

MINUTES OF THE VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL

April 14, 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 and Marshall were present.

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

Ringwald made a motion to approve tonight's Consent Agenda and minutes from the March 24th meeting. Agler seconded; Ringwald, Agler, Kallas, Roberts and Marshall voted yes, Bowers abstained.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC SPEAKERS

Andrew Davis shared The Van Wert County Regional airport is currently in the process of extending the runway. This project has broken ground recently. During a meeting with the County commissioners a few weeks ago a shortfall in the project of around \$120,000 was discovered. During the Mayor's radio show the County commissioners agreed to cover half of that if the City would come up with the other half. The commissioners agreed to \$20,000 over the next 10 years for a total of \$120,000.00. In summary, VWCRA is looking for \$60,000 from the city. Davis gives a summary of funding of which 50.5% was private funding, 24.3% was state funding, 22.7% was county funding and, if approved, the city contribution would make up 2.4% of the total funding. Ringwald and Kallas clarified together that the city has, to date, not funded anything specific to the airport project, but has an annual budgeted amount that going toward daily operations. Bowers asked for a timeline council needs to make a decision; Davis states the project will be wrapped up by early August. Bowers asked about students the airport teaches to which Davis answered there are currently 8 along with additional people also have scheduled time to use.

Bill Marshall shared how important the airport is to economic development for Van Wert and subsequently made a motion to prepare, as an emergency, an ordinance to allow the city to fund the airport runway project with \$60,000 out of the general fund. Agler seconded, Kallas, Bowers, Agler, Roberts and Marshall voted yes. Ringwald voted no.

Hall Block presented several suggestions to council for improvements to the Washington St./Crawford St. intersection after an accident back in November of 2024 in which a juvenile pedestrian was hit by a car. His proposals included the removal of at least one unmarked parking area therefore moving the 'no parking' sign, the removal of one lane of Crawford, and painting of unused space within the intersection area as bright yellow stripes that is more apparent to drivers that pedestrians may be present, colored curbs/shoulders and even potential coloring the entire intersection on theme being near the art center. He expresses how the wide open, unused space

encourages high speeds and gives the example of I-75 on a 3 lane highway that is designed for high speeds is smaller wide than this section of the intersection is.

Agler expressed he thinks the proposals are not necessary due to a one off accident happening and the intersection has not had any incidents in many years and used to be more high traffic with students when the high school was closer.

The mayor clarifies only one of Block's proposal would need passed by council; the removal of the left turn lane on Crawford, the rest would run through administration which street funds.

Ringwald request data/proof of Block's proposals minimizing accidents to which he did not have concrete data, but shared some personal research based on an engineering background.

Council had several concerns on the distractions of Block's proposal.

Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler, proposed rumble strips leading up to the intersection.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: Mr. Markward announced the offices in the city building will be closed in the afternoon for Good Friday.

The mayor mentioned the main street water project has continued and there is a chance this project will be finished at the end of this month, weather pending.

The Leeson Ave. project final paving may occur in the first two weeks of May.

Code enforcement is used when properties are in disrepair. In the Ohio Revised Code, this term is known as a Blighted Property and the City has adopted that terminology. Typically, action taken would end with a goal of fixing up, tearing down, or selling the property. The city has taken caution to not to implement this on properties where there were residents present even though they are allowed to do so. Mr. Markward reports Blighted Property #16, which has been vacant for at least 8 years, is now owned by the city. The city is not interested in owning this property, so an ordinance will be proposed by properties and equipment to transfer this property to the Land Bank.

Markward also brought up the Data Center, which is not 100% confirmed to come to the city. In the case that it does, council will need to add a data center in the definitions of the zoning codes.

A small strip of a coming up road for a Bonnewitz extension will require land donations from First Federal and Patel's to turn the street area over to the city. These will require ordinances from the city.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Not present.

AUDITOR: Ms. Blackmore reported March financials.

The auditor also reported a few supplementals that will need prepared tonight including administrative fees, revenue, and new phone lines in the municipal building.

The fraud risk assessment questionnaire must be completed for the city auditor's audit, Blackmore is reminding council to complete. The OPERS census audit finished a few weeks ago and results should be back soon.

A Then & Now will need passed tonight for road salt. Three separate invoices for Morton Salt in the amount of \$15,841.52.

LAW DIRECTOR: Mr Hatcher reports and reminds tomorrow is Tax Day.

Hatcher also reminds the city that it is mowing season and the city has an Ordinance to keep grass clippings off the street.

