

# MINUTES OF THE VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL

January 26, 2026

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

President Eikenbary gave the invocation.

On call of the roll: Johnson, Block, Agler, Roberts, Moore, and Hurless were present.

Agler made a motion to excuse Ringwald. Block seconded; all concurred.

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

## SCHEDULED PUBLIC SPEAKERS

Kim Fleming, Executive Director of Visit Van Wert spoke about a special event coming to our city in celebration of America 250/Ohio 250 celebration. On this celebration, Ohio has come up with a monthly theme in celebration. Visit Van Wert has decided to follow suit and this will involve "passports" specially made specific to Van Wert county to encourage citizens who purchase the passports to travel to different historic landmarks and businesses in our community to learn more about that location and receive a "passport stamp".

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

**MAYOR:** Mr. Markward expressed thanks to the street crew for the extra work under current weather conditions.

Markward also followed up on recently passed legislation on cyber security. The city is holding a meeting on this coming Thursday in relation to getting updated emails for council.

**SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR:** Mr. Fleming reported there is trucking scheduled to remove all of the extra snow downtown tomorrow night, Tuesday the 27th.

Fleming also extended Chief Jones' invitation to the Fire Department's annual awards banquet on February 22nd.

**AUDITOR:** Mrs. Blackmore reported there will need to be an amendment to Ordinance 25-11-055 to update a salary amount that was missed when it was originally passed.

**LAW DIRECTOR:** Mr. Hatcher reported he is in the process of updating a blighted properties spreadsheet. Hurless addressed a blighted property on the list and asked for an update on the letter that was sent to the property owner and what the letter communicated to the owner. Hatcher explains that the letter was to ask the property owner for plans to address how the

blighted property will be up to code before further action is taken by the city. A copy of this letter will be provided to any council member who wishes to see it.

**COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:**

None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCE:** Ringwald was not present. Mr. Block had no report.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** No report.

**STREETS AND ALLEYS:** Block extended thanks to the street crews on handling the amount of snow that came to the city. Block also reminds council of a new bus/transportation service into our community.

Block wants to review the Ordinance that currently requires new developers to install sidewalks within their development. He specifically would like to address developers who may build a distance away from a current developments causing long stretches between where each of the developers are required to put in sidewalks. He uses Walmart and VWCS as examples. He is proposing that an Ordinance would require the developer to connect to existing sidewalks. Hatcher reminds council they should receive input from property owners who would be affected by this and also think of the extensive funding that would be required to do such a thing.

Hurless expresses personal experiences where he agrees there is a large opportunity to not only complete sidewalks where there is none, but also fixing existing sidewalks in poor conditions; Hurless acknowledges this is a lengthy project.

**PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT:** Agler extended thanks to the street crews on handling the snow downtown.

**PARKS AND RECREATION:** No report.

**HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY:** Moore was asked to check out a few properties to consider for blighted properties. She submitted the necessary pictures and documentation to administration.

**JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION:** Hurless reported that while the Zoning Board of Appeals is required to send out notices to property owners to notify them of a hearing, the notices are not sent to the tenants of the property owners and sometimes the Landlords do not communicate with the tenant about the hearing. Hurless is proposing council look at legislation to include additional parties. Currently, the person filing for the appeal is required to collect the addresses of the property owners in which they are affecting, a new proposal could simply require the person filing to also collect information on tenants as well.

Next, Hurless references an ordinance that states trash and recycling are required to be collected on the same day; he shares that on holiday weeks, there is mass confusion within the city because recycling and different trash contractors do not all react to the holiday week in the same manner. Hurless is asking if it would help to amend the ordinance to exclude holiday weeks from this requirement.

Hurless inquired on which municipality was responsible for the speed limit between Dickinson Landing and Chief Supermarket with concern that the speed limit in that location is high. Mr. Fleming stated three jurisdictions technically can be involved for that location, but he is proposing Hurless address this with State Highway Patrol to begin.

Lastly, Hurless is volunteering to take the lead on the project of bringing a city pool to Van Wert after it was put on pause sometime last year. He is asking for any materials already obtained by council/the city to avoid duplicating work that has already been done.

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC:** Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler St., reminds council that VWCS can potentially suspend a student who is walking to school as the school is considered to be “non-walking” and the school provides bus stops for the in-town students to avoid walking to the school on the highway.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** NONE.

**NEW BUSINESS:** President Eikenbary reminds council members to stay vigilant as there have been some fraudulent emails circulating around council of fraudsters pretending to be Mayor Markward or President Eikenbary with an “urgent” request to be completed.

## **RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

Second Reading Advisory for Resolution Number: 26-01-004. All concurred.

Block made a motion to prepare an ordinance amending ordinance 25-11-055 to include a salary that was missed due to a clerical error as an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Block made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-01-008. Agler seconded; all concurred.

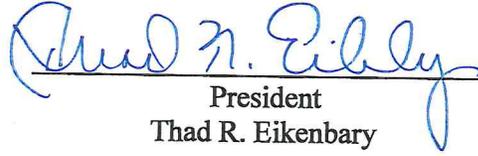
Block made a motion to suspend statutory rules. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Block made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, Ordinance Number: 26-01-008; AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 25-11-055 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 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Agler seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Agler made a motion to adjourn at 7:34 p.m. Block seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council  
Stephanie R. Phillips



President  
Thad R. Eikenbary

February 9, 2026  
DATE