

**MINUTES OF THE  
VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL**  
March 23, 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: Ringwald, Johnson, Block, Agler, Moore, and Hurless were present.

Ringwald made a motion to dismiss Roberts. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Agler made a motion to approve tonight's Consent Agenda and minutes from the February 23rd meeting. Johnson seconded; all concurred.

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC SPEAKERS**

NONE.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**MAYOR:** Mr. Markward asked for council to move into executive session for a personnel matter.

Agler made a motion to go into executive session for a personnel matter regarding AFSCME contracts. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Council resumed regular public session at 6:48 p.m.

Markward resumed his report and requested an executive session at the end of tonight's meeting for the purpose of economic development. No action will be taken on the matter following the executive session.

**SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR:** Mr. Fleming stated brush pick-up started this morning and will take place all week.

Reprints were provided to the clerk by Mr. Hatcher for clerical errors on Ordinance Number 25-09-039 and Ordinance Number 26-03-013.

**AUDITOR:** Mrs. Blackmore presented February financials following a snapshot that was sent via email to council.

Blackmore also presented one Then & Now needed for the Tax Office in the amount of \$12,018.42 to The Ohio Department of Taxation

Financial disclosure statements are due on April 15th.

A big project this year for the city auditor is to convert all vendors to ACH; avoiding the need to write paper checks for most vendors.

**LAW DIRECTOR:** Mr. Hatcher expects to have a court hearing for blighted property #17 at 1:00 pm on March 31, 2026.

Hatcher stated the city has a jury trial on Friday if anyone is interested in attending.

Hatcher and Block continue to work together on research of noise and sidewalk ordinances.

#### **COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS:**

NONE.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCE:** Ringwald made a motion to approved the Then & Now as presented by the City Auditor. Agler seconded; all concurred.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Johnson deferred his report to Brent Stevens, Director of Van Wert Area Economic Development. The first item Stevens discussed was a letter he provided to council from Wade Adamson, Senior Director, Americas Operations of Danfoss. The letter simply states that the rapidly growing data center industry translates directly into job creation here in Van Wert at Danfoss including 53 jobs to start. In direct relation with this, Danfoss is leasing 1181 Grill Road for storage.

A new website is now up called [vanwertohiodatacenter.com](http://vanwertohiodatacenter.com) that goes into many details including many of the questions council had asked in regards to the potential data center.

**STREETS AND ALLEYS:** Block continues to work with Hatcher on sidewalk and noise ordinances.

**PROPERTIES AND EQUIPMENT:** Agler is requesting a Committee of the Whole meeting at 6:00 p.m. on April 13, 2026 to discuss and possibly amend junk and rubbish ordinances for the city.

**PARKS AND RECREATION:** Not present. Moore has no report.

**HEALTH, SERVICE AND SAFETY:** A citizen reached out to Mrs. Moore in regards to a property that needs cleaned up. Moore moved the pictures and related concerns on to administration to be addressed.

**JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION:** No report.

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL and PUBLIC:** Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler St., is requesting Mr. Block review “no parking” issues involving parking lots near Main St./Jefferson St. around Laing Dentistry and Family Video.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Fleming gave an update on the city's potential lease with AEP, starting with reasons why AEP has a lease with the city— main reasons include: holding city harmless in matters with AEP, waives pole attachment fees and lastly, allows AEP to work without needing permits. Fleming also followed up on some of the additional proposals the council mentioned including: reducing the lease, abandonment language, annual report to council, trimming schedules, and undergrounding requirements when possible. First, AEP is willing and able to shorten the lease to 10 years and council should see that amendment reflected in the next review of the lease. Fleming has no concerns with abandonment as the city has never had issues with AEP abandoning equipment, city administrators meet with AEP at least 3 times a year, and AEP has been over communicative on trimming schedules; therefore, those are not of concern. AEP is willing to utilize undergrounding, but the cost is covered 60% by AEP and 40% by the homeowners. In Flemings opinion, homeowners would not be willing to cover this 40%; he also mentions any new developments are automatically underground.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Council President Eikenbary moved that City Council schedule a public hearing on the Petition for Conditional Zoning filed with the City of Van Wert requesting that certain property be zoned I-2 General Industrial District upon annexation into the City of Van Wert, Ohio.

The public hearing shall be held on May 4, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Second Floor, Municipal Building, 515 East Main Street, Van Wert, Ohio 45891.

The property that is the subject of the petition is generally described as land located immediately east of U.S. Route 127, south and east of U.S. Route 224, west of Mendon Road, and north of U.S. Highway 30, and further identified as Van Wert County Auditor parcel numbers:

- 17-034718.0000
- 33-047500.0000
- 12-034459.0000
- 17-034718.0100

Council further directs the Clerk of Council to:

1. Publish legal notice of the public hearing as required by law beginning April 1, 2026, and
2. Mail notice of the public hearing by regular U.S. Mail and certified U.S. Mail to adjacent property owners on April 1, 2026.

The notice shall state that the Petition for Conditional Zoning, all related materials, and the report and recommendation of the City Planning Commission will be available for public inspection at the office of the Clerk of Council prior to the hearing.

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

Second Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-03-014. All concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to prepare an ordinance authorizing the mayor and safety service director to contract with local #3767 of the AFSCME, Ohio Council, 8, AFL-CIO, relative to wages, hours, terms and other conditions of employment and declaring an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce ordinance 26-03-016. Agler seconded; all concurred.

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

Ringwald made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, Ordinance Number: 26-03-016; AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO CONTRACT WITH LOCAL #3767 OF THE AFSCME, OHIO COUNCIL, 8, AFL-CIO, RELATIVE TO WAGES, HOURS, TERMS AND OTHER CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Moore seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

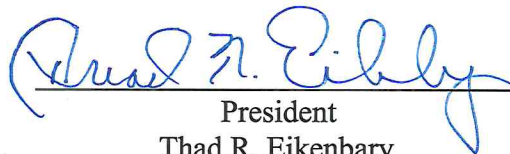
Agler made a motion to move into an executive session for the purpose of Economic Development Negotiations at 7:24 p.m. with no action to be taken after the session. Block seconded; all concurred.

Council came out of executive session at 8:08 p.m.

Agler made a motion to adjourn at 8:09 p.m. Hurless seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council  
Stephanie R. Phillips



President  
Thad R. Eikenbary

April 13, 2026  
DATE