Agler expresses dissatisfaction on a property that has a couch in the front that has been there for awhile. He wanted to know how long the resident has to address this. Mr. Hatcher stated the ordinance says 10 days.

The property on the corner of Chestnut and Central also needs addressed and has been brought up several times with no action.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:

Anita Carvajal, 1329 Leeson Ave., speaks on the Leeson Avenue project. The storm drains between Rose and Smiley Park. The ditch has been filled in through the project and the storm drains have been reconstructed/moved. She has concerns on extra flooding around the sidewalks due to the road being higher than the sidewalks. The road and curb project is projected to be scheduled in 2027, but as a resident she would like to have the flooding addressed now if possible. Additionally, she asked if golf carts are allowed on the bike path because currently, golf carts are spotted on the path. The mayor clarifies they are not supposed to be on the path.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Mrs. Ringwald made a motion to approve the Then & Now as presented by the city auditor. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to suspend statutory rules for Ordinance Number: 25-03-012. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald 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. Agler seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Kallas made a motion to prepare an Ordinance to allow the participation in the ODOT road salt contracts for 2025 as an emergency. Ringwald seconded; all concurred.

Kallas made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 25-04-015. Ringwald seconded; all concurred.

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

Kallas made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, ORDINANCE Number: 25-04-015; AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) ROAD SALT CONTRACTS AWARDED IN 2025, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Agler seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Kallas made a motion to prepare a resolution, as an emergency, accepting the dedication of .592 acres from First Federal to the city and allowing the safety service director to sign any documents relating to the dedication. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Kallas made a motion to introduce Resolution Number: 25-04-017. Agler seconded; all concurred.

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

Kallas made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, Resolution Number: 25-04-017; A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE DEDICATION OF .592 ACRES FROM FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN TO THE CITY OF VAN WERT, AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR TO SIGN ANY DOCUMENTS TO COMPLETE THIS DEDICATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Ringwald seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Kallas made a motion to prepare a resolution, as an emergency, accepting the dedication of 3.132 acres from Devchand B. and Jivan J. Patel to the city and allowing the safety service director to sign any documents relating to the dedication. Roberts seconded; all concurred.

Kallas made a motion to introduce Resolution Number: 25-04-018. Roberts 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, Resolution Number: 25-04-018; A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE DEDICATION OF 3.132 ACRES FROM DEVCHAND B. AND JIVAN J. PATEL TO THE CITY OF VAN WERT, AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR TO SIGN ANY DOCUMENTS TO COMPLETE THIS DEDICATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Roberts seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: Bowers made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 25-03-014. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Bowers made a motion for a First Reading Advisory on Ordinance Number: 25-03-014. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Bowers made a motion to prepare an Ordinance to annex the property purchased by the city on John Brown Rd. Roberts seconded; all concurred.

Bowers made a motion to prepare an Ordinance that will update the definition of the zoning ordinance to include a data center. Roberts seconded; all concurred.

PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT: Agler made a motion to prepare and Ordinance that would allow the mayor to sign any documents related to the transfer of 326 N. Wayne St. Property to the Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Agler made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 25-04-016. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

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

Agler made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, Ordinance Number: 25-04-016; AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS TO ALLOW THE TRANSFER OF THE REAL PROPERTY AT 326 N. WAYNE STREET TO THE VAN WERT COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Kallas seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Roberts reports the Parks department is hoping to have public restrooms open by the end of this week.

HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY: Not present. Kallas has no report in her absence.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: No report.

Marshall expressed concern to streets & alleys on a "lane" that is narrow and with residents parking on the street, he is concerned emergency vehicles would not be able to get down to the emergency. The mayor requested the location and stated once received, he would request the fire marshall to take a look and assure council if an emergency vehicle could get down the lane or not.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC: Kallas is proposing a Council of the Whole Meeting at 6:00 p.m. on April 28 to discuss salaries of Council, Council President, and Council Clerk. Council agreed.

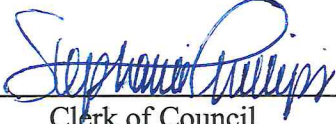
UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

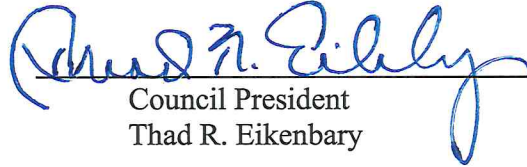
RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

None.

Bowers made a motion to adjourn at 8:08 p.m. Agler seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



Council President
Thad R. Eikenbary

April 28, 2025
DATE