenda with the following addition: city correspondence. Motion passed unanimously.

City Correspondence

Bruhn has sent 5 thank you notes out. Event center: Paul and Brenda Dellaneva, gun donation for event center kitchen fundraiser; Vergas Lions and Zumba, cleaning out event center for floor upgrade; Bryan and Vanessa Perry, for purse bingo fundraiser at the Event Center. Park: Vergas Community Club for picnic tables.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to approve the following consent agenda:

1. Council Minutes of the January 10, 2023
2. Bills paid between Council meetings and Council bills totaling \$98,666.22
3. Liquor Store bills for January 2023 totaling \$48,897.89.
4. 2023 Investment Schedule/Bond Schedule
5. General Fund Special Revenue Money Market Account
6. 2023 Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances
7. American Rescue Plan Funding 2021-2026
8. Committee Reports -requiring no Council Action
 - a. Heartland and Heart of Lakes Trail Plan
 - b. Economic Development Authority/Housing Redevelopment Authority
 - c. CDH-Vergas Fire Annual Meeting

Motion passed unanimously.

Council discussed the late water/sewer listing and questioned large bill at 130 E Elm St. They had large water usage last month. DuFrane reread meter and spoke with renter regarding leak. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to have Lammers write property owner and renter a letter regarding high usage and bill. Motion passed unanimously.

Vergas Community Club

Event June 3, 2023

Sherri Hanson, President of the Vergas Community Club presented the following request regarding Shops and Hops event on June 3, 2023.

Closure of Main Street (Billy's to Vergas State Bank) from Noon -6 pm.

One day liquor license for the craft beer breweries.

What is required of the City workers for this event?

Bring 10 picnic tables to be accessible for the event on Main Street.

Bring garbage cans to be accessible for the event on Main Street.

Bring barricades to be accessible for the event on Main Street.

Looking for the possibility of being flexible as the event comes closer as this is a new event, and there may be some things that might come up which we are not aware of. We plan for volunteers to be available.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the event contingent on County approval to close Main Street and waving the liquor license fee for the event. Motion passed unanimously.

Picnic Tables

The Vergas Community Club is asking for assistance in hauling 5 picnic tables that were funded and constructed by volunteers of the club. These will need to be hauled from a residence on Sybil Lake to the City garage. Motion by Fischer, seconded by

Pinke for city employees to help move picnic tables to the city shop. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Parks

Sherri Hanson reviewed park activities.

ACS Agreement-East Otter Tail Soil and Water has agreed to fund and help with planting of plants in the Long Lake Park. Motion by Albright, seconded by Fischer to have Lammers coordinate with East Otter Tail Soil and Water for the ACS agreement for a cost of \$1,010.13. Motion passed unanimously.

Facility Agreement-Frazee-Vergas School District would like to use the Vergas ballfield for summer rec and little league activities. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve Lammers to sign the facility agreement with the Frazee-Vergas School District. Motion passed unanimously.

Water Ski Group-Park Advisory Board requested the water ski team be able to install a dock off of City beach area, hold practice twice a week and perform once a month during the summer months. They would place the dock out of the swimming beach area and would need to do some brush clearing. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the water ski team the use of the city park for a term of one year. Motion passed unanimously.

Swimming Lessons- Frazee-Vergas school district has asked the City to participate in swimming lessons with them again this year. Cost to City is the Red Cross fee and Hanson will ask Vergas Community Club and the Vergas Lion's to each pay for ½ of the fee again as they did last year. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to hold swimming lessons with Frazee-Vergas school district again this year. Motion passed unanimously.

West Central Initiative(WCI)- WCI has given apple trees to the City of Vergas through the park board. Questioned if they could ask DuFrane to plant and where the Council would like them planted. Lammers will have a resolution ready for next month's meeting.

Park Member-Sydney Glawe has resigned her position on the park advisory board. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Haarstick to accept the resignation and have Lammers advertise for a replacement member with the Council reviewing applications at the March 14, 2023 Council meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Event Center

Lammers reviewed Event Center meeting of February 1 and February 6, 2023 meeting (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to grant the Vergas Lions use of the Vergas Event Center on March 11, 2023 for free. Motion passed unanimously. Discussed handicapped parking at the event center. The sign we currently have is to let people know there is a handicapped entrance – does not mean parking. The pavement is painted for handicapped parking, but the sign will not be installed by maintenance employees until spring.

Personnel

Bruhn reviewed personnel meeting of January 25 and February 8, 2023 meeting (minutes available at the Vergas City Office).

Accident/Incident Report-Discussed form and made the change to say action response, this form is for both Council and staff to fill out for the prevention and/or action of future issues. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to accept the accident/incident form with changes mentioned and for Lammers to provide reports to committee the report is pertaining to. Motion passed unanimously.

