

**MINUTES OF THE
VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL**
November 13, 2024

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

Paul Hoverman gave the invocation.

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

Agler made a motion to dismiss Bowers. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Dettrow made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Public meeting minutes from the October 28th meeting. Ringwald seconded; all concurred.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: No report.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Mr. Fleming reported on Leeson Ave. stating he was rained out for tomorrow, but most residents will be able to use their driveways by Friday. Fleming is hoping the path/sidewalks will be done by December 6th. Safety signs (like Stop and railroad signs) will be going up Monday.

EPA is requiring the city to identify what the material is made of in the service line; mainly to identify lead. This goes for the servicing side (city side of the meter) and the homeowners side. A list of about 4700 was narrowed down to about 1900 based on age/record. 120 Water out of Indianapolis is helping to help map out the type of pipe is running inside the house based on address. Today, all plastic is used. Copper, galvanized steel and lead have both been used in the past. Outdoor does not necessarily indicate what is inside the home. A letter will be mailed to the remaining 1900 residents and is asking residents to assess the interiors of their homes while the city will use 2025 to assess the exterior where they can. The safety service director describes ways to identify the material of the lines inside the home but instructions can also be found by following a link to a presentation that is in the letter. To inform the city of their findings, residents can report their results to the city water department.

Agler asked if streetlights on Leeson could be turned on; he has received complaints that they were not working. Fleming will assess.

AUDITOR: Not present.

LAW DIRECTOR: No report.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:

Joe Jared, 113 W. Main St., spoke on fluoridation at the meeting. There was a ruling against fluoridation; Jared wants the city to consider this ruling as well. Jared gave a scientific report on how fluoride affects the body. Jared reports Fluoride effectively reduces cognitive abilities through scientific research. Jared is suggesting we get ahead of a potential presidential executive order to remove fluoridation from the waters.

Mitch Price, Director of Main Street Van Wert was present tonight and gave an overview of Historic Main Street Van Wert and some of the events they hold for our community and a few points on how money is generated or MSVW. Two new business have been brought to the community last year, Winan's who was recently purchased by Sarah Sheets and Maeve Salon. Price mentioned "Giving Tuesday" that is coming in which the Foundation will match donations dollar for dollar up to \$10,000.00. MSVW is a part of Heritage Ohio in which Price attends annual trainings to keep Van Wert in this program that tremendously helps the downtown. Leadership in the city was touched on and Price commended leadership and volunteerism in the community. Price has formally requested \$27,000.00 from the city to fund Main Street. Last years request was \$30,000.00 for reference. 2025 will be a key year for MSVW including a few new restaurants downtown and continuing to develop the downtown area. Joe Jared complimented MSVW on communication with construction and keeping noise levels respectful considering certain times of day. Brent Stevens added the Van Wert has become a "model" city for like communities.

Fred Fisher from the Airport Authority presented all new LED lights will be updated down the new runway has been contracted out. Last Thursday the Airport broke ground on the extension of the runway to be over 5,000 feet (1,400 feet will be new/added) which will allow for commercial size jets to land at the airport safely. Underground work will be performed this fall and the rest of the work is planned for the spring with a goal of landing commercial jets by June of 2025. A funding request of \$40,000.00 was presented to council tonight. The airport provided council, via email, with a 2024/2025 budget. Kallas addressed the fact that the 2024 city budget does not have a line item for the airport even though the city passed a request for funding of \$40,000.00. This line item was missed and the airport has not yet received funds due to this error. The Airport Authority is working directly with the city auditor to get this corrected; council should expect a supplemental appropriation before year end to fix this error.

Judge Jill T. Worthington, Clerk of Courts, was here to represent the municipal court and speak on the 5% increased salary request for the year 2025. \$334k for employee salaries is being requested for the year 2025; 9 Full Time and 2 Part Time Employees work at the municipal court. Average salary for deputy clerks and probation officers is \$42,6xx. For city employees, non union/non elected, the average salary is \$45,2xx. Worthington states she is simply trying to retain her staff by staying competitive; certain limitations apply working in public service where the municipal court cannot give bonuses, extra vacation, etc. Worthington compares VW City Municipal Court to Celina Municipal Court mentioning that they received a 7% increase in October. Their Clerk makes approximately \$36 an hour where Van Wert's makes \$27/hour. Deputy Clerks in Celina range from \$21.58 to \$25.81 where Van Wert's makes \$19/hour. Probation officers average \$28.82/hour where Van Wert employees range from \$21 to \$23 per hour. In addition, Worthington adds that they are requesting less money this year than they did last year because they are down an entire full time position. Moore questioned if there would be

intentions to fill this position at any point or any others; Worthington stated since Covid, case load has been down and cases are being managed with current staff.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: No report.

The mayor reviewed the budget worksheet provided to council in the city auditor's absence to show some details on over funding from hotel/motel tax. Markward explains that with this tax there has been carryover; all the recent funding requests from organizations in the community would be covered by this carryover alone should the funds be needed for other purposes.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: No report.

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: Not present.

PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT: No report.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Dettrow shares that the Christmas light display in Fountain Park is "under construction". It will open the Wednesday before Thanksgiving at 6:00 p.m., weather permitting, will run through the Christmas season. He reminds the public to be respectful of the area.

Parks Department will be holding an open forum on December 3, 2024 at 6:00 pm in the council chambers to discuss pickleball in Van Wert. There have been questions on changes or suggestions for changing this in the parks. If the public would like to give input, Parks & Recreation asks you to attend.

