

MINUTES OF THE VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL

January 27, 2025

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

Judy Bowers gave the invocation.

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

Moore made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda from the January 27th meeting. Ringwald seconded; all concurred.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC SPEAKERS

Mitch Price, Director of Main Street Van Wert stated VFW approached Main Street on being part of the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA). Price proposed a map that would include VFW, but excluding the sidewalk in front of the YMCA and the Brumback Library although they are not against having the map include it. Price has been in contact with both Mr. Kocab of the YMCA and Ms. Schmidt of The Brumback to see if there were any objections to which there were none at this time. This map is a draft that can be adjusted based on council's feedback. Currently the Wassenburg is the only active seller in the DORA District with a few on the way including R Place, another new restaurant and potentially Truly Divine. Anyone can eat and purchase alcohol from VFW, you do not have to be a member. The goal is to get VFW added by June 6, 2025. Once council makes a motion, it takes the state 60-90 days for the state to officially approve of this. Signs and stickers are already in MSVW's possession, so there would be no additional cost.

Brent Stevens, Director of VWAED is requesting 2 CRA Transfers. The first transfer from VWert 2 (901 Vision St.) to Intraplas Packaging Solution Inc., a company out of Portugal who purchased that property. A second CRA transfer from The Edition to MAC White, LLC at 139 E. Main St. will also need to take place. Additionally, Intraplas will be doing an \$8.9 Million improvement project that will need to be requested as a new CRA request. Stevens also gave an update on what is happening at the Mega Site. 220 acres were sold to a data center; part of this process meant a part of Stripe Rd. was requested to be vacated across US 30 over to the Equine Barn on Stripe Rd. owned by the Marsh Foundation. The commissioners intentionally declined this request after hearing negative feedback from the public and came up with a new solution. It was proposed to vacate Stripe Rd. 1000 feet south of the overpass and Marsh would pay for a road about a half a mile long to connect Stripe to Mendon Rd. including construction and engineering to county road specs; then, the road would be turned over to the county. Jay Fleming mentioned taking Franklin clear through to Stripe as well; all in all, hopefully relieving a lot of traffic congestion from Washington. Melhorn Trucking is set to begin construction near Production drive this coming spring as well as Highway 30 Truck Wash.

Joe Jared inquired on rumors around power and water requirements to run the data center. Stevens confirmed the data center is requesting 500 megawatts of power and 1.7 million gallons

of water. Stevens reminds the public that this water requirement is not a 365 day/year usage. This requirement would be around their peak July/August business time frame to cool equipment.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: The mayor requested Ringwald consider having an ordinance prepared that would allow the city to charge a late fee on bulk water orders and sewage dumping.

A discussion has come to light requiring an executive session for council for the purpose of Purchase and/or Sale of Real Estate. No action will be taken tonight so an adjournment will directly follow.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: The Safety Service Director addressed the E Main Street water project is underway. Main Street traffic will be detoured block by block West Bound as they work their way down in order to leave room for workers.

A sign was posted today as a “reduced speed ahead sign” to give extra warning to driver’s Northbound on Washington about the speed change.

The water rate ordinance needs to be effective as of February 1st to be able be billed on March Billings. An amendment will take place for that tonight.

AUDITOR: The city auditor reported a Then & Now that will need passed from the Water Treatment Plant in the amount of \$5200 paid to the Environmental Protection Agency for their 2024 Annual Discharge Fee.

All financial documentation has been officially sent to our private auditor for final approval before being sent to the state and 2024 will be closed.

LAW DIRECTOR: Hatcher reported another round of blighted property court appearances will occur in March along with a new property that has been added. Municipal court has had several citations filed over the Bonnewitz closure. Most of those have since made their way through the system.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:

Joe Jared, 113 W. Main St., shared info on half of Florida who no longer flouridates and encourages us to do the same. Additionally he expresses concerns over the amount of water the upcoming data center will demand and how much Van Wert City is capable of providing. Fleming answered with a few solutions. Lastly, Jared comments on the seriousness of a potential AI Company in the Data Center.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Ringwald made a motion to approve a Then & Now to Environmental Protection Agency for 2024 Annual Discharge Fee in the amount of \$5,200. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Second, Ringwald made a motion for the law director to prepare an ordinance that would allow the city to charge late fees on bulk water and sewer bills. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Lastly, over the review of salaries for council, Ringwald has requested interest in holding an executive session or Council of the Whole at the February 10th meeting to discuss. After council discussed, an executive session for the purpose of Council Member salaries will take place at the end of the next council meeting.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Kallas made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number 25-01-004. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Kallas asked opinions on Price's proposal to the DORA map. With a general consensus from council to move forward, Price stated he will make some tweaks to the map and present it to council. Kallas made a motion for the law director to prepare an ordinance that would extend the DORA Map to include the VFW. Agler seconded; Kallas, Agler, Ringwald, Roberts, Moore and Marshall voted yes. Bowers voted no.

Agler asked Kallas if the public has ever brought the traffic light at Cherry and Main St. to his attention. Kallas stated, while he agrees it could be addressed, the public has not mentioned anything to him on the matter. Because this is in Agler's ward, he has heard some comments from the public about potential removing this stop light. Kallas asked for input from the Safety Service Director. Mr. Fleming stated that additionally, he not only thinks this traffic light could be made into a stop sign from North and South Directions, but additionally, the traffic lights at Market/Central and Walnut/Central intersections as well, where he is proposing 4-way stops. Fleming stated internally there was discussion about not putting any additional dollars into fixing these lights if they broke because they were older units. Fleming is doing some additional research on these traffic areas and will report back before council takes action.

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: No report.

PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT: Agler made a motion to introduce Resolution Number 25-01-003. Ringwald seconded; all concurred.

PARKS AND RECREATION: No report.

HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY: No report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Marshall stated the Community Reinvestment Board met last Thursday where they interviewed the Portugal company, Intraplas, a high tech food industry. This is their first move into the US, but plan to add more locations. This company will start by bringing 100 jobs to Van Wert. Marshall made a motion to prepare a CRA agreement to allow Intraplas to enter Van Wert as an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to have the law director prepare a CRA transfer from VWert 2 to Intraplas. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Marshall made a motion to have the law director prepare a CRA transfer from The Edition to MAC WHITE. Agler seconded; all concurred.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Hatcher plans to present a summarized report blighted property report when available..

NEW BUSINESS: None.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Ringwald made a motion to amend Ordinance Number: 24-12-078 to make the effective date of the water rates February 1, 2025 and on minimum bill, next 6,000 cu. ft. the rate shall be \$52.29/ 1,000 cu. ft with a total of \$313.74. On Out of Town Minimum Bill, over 100,000 cu. ft. should read with a rate of \$40.50/1,000 cu. ft. as an emergency. Roberts seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to suspend statutory rules. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to pass, as amended, on it's Third and Final Reading Ordinance Number: 24-12-078; AN ORDINANCE SETTING NEW WATER RATES AND FEES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Roberts seconded All concurred. Ordinance Passed.

Second Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 25-01-001. All concurred.

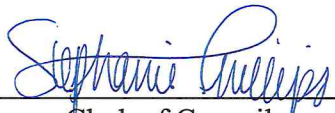
Second Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 25-01-002. All concurred.

First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 25-01-003. All concurred.

First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 25-01-004. All concurred.

Agler made a motion to move into executive session for the purpose of purchase of real estate. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

After reconvening from the executive session, Agler made a motion to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. Kallas seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



Council President
Thad R. Eikenbary

February 10, 2025
DATE