Time Clocks-Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to purchase 2 time clocks for city employees. Motion passed unanimously.

Drug Alcohol Policy-Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the drug and alcohol policy provided. Motion passed unanimously.

Hiring Policy-Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the hiring policy. Motion passed unanimously.

COLA-Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the 2023 cola to 3% retroactive to January 1, 2023.

Personnel Policy-Discussed the holiday of Juneteenth, on February 3, 2023 a bill established Juneteenth as a state-recognized holiday effective in effect on August 1, 2023. State office will be closed for Juneteenth this year as they had previously collectively bargained for the holiday. City may elect to recognize holiday in 2023 if they choose. Holidays require that no public business be conducted on this day. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the personnel policy with the change under holidays to reflect in effect on 8-1-2023. Motion passed unanimously.

Planning Commission

Albright reviewed planning commission meeting of January 23, 2023 meeting (minutes available at the Vergas City Office).

Ordinance- Dogs and Cats-Motion by Fischer, seconded by Pinke to approve ordinance 91.2 Cats and Dogs requiring cats to be licensed if not on owners' property. Motion passed unanimously.

Permit Inspector-Construction Permits have not been reviewed after they are issued, and the city is having difficulty closing permits. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to appoint Neil Wothe a volunteer permit inspector. Motion passed unanimously.

Liquor Store/Municipal Building/Licenses

Kyle Theisen, Liquor Store Manager requested Council to approve proposal from Widseth regarding remodeling the current liquor store building. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve Widseth Proposal for \$4,320.00 to provide plans to remodel liquor store. Motion passed unanimously.

Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste

Albright reviewed planning commission meeting of February 9, 2023 meeting (minutes available at the Vergas City Office).

Albright reviewed need for storm sewer map. Lammers has spoken with Widseth, and they need to know if the City would like

them to survey the storm drains and provide condition of structures for a cost of \$3,500 a day or have DuFrane mark up a map of the drains and proceed with conditions only when a need arises. The layers will then be added to the GIS map. DuFrane will work with Greene to identify and map storm drains for the next streets/sidewalks/yard waste meeting. Discussed the County property the city will accept in March. Haarstick questioned parking study and tearing down the building. Albright stated the city does not need a place to store more junk, but we need parking. Fischer also stated how important parking is needed in Vergas. DuFrane stated there is a lot of parking that is not being used behind businesses and the street department will soon be asking for a larger building. Haarstick stated there are new doors and a roof on this building and we need to look at what it will cost to build a building. Lammers stated she would email Council members an inspection report of the building.

Staff Reports

Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent

No report was provided to Council prior to meeting. DuFrane stated the sewer lift station froze up on Scharf Avenue and Albright questioned the cost to correct this problem. DuFrane stated he has replaced the heater and the only way to correct would be to replace the pump which would be very expensive.

DuFrane requested clarification regarding being on-call. Personnel Committee has stated employees do not need to answer the phone when they are not working, and he would like to know how the Council feels regarding being on-call. DuFrane stated many communities pay their public works staff to be on-call. Haarstick reviewed a water break incident that happened a few years ago at 3 am and how Mike came to Vergas and repaired as soon as he called him. DuFrane stated employees need to be appreciated.

Bid for Snow Removal

Ness Construction of the Lakes LLC provided the only bid for snow removal on a on-call basis. The city employees will let Mayor, or if not available, Acting Mayor know when they are calling Ness Construction for extra help with the removal of snow. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to contract with Ness Construction for back up snow removal when needed. Voting Yes: Albright, Pinke and Fischer. Voting No: Haarstick. Motion carried.

Information & Announcements

Trainings:

- a. MN Rural Water Conference – March 7-9, 2023 (DuFrane) St Cloud
- b. MN Clerks and Finance Officers – March 21 -24, 2023 (Lammers) St Cloud
- c. LMC, Loss Control Workshop - March 29, 2023 Alexandria (DuFrane, Engebretson, Lammers)
- d. IIMC Conference - May 14-17, 2023 (Lammers) Minneapolis
- e. Clerks Advanced Academy- (Lammers)Waite Park
- f. League of MN Cities Annual Conference (Mayor, Council & Lammers)
- g. Municipal Beverage Association, April 29-May 2, 2023 (MMBA) (Theisen) Arrowwood

Events:

- a. Local Board of Review, April 5, 2023 Vergas Event Center Council Chambers, 1:00 pm (Mayor, Council and Lammers)
- b. Household Hazardous Waste Day, Thursday, June 29, 2023 10:00 - 2:00 volunteers needed

Adjournment

The business for which the meeting was called having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer
Julie Lammers, CMC