

Public Comments September 27, 2023

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:00 pm, on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at the Vergas Event Center for a public comment session with the following members present: Mayor Julie Bruhn, Council Members: Bruce Albright, Dean Haarstick, Paul Pinke and Natalie Fischer. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers, Ronola Richards, Carol Albright, Jill Hoffman, Nicole Weldon, Felicia Singer, Kathy Wonters, Kevin Zitzow, John Benney, Vanessa Perry, Tony Boyd, Maria Shomento, Meryl Kvam, Rebecca Hasse, Ron Franklin and JoAnne Knuttila.

Julie Lammers presented a power point on the City of Vergas purchase of 123 & 131 E Main Street.
After presentation the following comments made by public:

What are the estimates for adding on to/remodeling the VEC? Estimated 8 years ago.

What is the SQ footage of the new building?

Grow the VEC, more space, more marketable.

Buying a new building for city employees. The City Office open more hours to be conducive to the residents' work schedules.

Estimate for remodel of VEC in the past. Revisit past data & compare current costs.

What is the SQ footage of the new building?

Pricing for installing an elevator to utilize the upstairs area.

For \$500 /month, all of the offices & the council chambers could be on the upper level of the municipal building. 1/3 of the downtown main street block will be owned by the City.

Future assessments - future costs.

A new retailer is concerned about retail space being used for city office space instead.

Why were fees spent prior to the meeting?

Was the special council meeting an open or closed meeting? Open. Meeting closed for the duration of discussion of finances.
Posted as required in 3 places around town prior.

Was something sent out to notify the residents?

Is there a policy in place for spending/cap for spending before it goes out to the city residents to vote?

The view of downtown from upstairs in the Municipal Bldg. could be beneficial.

Cameras everywhere.

Skewed data offered. Why weren't all the committee members given a list of pro's and con's/ info provided to consider a well thought out outcome.

Concern with making everything compliant - PO doors need to be replaced as they are too heavy. Buttons installed to be easily opened. Currently needs an extensive amount of force to open doors. Why didn't prior remodels include a LS ramp? Handicap access @ Municipal Bldg. Why are City offices open/closed as they are?

Why isn't the City Office open @ 8am when customers are able to come in before work. The City Maintenance Staff could supply support for the City office because they sit around in their trucks. Not that much grass to mow.

The City is not ready for expansion.

Zoom unavailable for this meeting. Communication should have been sent out - Zoom id should not have been available.

Someone stated he does it (Zoom) every day & could facilitate it on his phone. He could get his camera & USB.

Who authorized the purchase?

Not everyone had all the information.

Who is on the municipal building committee?

Purchase price? Contractual agreement? Safety guard in place for residents before decisions are made.

Were notices sent to inform?

“Water Issue” was mentioned (uncertain what that was referring to).

Core values. Caring, common courtesy.

Better notification for all issues - go door to door with notes left at each residence. Volunteers would gladly help with this if it didn't conflict with personal responsibilities.

Posted on the LS electronic sign because it's easier to read.

Do we need to sign up to get notified?

Notes on doors for dogs & cats but not for the water.

I didn't get a note about the cat.

Do more than what you HAVE to do. Bare minimum info.

Post big sign in the LS.

10 years ago it was a "community". Now it is 2 communities - The City Office & The community.

Nuisance letters for campers & mowing, nothing said to the railroad track blowing their horn.

Where do we go from here? Go forward from here?

Public not informed. Informed consent.

What are the options available after further council discussion?

Prior councils have involved city resident input before spending large amounts of money.

Did you HAVE to buy it?

Was there another buyer? Would they benefit the community? Not high bidder, city over bid. (?)

Recorded by Ronola Richards