

**MINUTES OF THE
VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL
May 28, 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.

Agler made a motion to approve tonight's Consent Agenda and minutes from the May 12th meeting. Bowers seconded; all concurred.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC SPEAKERS

Rick Turner, Superintendent of Vantage Career Center proposed the city consider putting in a pedestrian cross walk crossing Franklin Street due to students crossing the street now that Vantage will hold classes in the building across the street as well as their current building. These students will cross the road multiple points of the school day. Turner started by sharing a project in which a building across the street was donated to the school along with around 4 acres so students will be taking all "labs" across the street..

Up to 75 students will be crossing the street by walking or driving and the school investigated underground tunnel or over bridge avenues which were far too expensive, so the crosswalk seemed to be the best and most affordable option.

Many options were discussed during the speech between Turner, Fleming and Markward. Including stop lights, changing speed limits, and multiple crosswalks. Scheduled flashing lights was also a topic for students who switch specifically morning, noon for lunch and after school.

Ultimately, another follow up meeting will come to fruition to come up with a plan and solution for Vantage between the mayor, the safety service director and the school.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: Mr. Markward shared the intersection of Main and Cherry "test" on removing the east/west light has been successful, so a new ordinance will need prepared to make this permanent and the bagged lights will be removed.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Mr. Fleming also mentioned traffic, and proposed a change to the prior idea of phasing Central and Market and then Central and Walnut at separate times and instead, doing them at the same time. Both of these intersections will be four way stops. Weather and street painting are factors in changing the idea of phasing these. To start this traffic proposal, the current lights will be bagged for 1 month to get traffic acclimated to the change.

Leeson Ave. paving was complete yesterday. The Man Hole's will be completed this week. Lastly, final touches will include some signage and final painting.

Bonnewitz will begin paving on June 4. Washington will be difficult to navigate for the day and will include flaggers. This is weather dependent.

Aglar mentioned the citizen who visited council that lived on Leeson and was notifying the city of flooding issues. Fleming stated that as soon as the current weather dries up, the city has plans to add four inch drains to help with some of the flooding until the additional path can be paved in 2027.

AUDITOR: Mrs. Blackmore presented 3 Then & Now's: \$4,673.51 to County Electric for lighting repairs, \$36,613.27 to Zoll for our annual lease contract, and \$8,700.00 to Garmann Miller for a feasibility study.

June 9 the auditor will present a preliminary tax budget. June 23 the auditor will present the budget again with changes. The tax budget must be passed by July 7 because it has to be to the county by July 20.

July 3 a meeting for a tax hearing will happen among the administrators.

Lastly, the auditor shared that state legislation future unknowns are making her 5 year projection difficult and uncertain. She warns that because of the uncertainty, she plans to be quite conservative on the revenue and appropriation budget.

LAW DIRECTOR: Mr. Hatcher announced next week several blighted properties will be seen in court and he will follow up with updates at the next meeting.

The private poker club request on whether or not our city would allow them was researched by the law director. The state law does not prohibit this and several surrounding cities have clubs. The city would need to establish where this would be located.

Ringwald brought up a point the law director made in a council of the whole meeting addressing charges for blighted properties and what kind of charges could be brought against an offender, including a 3rd degree misdemeanor if the city would choose to change that rule. Council also discussed having a minimum fee where now there is none, or upping the maximum fee for stubborn or repeat offenders.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:

Joe Jared, 113 W. Main reported his objection to allowing a data center as permitted use, so even if the current proposed data center does not come, it does not allow others to come in either. Jared is fearful of the city being overloaded.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Ringwald made a motion to approve the Then & Now's as proposed by the auditor. Agler seconded all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce 25-05-022. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce 25-05-023. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce 25-05-025. Kallas seconded; Ringwald, Kallas, Bowers, Roberts, Moore, and Marshall voted yes, Agler voted no.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Kallas made a motion to prepare an ordinance that would put stop signs on the Main & Cherry St. intersection by the YWCA and the post office as an emergency. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Kallas made a motion to introduce 25-05-024. Bowers seconded; all concurred.

