

**MINUTES OF THE
VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL**
March 10, 2025

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

Eric Burk of Living Truth Ministries gave the invocation.

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

Kallas made a motion to dismiss Ringwald. Moore seconded; all concurred..

Agler made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and minutes from the February 24th meeting. Bowers seconded; all concurred.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC SPEAKERS

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: Mr. Markward reports two informational items. One being an old ordinance that was referenced recently for an item unrelated to tonight's meeting, in which there was a discovery of the misnaming of Franklin Park by it's former name, Memorial Park. The Clerk is submitting that change to publication, but no further action is needed. Second, council approved of a Union Cemetery District which has nothing to do with Union Township, but rather, the union of Pleasant Township Trustees and the city. There is potential that the township trustees will attend the first city council meeting in May to discuss items around the cemetery.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Mr. Fleming reported that THM issues will need reported in this first quarter as a public notice due to reports of being out of compliance. Over the last year, the city has opted in to studies to find the best treatment or technique. The best course of action will be to install aeration equipment in the clear well that is located under ground at the current water treatment plant. The plan is this construction would occur in 2026.

Agler had a question on how to purchase vehicles and equipment for the city. Fleming answers that it is acquired through a state purchasing agreement giving the city the best price when bought through what is available through the state co-op.

AUDITOR: Ms. Blackmore reported February financials.

She additionally introduces three Then & Now's. The first from Mercer Health Occupation Services for yearly physicals in the amount of \$4,421.50. A second in the amount of \$4,659.96 to Jackson's Garage for a new turbo engine in a truck for the city. Lastly, two invoices in the total amount of \$2,252.25 for final moving expenses paid to PC Implements.

Lastly she reminds council to complete their Sunshine Law Training before end of term and proposed a few different ways to complete it.

LAW DIRECTOR: Mr. Hatcher reminds council several blighted properties will be going to court on 03/13/25. He plans to meet with Mrs. Moore to give her updates to bring to the next meeting as he will be absent.

Hatcher reports needing a meeting with Mrs. Ringwald to review finances to hire a full time administrative assistant; a meeting will be scheduled in the near future. Scott Gordon, who recently retired from his own practice, has agreed to become the assistant Law Director. A piece of legislation will need requested on this topic.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:

Kirby Kelly, 221 N. Wall St., mentioned cable ordinances and asked if they were still relevant since it's more state ran now. The mayor was unsure and will return with a clear direction for council.

Kelly also asked if Big Lots obtained a going out of business permit. The mayor needs to check with his administration to confirm if they did or not.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Not present. Kallas made a motion to pass all three Then & Now's proposed in the city auditor's report. Marshall seconded; all concurred.

Kallas made a motion to prepare an ordinance authorizing the mayor to sign a contract with Scott Gordon as the assistant law director. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Kallas made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number 25-03-013. Agler seconded; all concurred.

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

Kallas made a motion to pass on it's first and final reading, Ordinance Number: 25-03-013; AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH ATTORNEY SCOTT R. GORDON FOR SERVICES AS ASSISTANT LAW DIRECTOR; AND DECLARING THE SAME AS AN EMERGENCY. Agler seconded; all concurred. Ordinance Passed.

Kallas made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number 25-03-012. Agler seconded; all concurred.

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

Kallas made a motion to pass on it's first and final reading, Ordinance Number: 25-03-012; AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS TO FUNDS 101, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Roberts seconded; all concurred.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Kallas confirmed with Jay Fleming that the city is still on target to begin transitioning from a light to a four way stop at the intersection of Cherry and Main.

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: No report.

Moore proposed allowing zoom meetings when council members are feeling under the weather or out of town. Hatcher states since it is not explicitly stated in council rules that it is allowed, so he would be under the “safe” assumption that it is not allowed. After further discussion, it was determined that a member could certainly call or video stream in, but would not be allowed to vote.

PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT: No report.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Mr. Roberts shares that Kyle Klinker of the Parks Department is in search of a few field maintenance workers to help prep and upkeep on ball diamonds for the season. Additionally, Klinker is active in obtaining quotes on pickleball courts to bring those to the/a park(s).

HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY: Moore reported a few junk and rubbish issues that were resolved after police involvement along with a few other potential properties to add to the blighted property list she reported to Mr. Lawson.

Additionally, after speaking with the Safety Service Director, Moore confirmed for the public that there is potential savings on the sewage portion of the city water bill if the property owner wants to invest in an irrigation system for their lawn. They can request or apply for a second meter and a irrigation tap to be installed. The equipment and installation is at the expense of the property owner/tenant; several members of the public are already using this.

Agler wants the abandoned hospital on Central Avenue to be addressed in first ward. He is concerned with it being a nuisance property with break-ins. Agler is requesting a meeting with public officials and the property owner to try to resolve this. Council has reminded Agler the property owner uses this building for storage and upkeeps the outside of the property, so the city is limited on what can be done.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Marshall reports appreciation for being the council’s representative for economic development. He states that there are several big and exciting things coming for Van Wert.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC: Bowers discussed the topic of raising council wages and reiterated to the public that a council member’s job goes well beyond the 2 meetings per month, but also several hours a month talking with Van Wert Citizens on Council time.

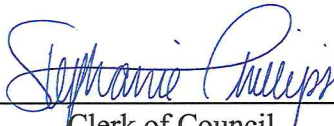
UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: See Law Director's Report above for update on Administrative Assistant to the Law Director.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Kallas made a motion to pass on it's third and final reading, ORDINANCE Number: 25-02-009; AN ORDINANCE ALLOWING FOR CHARGING OF LATE FEES FOR THE PURCHASE OF BULK WATER AND SEWER CHARGES. Marshall seconded; all concurred. Ordinance Passed.

Agler made a motion to adjourn at 7:06 p.m. Roberts seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



Council President
Thad R. Eikenbary

March 24, 2025
DATE