

MINUTES OF THE VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL

August 10, 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, Roberts, Moore, and Hurless were present.

Hurless made a motion to amend the agenda to correct a type-o on the title of Ordinance 26-07-038 from "AN ORDINANCE CREATING A HANDICAP PARKING SPOT ON THE THIRD PARKING SPOT SOUTH OF JACKSON STREET ON THE WEST SIDE OF NORTH WASHINGTON STREET IN THE CITY OF VAN WERT. " to " AN ORDINANCE CREATING A HANDICAP PARKING SPACE ON THE FIRST PARKING SPACE EAST OF NORTH WASHINGTON STREET ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF WEST JACKSON STREET IN THE CITY OF VAN WERT." to match the legislation that was prepared by the Law Director. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Agler made a motion to approve tonight's consent agenda and regular meeting minutes from July 27, 2026 meeting. Block seconded; all concurred.

Scheduled Public Speakers:

Dr. Paul Kalogerou, Medical Director of the Health Department and Kathy Will, Director of Nursing of the Van Wert County Health Department was invited to the council meeting by councilman Hall Block to speak on smoking and health related risks. Kalogerou spoke on "The Cigarette and it's Role", Risks and Consequences of Secondhand Smoke (including specifically with children), Health Effects of Smoking, How to Stay Safe, and lastly, Privilege and Opportunity Surrounding Public Health. Hurless asks for statistics related to distance outdoors to experience secondhand smoke symptoms. Kalogereou was not prepared with these statistics but offered to research further for Hurless.

Joe Jared, 233 Burt St., ensures council he personally distances himself from other members of the public to smoke. He spoke on his views on reasons for illnesses that Dr. Kalogerou spoke to and listed several other harmful chemicals that he compared/ argued were more harmful or just as harmful as nicotine/ smoking.

Jody Huth, 668 N. Walnut St., requests comparison opinion from Dr. Kalogerou on car exhaust versus cigarette smoke. Kalogerou's opinion nods to them being equally as harmful depending on exposure.

Dave Roehm, 3145 SR 118 Willshire, speaks of his family history of being around smoke and comparing his current health to his exposure; expresses fear of pollution from Data Center.

Faith Wallace, 1014 E. Crawford St., speaks to her smoking habits versus her current health status and her admittance to firsthand exposure during pregnancy and secondhand exposure to current family members.

Mark Lippi, asked if anyone on council was an active smoker. No one was recognized.

Administrative Reports:

Mayor: Markward reviewed/summarized the process of assembling the city budget as several members of council will be through it for the first time. Markward mentioned that revenue in the city has been up and several extra projects have been able to be budgeted in. This includes a specific project of updating tennis courts to pickleball courts that are projected to be completed next spring, weather pending.

Safety Service Director: Fleming updated that the bike path is complete other than grass seeding and dirt work which will be completed weather pending this coming week.

THM project has been opened for bidding through September 17th and Fleming anticipates this project will begin around October.

Warren Straley was introduced to council by Mr. Fleming to share a change in his subdivision plans. Straley shared that where an original ordinance passed in which he requested 10-foot setbacks; he is now requesting to be changed to 5-foot setbacks instead to allow for single family option as well as his duplex option.

City Auditor: Blackmore reported July financials.

Additionally, Blackmore is requesting a supplemental appropriation ordinance be prepared to move funds to PERS and additionally, money needs appropriated to prepare the city auditor's office for a new trainee as her current deputy auditor accepted a new job.

The 2025 audit is in completion stages. Blackmore reported this should be available within the next week or so.

Law Director: No report.

Johnson requested research on stop signs at certain intersections mentioned in a previous meeting. Mr. Hatcher will follow up at a later meeting.

Comments, Communications, and Petitions:

Dave Roehm, stated a complaint on the LED Light at Living Truth Ministries is still not resolved.

Joe Jared, 233 Burt St., reiterated frustrations with smoking. He continues speaking on personal research with lead poisoning and COVID vaccines.

Committee Reports:

Finance: Ringwald made a motion to prepare an ordinance to make supplemental appropriations to fund 101, 301, 601 and 602 and declaring as an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-042. Agler seconded; all concurred.

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

Ringwald made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, ORDINANCE Number: 26-08-042; AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS TO FUND 101, 301, 601 AND 602 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Agler seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Ringwald made a motion to prepare an ordinance to amend ordinance 26-04-018 to amend salaries and declaring as an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-043. Agler seconded; all concurred.

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

Ringwald made a motion to pass, on it's first and final reading, ORDINANCE Number: 26-08-043; AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 26-04-018 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.

Economic Development: No report.

Streets and Alleys: Block summarizes new changes to a potential amendment to the tree commission ordinance and asks if the Safety Service Director, Streets Director and Parks Director all need to be listed as required members; he also summarized member structure. All tree commission meetings are designed to be open to the public. All changes will be determined/motioned if council does not repeal the current ordinance.

