

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

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

President Eikenbary gave the invocation.

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

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

Agler made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Public meeting minutes from the November 13th meeting. Ringwald seconded; all concurred.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: The mayor shared that the Brumback Library has a holiday open house again this year similar to last year. During the open house, on December 5th, 6-8 pm there is an opportunity to vote on the “ugliest” Christmas sweater. There are several on display, and the mayor agreed to wear the most voted ugly Christmas sweater to the next council meeting on December 9th.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: The city bills the EMS Department. With that, the city has to set rates to stay competitive and keep pace with Medicare. Fleming gave several examples of increasing rates including life support and mileage. The city “soft bills” the residents meaning, it will still be filed through insurance. Fleming will be looking for legislation to be passed on this.

Mr. Fleming reported on Leeson Ave. stating 75% sidewalks/walkways and driveways are poured and residents are able to use them. Weather is potentially going to limit this for the rest of the year, but something above freezing will make it possible to wrap up this project.

AUDITOR: The city auditor reported October financials.

The auditor spoke about the hotel/motel tax; we received the fourth quarter payment for that. As compared to last year, the city is down 6.8% in the fourth quarter, but we are up for the year.

The auditor emailed out fund details to the council for review and spoke about them at the meeting. These details give items such as actual totals in 2023 and estimated November & December expenses along with projected expenses for 2025. She also emailed out appropriations to the council. We have a 2% increase in the general fund which is great. Blackmore went over details in this appropriation spreadsheet to explain some differences in 2023 to 2024. She added that these numbers are not final.

Finally, the auditor requests the budget ordinance be tabled and not passed tonight so that way the salary ordinances and other numbers can be finalized and avoid an amendment before year end.

Mark Davis questions upcoming legislation on pension for Firefighters. Blackmore stated she does not have this earmarked because she does not have the legislation in front of her or exact numbers to give an estimate. If it is given to her, she will adjust accordingly.

LAW DIRECTOR: No report.

PSA: Liberty Union Road to Wren Landeck Rd. is being heavily patrolled by the State Highway Patrol and the Sheriff's Department due to the uptick of accidents and trucks taking this route that is strictly prohibited to be used as a truck route. Joe Jared questions if it is properly signed which Hatcher confirmed it is.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:

Joe Jared, 113 W. Main St., spoke about countermeasures to flouridation such as Turmeric a common spice. Additionally, vaccinations became a topic of conversation; he brings up high metal toxicity that is in traditional vaccines that he is finding home remedies to treat himself. Jared speaks on countermeasures for mRNA which modifies cells of the body and ultimately, causes blood clotting. Jared offers nanokinesis to anyone who is interested.

Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler, petitions council to consider doing a traffic analysis on Frothingham and Race St. to record speeds he is stating are well over the limit. Davis states a cop is just solving the issue when they are in the area and a speed trailer doesn't record speeds. In a prior meeting, a proposal for a stop sign here was rejected. Fleming agreed to a study after questioned by councilman Kallas.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Ringwald suggested council to go through the budget in detail before passing making a point that some of the larger requests from places such as the Airport Authority and Main Street Van Wert are within the budget and do not get voted on or passed separate from the budget.

Ringwald made a motion to have the law director prepare an ordinance to increase in the billing rates by EMS for the Safety Service Director, as an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: No report.

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: Not present.

PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT: No report.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Not present.

HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY: No report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: No report.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Moore shares with the group, a message from Ms. Bowers, after talking with several citizens who voted her to her at-large position, she is choosing to stay (not resign) her at-large seat. She has recommended David Stinnett to be appointed to the 2nd Ward Councilman position. Law Director Hatcher reminds council that they have 30 days to appoint a person to this position, if they choose not to do so, the mayor has the ability to appoint who he so chooses.

Council decided to do interviews with any citizens potentially interested in the 2nd Ward Councilman Seat. Dependent on the number of citizens interested,

Kirby Kelly, 221 N. Wall St., has a concern on there not being an established procedure when a “mid-term” opening occurs. He advises against “steam rolling” the process and gauging interest in the public before appointing someone as to not upset the public.

The Law Director clarifies we currently follow Ohio Revised Code and the City itself has no procedure in place.

David Stinnett, 610 Ulms Dr., a prior city councilman presented a folder with signatures from the second ward to show their support in Stinnett being appointed as Second Ward Councilman. Stinnett wants the seat to be represented well regardless who is in the seat. Stinnett dealt with health issues which lead to not continuing a prior term. He states he is now healthy and ready to fill the seat if council so chooses.

Joe Jared, 113 W. Main St., stated he would vote for Stinnett again.

Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler., wants clarification on where the public will be able to view details on how to inquire or show interest and how council will advertise this opening to the public.

Mayor Markward offered the public to call in to the Mayor’s office to show interest. Interested parties should: Live in second ward, be a registered voter, and provide name, address and phone number by calling 419-238-0308 or emailing tmiller@vanwert.org

Deadline will be Thursday, December 5th by 4:30 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Ringwald made a motion to table 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. Kallas seconded; All concurred.

Third and Final Reading 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. All concurred. Ordinance Passed.

Third and Final Reading 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. All concurred. Ordinance Passed.

Third and Final Reading 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. All concurred. Ordinance Passed.

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

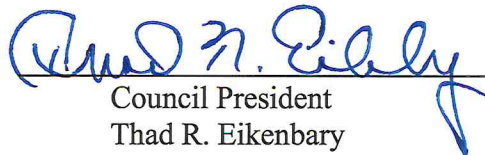
Blackmore asked for clarification for salary purposes, if a second ward councilperson would be appointed, what their start date would be. Hatcher clarified they could start immediately, i.e., if they were appointed on the 9th of December, they could start on the 9th of December.

Mr. Eikenbary reminded council of the regularly scheduled meeting at 6:30 p.m. on December 9, 2024.

Agler made a motion to adjourn at 7:37 p.m. Moore seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



Council President
Thad R. Eikenbary

December 9, 2024
DATE

