

**MINUTES OF THE
VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL**
March 25, 2024

Council President Thad Eikenbary called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Pastor Missy Mullenhour gave the invocation.

On call of the roll: Ringwald, Kallas, Bowers, Agler, Dettrow, Moore and Marshall were present.

Bowers made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: The Mayor brought up the topic of recreational marijuana dispensaries and reminded council that when medical marijuana became legal in 2016 the city passed a law prohibiting dispensaries and prohibiting the consumption of marijuana at any of the city properties, including parks. It was suggested council members take some time to consider prohibiting dispensaries and it will be discussed further during the April 22 meeting.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Fleming thanked Sgt. Kurt Conn for his 32 years of service with the Van Wert Police Department. Fleming also requested that an ordinance be passed amending the previous ordinance which left out paying retired officers for their earned sick time.

The Civil Service Committee is reviewing to reduce the age to take the Civil Service Exam from 21 years to 20 years old and the upper age to 42 years old. If approved by the Committee, it will be brought before council for approval.

Fleming also asked for an ordinance to be passed for a final plat for Edgewood Place Subdivision.

Fleming also requested an ordinance raising the water tap fees from \$800 for a ¾ inch line to \$1900 and from \$1200 for a 1" line to \$2350 to help pay for the actual cost of tapping into the city water line.

AUDITOR: There is one invoice that needs approval on the Then and Now: Stoops Western Star of Ohio (Street Department - 2025 Western Star Truck) in the amount of \$138,840.00.

Blackmore reminded all council members that Sunshine Law training is required.

LAW DIRECTOR: The Law Director indicated he is still working on the de-annexation of the property owned by Dasher and hopes to have it resolved in the near future.

There have been complaints for a home located in the 200 block of North Chestnut regarding illegal activities and his office is in contact with the owner of the property.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:

President Eikenbary reminded the council of the public hearing on zoning scheduled for April 1st at 6:15 followed immediately by a meeting on the topic of a swimming pool.

It was unanimously voted that due to the solar eclipse on April 8th that the regular scheduled City Council meeting will be moved to April 10th at 6:30.

Rick McCoy, Director of Van Wert County EMA was present to discuss tornado watch and warnings and the importance of signing up for Nixle Alerts where residents can receive text messages warning of extreme weather. He also discussed when tornado sirens are set off and indicated the sirens are designed to warn people who are outside that they should seek shelter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Ringwald made a motion to approve the Then and Now. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion for an ordinance to be prepared to amend water tap fees. Moore seconded; all concurred.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: No report

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: Bowers made a motion to have an ordinance prepared for the plat approval for Edgewood Place Subdivision and be prepared as an emergency. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT: Agler asked the Law Director regarding the house on the corner of First and Washington that had a fire over two years and is just sitting there. The Law Director will look into it.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Dettrow asked the Law Director to clarify the legality of marijuana in public parks. The Law Director indicated that treating marijuana in a park would be the same as treating alcohol in a park. It is city property and council can regulate it.

Agler made a motion to have an ordinance prepared to ban marijuana on all city property. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY: Moore asked the Law Director for an update on blighted properties and was told that one of the cases in the court has not filed an answer and he can file a default motion. The other property in the court system tried to file an answer without an attorney which was denied. They were given additional time to file an answer.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Marshall indicated he has been in discussions with Brent Stevens, Director of Economic and Development and there is a continuation of good things being done and thanked Mr. Stevens for his hard work.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC:

Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler asked why there are trailers being parked on the streets and sitting there for weeks with nothing being done. He was advised to call the Police Department.

Joe Jared, 113 West Main, asked if the ordinance being amended for police retirement funds would be retroactive. It was discussed that it would be effective January 1, 2024.

Andrew Davis, 1061 Linden Drive, discussed the steps being taken at the airport to extend the runway.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Kallas made a motion for an ordinance to be prepared to eliminate council's seven three-member committees and replace them with special committees on an as-needed basis and dissolving those special committees once the task at hand was complete. Agler seconded. Ringwald, Kallas, Agler, Dettrow and Marshall voted yes. Bowers and Moore voted no.

NEW BUSINESS: None

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Ringwald made a motion to prepare ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015. Moore seconded; All concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015. Agler seconded; All concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to suspend statutory rules for ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015; Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to pass as an emergency ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 23-02-010 BY AMENDING THE SALARY ORDINANCE SAFETY DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES PROVIDING FOR THE SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, NON-BARGAINING UNIT MEMBERS OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT, ESTABLISHING JOB CLASSIFICATIONS, SALARY RANGES AND LIMITATIONS, AUTHORIZING SPECIFIC NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, PROVIDING IMMUNIZATION AGAINST COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, AND OTHER BENEFITS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Moore seconded; all concurred. Ordinance Passed.


Ringwald made a motion to prepare an amendment to ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015 to be effective as of 1/1/2024. Agler seconded; All concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce the amended ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015. Agler seconded; All concurred.

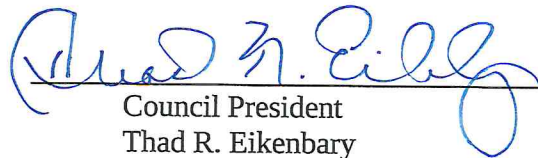
Ringwald made a motion to suspend statutory rules for the amended ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015; Moore seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to pass as an emergency the amended ORDINANCE NUMBER 24-03-015; AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 23-02-010 BY AMENDING THE SALARY ORDINANCE SAFETY DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES PROVIDING FOR THE SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, NON-BARGAINING UNIT MEMBERS OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT, ESTABLISHING JOB CLASSIFICATIONS, SALARY RANGES AND LIMITATIONS, AUTHORIZING SPECIFIC NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, PROVIDING IMMUNIZATION AGAINST COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, AND OTHER BENEFITS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Agler seconded; all concurred. Ordinance Passed.

Bowers made a motion to adjourn at 8:07 p.m. Agler seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Lisa K. Hartsock



Council President
Thad R. Eikenbary

April 10, 2024
DATE