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

Kallas made a motion that Ordinance 25-05-024: AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS, AWARD CONTRACTS, AND SIGN CONTRACTS ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT FOR RESURFACING SEVERAL STREETS IN THE CITY OF VAN WERT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY be passed on it's first and final reading. Ringwald seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Agler wanted a list of streets that are being repaved/repared. The mayor stated after we receive the bids, the list would be disclosed.

Kallas and Fleming will have a plan together to add some stone to some city alleys in some rough shape.

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: No report.

PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT: Agler made a motion to have the law director prepare an ordinance that would allow the safety service director to advertise and sell the city's unused, unneeded, obsolete or unfit vehicles by internet auction and declaring an emergency. Kallas seconded; all concurred.

Agler made a motion to introduce ordinance number 25-05-026. Bowers seconded; all concurred.

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

Agler made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, Ordinance 25-05-026: AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE AND TO SELL THE CITY'S UNUSED, UNNEEDED, OBSOLETE, OR UNFIT VEHICLES BY

INTERNET AUCTION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Roberts seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

PARKS AND RECREATION: No report.

Agler asked for an update on pickleball courts. No update was available.

Moore requested the smiley park get higher nets on the high school team diamond to help with dangerous foul balls. Roberts stated he will contacted Mr. Klinker to address this.

HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY: Moore wanted to confirm with the law director if an ordinance was necessary in order to contact both the tenant and property owner on blighted properties. The law director stated that it is already in the current ordinance as one, the other, or both can be contacted, but currently it's the law director's office policy that the tenant only is contacted. It would be a matter of a policy change within his office to start contacting both.

Agler questioned the fines for junk and rubbish. Nothing was set, but the law director is going to draft a potential ordinance where the owner/tenant would be charged per offense and bring it to council for review.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Agler asked if Marshall if he knew any information on a Papa John's coming to town to which Marshall did not know of any development.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC: Jared spoke one last time and asked council to consider making the data center conditional use due to some research he completed on a similar city who would have benefitted from making theirs conditional. He is fearful of resources running out.

Bowers stated she had she has been doing data center research. She has called 6 different city mayors in Ohio who have had data centers for a few years to ask about effects. Bowers shared these mayors had high respects and good reviews on which the data had brought their cities. They stated so far, there have been no issues with resources including the water they used which was seasonal and recycled. The cities were the size of Van Wert or smaller.

Kirby Kelly, a van wert citizen, requested the cities Bowers spoke to to which Bowers stated she would have to bring the names to the next meeting because she did not have the list.

Marshall reiterated the board is taking all aspects of resources and effects of the data center into consideration before making the decision.

Davis requested data on a Frothingham speed study to which Fleming did not have results for.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: A liquor license request for Golden Plate LLC DBA Saisaki was presented by Mr. Eikenbary.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number 25-05-022. All concurred.

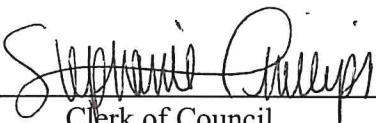
First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number 25-05-023. All concurred.

First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number 25-05-025. Ringwald, Kallas, Bowers, Roberts, Moore and Marshall voted yes. Agler voted no.

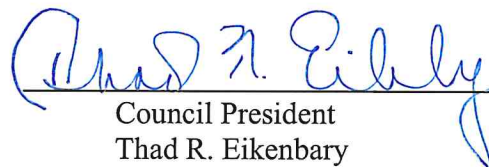
Third and Final Reading for Ordinance Number: 25-04-019: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING VAN WERT CODE OF ORDIANCES BY AMENDING SECTION 150.03 DEFININTIONS. All concurred. Ordinance passed.

Third and Final Reading for Ordinance Number: 25-04-020: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING VAN WERT CODE OF ORDIANCES BY AMENDING SECTION 150.15(H)(2) PERMITTED USES BY ADDING DATA CENTER AS A PERMITTED USE FOR I-2 GENERAL INDUSTRIAL ZONING. All concurred. Ordinance passed.

Kallas made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Agler seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



Council President
Thad R. Eikenbary

June 9, 2025
DATE