Second, Block thanked Public Speakers for presenting information on smoking to the public. Block acknowledges the argument of civil liberties and presents that although he feels parks should be "smoke free" entirely, he believes in consistency and if the smoking prohibition does not pass, that marijuana should also be allowable. The Law Director interjects to inform council and public that smoking marijuana on public sidewalks is actually against state law and could be equivalently compared to an "open container" charge outside of the DORA District in the city limits.

Properties and Equipment: No report.

Parks and Recreation: No report.

Health, Service, and Safety: No report.

Judiciary and Annexation: Hurless made a request for a Council of the Whole Meeting on August 24 at 5:45 pm in council chambers to discuss the junk & rubbish ordinance amendments, a potential private well prohibition ordinance and the solicitor ordinance amendments.

Hurless made a motion to prepare an ordinance to amend 26-02-010 granting a franchise to AEP to update the lease term that was previously agreed upon to move the 50 year lease down to 10 years but was incorrect in the original signed legislation. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-044. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion to prepare an ordinance to allow Jennings Crossing Subdivision to construct single family homes with five-foot side yards. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-045. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Questions and Comments from Council and Public:

Brock Roehm, Willshire, OH is requesting feedback on a decommissioning ordinance proposal made by a constituent and sent to Johnson. Johnson stated he plans to review this with the law director and Council President and bring findings and suggestions to another council meeting.

Jody Huth, is in favor of taxpayer dollars going toward the tree ordinances and requests what amount will be provided by the city to support the commission. Block stated council first must not repeal the ordinance and then council would move on to amendments to the ordinance. Additionally, he requests council/administration to look into including marijuana within the DORA district. Huth addressed Hurless to clarify suggestions on grandfathering old wells/drilling new wells.

Dave Roehm, Willshire, OH, reiterates his support to keeping a tree commission ordinance in place.

Judy Wieging, SR 127, Van Wert, expresses concerns on speeding in a 35-mph zone between the reservoir and Washington/Hospital intersection along with Jake Break noises. Wieging states she has a well and is not interested in annexing into the city to obtain city water.

Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler, stated concerns on signage around Franklin Street near the overpass and Vantage Career Center including crosswalk signs and speed limit signs. Davis also reiterates interest in council reviewing city ordinances on signage around town due to inconsistencies.

Faith Wallace, 1014 E Crawford, is in favor of marijuana for medicinal use.

John Withers, Woodland Ave., stated the Woodland/Sibley stop sign near his residence is being ran frequently; Withers is requesting a speed study/ increased law presence.

Joe Jared, asked if Eikenbary could summarize when public is able to speak during reports. Jared is reiterating his request that the city take a soil sample from the area planning to be used for a solar farm. Jared made comment on wishing there was conditional use for wells. He makes additional comments on his health versus being an active smoker.

Kelly Ripley, 8847 German Road, shared discovery of an article that refers to energy usage on the data center potentially being increased. Ripley is also requesting samples being taken from the water currently to get a baseline/safeguard put in place before industrial business begin construction.

Theresa Singer, Boroff Road, summarized her research on what an emergency ordinance is meant for.

Unfinished Business:

No Updates.

New Business:

Noise Ordinance changes were requested to be prepared for next meeting by Block that have not yet been presented; these were requested last meeting.

Resolutions and Ordinances:

Third and Final Reading for Ordinance Number: 26-07-036; AN ORDINANCE REPEALING SECTION 98.11 OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT CODE OF ORDINANCES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Ringwald, Johnson, Block, Agler, Roberts, Moore and Hurless voted no. Ordinance fails.

Hurless made a motion to amend Ordinance Number: 26-07-038 to locate the handicap parking spot West of Washington Street in the first spot on the South Side of West Jackson Street.

Third and Final Reading for amended Ordinance Number: 26-07-038; AN ORDINANCE CREATING A HANDICAP PARKING SPACE ON THE FIRST PARKING SPACE WEST OF NORTH WASHINGTON STREET ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF WEST JACKSON STREET IN THE CITY OF VAN WERT. All concurred. Ordinance passed.

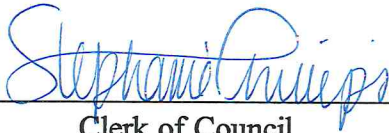
Third and Final Reading for Ordinance Number: 26-07-040; AN ORDINANCE ENACTING SECTION 94.03 OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT CODE OF ORDINANCES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Block voted yes. Ringwald, Johnson, Agler, Roberts, Moore and Hurless voted no. Ordinance fails.

Second Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-07-039. All concurred.

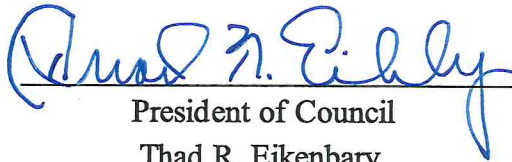
First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-08-044. All concurred.

First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-08-045. All concurred.

Agler made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm. Block seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



President of Council
Thad R. Eikenbary

Approved on: August 24, 2026