

MINUTES OF THE VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL

August 24, 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.

Agler made a motion to approve tonight's consent agenda and regular meeting minutes from August 10, 2026 meeting. Ringwald seconded; all concurred.

President Eikenbary addressed the public directly to remind them of the procedural points of city council meetings. The purpose of City Council meetings are to conduct the business of the City following the approved Consent Agenda. These meetings are open to the public, not meetings of the public. Comments to Administration and Council should directly pertain to items related to Council and the presented agenda. For tonight's meeting, areas in which the public have the opportunity to speak have been obviously highlighted and as always, many paper copies, along with a digital version are always available. Eikenbary reminded the public there are four opportunities for the public to speak: following public speakers, following administration reports, following council committee reports and lastly, during an open comment opportunity. Eikenbary requests that the public does not continue to repeat points that have clearly been made with the council. The public is to address council only if they are recognized by the president to do so. Once recognized, the member of the public must stand, state their full name and full address so the Clerk may accurately record it for the record, then they are given two minutes to speak. The public is given one opportunity to speak during each public comment section; outbursts and on-going conversations in the gallery will NOT be tolerated and those not abiding by these rules will be asked to leave. Lastly, President Eikenbary pleaded with the public to leave the vitriol, negativity, accusations, name calling and finger pointing out of the meetings.

Scheduled Public Speakers:

NONE

Administrative Reports:

Mayor: Markward announced today was the first day for city residents to pick up trash vouchers to be used in the month of September. 65 were picked up today, but there is no rush, as there is one available for each resident who receives a water bill, there is not a limited supply. These must be used by the end of September.

Brush pickup begins Monday, September 14.

A new version of minutes
will be uploaded with 2
separate petitions for conditional
zoning after waiting/holding
period ends

VWAED met today to begin implementing a countywide comprehensive plan and appointing someone to do so. VWAED is involved because currently items the city may be interested in are outside of city limits.

On the Community Reinvestment Act Board, the mayor appoints two members, the council appoints two members, and the fifth member is appointed by the Regional Planning Commission. There has never been a requirement for someone from the school districts to be appointed to the board, but historically, council and the mayor have tended to appoint people from the school districts because some CRA's require school board approval and it is easier to have those who were involved on the board. With the newly annexed land to the north of the city, where Lincolnview was never typically involved, there is now a great portion of city land that falls within their school district. The mayor explains that there is a provision in which the CRA Board may appoint a sixth member but they must live in the CRA Area. With that, perhaps the Lincolnview Superintendent should be appointed to the board, but he does not live in the CRA area. A solution to this, would be for council to recall their appointment of President Thad Eikenbary, who lives in the CRA area and appoint Lincolnview Superintendent Jeff Snyder. The CRA Board, could then, if they choose, appoint Mr. Eikenbary as the sixth member.

Eric Hurless requested a list of current CRA Board members to which the mayor stated are: Thad Eikenbary, Mark Bagley, Rick Turner, Brent Stevens and Cathy Malone. Additionally, Hurless requested a summary of the responsibilities of this board. The CRA Board considers requests for tax abatements. They are authorized to give up to 100% abatement for up to 15 years. Block requested to know when it was discovered that this "new appointment was needed". Markward was sure to clarify that this is NOT a requirement or needed or requested by any specific entity, but just a suggestion as a courtesy to involve Lincolnview. Ringwald asked if there are any problems with conflict of interest to which Mayor Markward stated he was not aware of any past incidents of this. Moore clarified if there was any indication that Snyder has interest in accpeting; the mayor indicated he would accept if proposed.

Safety Service Director: Fleming discussed ordinances on supplemental appropriations in-order-to cover the increased cost of pavement for pickleball courts (-047). City also agreed, last year, to do sanitary and storm work along the railroad tracks near Walnut & Main; the other part of this supplemental appropriation ordinance. The storm and sanitary work costs \$211,000; of this, half of the funds will come from the sewer fund and half will come from the "301" which covers storm water work (draft -046).

Lastly, Fleming addressed the light that has been brought up in past meetings at the Church on 127. Bill Lawson was able to make contact and something will done, but the church is struggling to find a solution due to it not being able to be moved left or right and only up and down. The city is asking for this light to be bagged or turned off until a better solution occurs.