Finally, Dettrow announces his resignation of second ward councilman effective Friday, November 22, 2024 making tonight's meeting his last meeting. His family purchased a home that moves him out of second ward. Kallas asks if it is possible to move an "at-large" position to the second ward (since one of our "at-large" lives in second ward). The Law Director and Mayor confirm this is allowed. Law Director further confirms the rules which allows council to appoint whoever they so choose to fulfill the remainder of the term. Kallas makes a suggestion to appoint Judy Bowers, at-large councilman, to the second ward spot. She would then resign her at-large councilman position to which council could then appoint Mr. Dettrow to as an at-large council member. Dettrow confirmed he is interested in doing so.

HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY: No report.

Agler addressed a property on the northeast corner of Chestnut and Central Ave. He would like to hold a council of the whole meeting for 6:00 pm on November 25 for the purpose of discussing a blighted property that has been in and out of the court system for years. Agler is suggesting we only ever approach the home owner instead of the renter. There are frustrations that there has never been a solution.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: No report.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC: The mayor mentioned an email from a citizen interested in the group that is organizing the initiation of a public pool. He is in need of a contact to be involved.

Kallas announced the annual Goedde Thanksgiving Lunch on November 21st that is open to the public set up by the students.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Two legislative requests for liquor licenses, one for a business DBA Lucky Spice n' Rice and the other known as Double A's Dining. Mr. Eikenbary offered time for any rejections; there were none.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Ringwald made a motion to withdraw ORDINANCE Number: 24-09-051. A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE GRANTING OF A TAX INCREMENT FINANCING EXEMPTION AND COMPENSATION AGREEMENT. Kallas seconded; All concurred.

Second Reading Advisory for ORDINANCE Number: 24-10-060; AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES FOR THE CITY OF VAN WERT, OHIO, FROM JANUARY 1, 2025 TO DECEMBER 31, 2025, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. All concurred.

Second Reading Advisory for ORDINANCE Number: 24-10-061; AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 24-01-002 PROVIDING FOR THE SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE SERVICE DEPARTMENT, AUDITOR'S OFFICE, INCOME TAX AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT, ESTABLISHING JOB CLASSIFICATIONS, SALARY RANGES AND LIMITATIONS, AUTHORIZING SPECIFIC NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, ALLOWANCES, IMMUNIZATION AGAINST COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, AND OTHER BENEFITS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. All concurred.

Second Reading Advisory for ORDINANCE Number: 24-10-062; AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT SYSTEM FOR THE VAN WERT MUNICIPAL COURT, ESTABLISHING JOB CLASSIFICATIONS, SALARY RANGES AND LIMITATIONS, AUTHORIZING SPECIFIC NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, PROVIDING FOR SICK LEAVE, VACATION SCHEDULE, ALLOWANCES, IMMUNIZATION AGAINST COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, AND OTHER BENEFITS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. All concurred.

Second Reading Advisory for ORDINANCE Number: 24-10-063; AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 22-12-061 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. All concurred.

Marshall made a motion to have the law director prepare, as an emergency, a resolution approving the petition for special assessments for special energy improvement projects in the city of Van Wert. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to introduce Resolution Number: 24-11-065. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to suspend statutory rules. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to pass on it's first and final reading, Resolution Number: 24-11-065; A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PETITION FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR SPECIAL ENERGY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UNDER OHIO REVISED CODE CHAPTER 1710 AND APPROVING THE NECESSITY OF ACQUIRING, INSTALLING, EQUIPPING, AND IMPROVING CERTAIN PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CITY OF VAN WERT, OHIO IN COOPERATION WITH THE VAN WERT AREA ENERGY SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Kallas seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Marshall made a motion to have the law director prepare, as an emergency, an ordinance determining to proceed with the acquisition, installation, equipment and improvements in the city of Van Wert. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 24-11-066. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to suspend statutory rules. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to pass on it's first and final reading, ORDINANCE Number: 24-11-066; AN ORDINANCE DETERMINING TO PROCEED WITH THE ACQUISITION, INSTALLATION, EQUIPMENT, AND IMPROVEMENT OF CERTAIN PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CITY OF VAN WERT, OHIO IN COOPERATION WITH THE VAN WERT AREA ENERGY SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Moore seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Marshall made a motion to have the law director prepare, as an emergency, an ordinance levying special assessments for the purpose of special improvements in the city of Van Wert. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 24-11-067. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to suspend statutory rules. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to pass on it's first and final reading, ORDINANCE Number: 24-11-067; AN ORDINANCE LEVYING SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING, INSTALLING, EQUIPPING, AND IMPROVING CERTAIN PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CITY OF VAN WERT, OHIO IN


COOPERATION WITH THE VAN WERT AREA ENERGY SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT; AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AND A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT AGREEMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Moore seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Dettrow made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 24-11-068. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

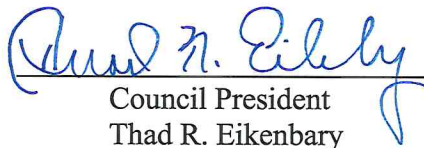
First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 24-11-068. All concurred.

Mr. Eikenbary reminded council and the public of the council of the whole meeting scheduled for 6:00 on November 25th for the purpose of a blighted property.

Agler made a motion to adjourn at 7:39 p.m. Moore seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



Council President
Thad R. Eikenbary

November 25, 2024
DATE