City Auditor: Not present.

Law Director: A blighted property trial that was scheduled for court tomorrow has been postponed due to a health issue. Hatcher agreed to a short continuance to allow the owner to address their health issue and this will be scheduled later.

Committee Reports:

Finance: Ringwald made a motion to approve a Then & Now payable to Layne for the installation and operations of pumps on 6-15-2026 in the amount of \$3,550.00. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to prepare an ordinance for a supplemental appropriation for funds 301 and 602 for a total of \$211,434.00. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-046. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to prepare and ordinance to allow the Safety Service Director to contract for paving of pickleball courts as an emergency. Roberts seconded; all concurred.

Ringwald made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-047. Roberts 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: 26-08-047; 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 THE PAVING OF PICKLEBALL COURTS AT SMILEY PARK AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Roberts seconded; all concurred. Ordinance passed.

Economic Development: Johnson turned his report over to Brent Stevens, Director of Van Wert Economic Development, to give an update on the incentive plan from QTS.

Stevens shared that they are close to announcing and having a signed agreement on the incentive plan proposed. Additinally, Hampton Inn has broken ground and a new apartment complex at Dickinson Landing has also broken ground. Due to the apartment complex being located in a mega site, Van Wert was eligible and has applied for a \$1.5 Million RED grant that would allow the apartment complex to expand from 80 apartments to about 105 apartments.

Stevens also shared a meeting was held with landowners to the east side of the mega site to talk about what is going on, what will happen during west side construction and to confirm the landowners wanted to move forward with annexation into the city. Attorney Chuck Koch will be able to give more information on this.

Block clarified that the incentive agreement with QTS is not the final agreement. Stevens clarifies that the agreed upon incentive plan is not final, but the final terms of the agreement will be approved by council.

Streets and Alleys: Block summarizes new changes to the tree commission ordinance 98.11. Changes to the ordinance include moving the appointment from the mayor to council. Block asked if further review was needed; there was no comment.

Block made a motion to have the law director prepare an ordinance altering the tree commission ordinance with proposed changes. Hurless seconded; all concurred.

Properties and Equipment: No report.

Parks and Recreation: No report.

Health, Service, and Safety: Constituents submitted complaints to Moore which were turned over to administration for further assessment.

Moore then reported that a city resident, Stuart Jewett, who was present at the council meeting, inquired on a light trespassing issue involving his property. There has been discussion prior to the meeting involving the law director. Jewett lives at the end of State Street and provided photos to council as support to his complaint. Jewett explains that after much time and work to make his home comfortable, a rear neighbor installed a very bright light that floods on his deck and in his back windows/back door. A nice letter was delivered to the neighbor with no response. Jewett decided to ask this neighbor in person and was presented with disagreements and no solution. Jewett is coming to council for help/suggestion on a light trespassing proposal. Hatcher will research similar community guidelines that the city could potentially adopt. Jewett proposes a simple piece of stock metal to guide the light in a downward direction. Block stated lighting regulations are possible and not unreasonable but could be a lot of work.

Judiciary and Annexation: Hurless made a motion to prepare an ordinance amending the Van Wert Code of ordinances Chapter 72 traffic rules. Agler wanted a further explanation to this preparation to which Hatcher explains this amendment is specific to one part of the newly requested noise ordinance amendment and must be broken up into one ordinance which amends changes to Chapter 72, the traffic rules regarding noise, and a different prepared ordinance will address Chapter 102 for noise which is new to the city. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-048. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number: 26-08-049. Moore seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion for the law director to prepare an ordinance amending Chapter 96 in relation to junk & rubbish. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion to take 26-07-037 off the table. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless made a motion to amend Ordinance 26-07-037 to strike amending section 115.03 and also add amendment to section 115.09 which is the Exemptions portion. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hurless recognizes Mr. Koch for a presentation this evening. Koch expanded on the meeting with landowners east of the mega site representing around 684 acres. As negotiations are still in process on securing a purchaser for the property, landowners agreed to annex and zone this property since it takes time to accomplish. In the last month, a conditional zoning petition and an annexation petition have been prepared for two different properties; one being the 684 acres on the north end of Van Wert. Another 155 acres on the south side of the City of Van Wert would join Industrial Drive. A purchaser still needs secured for this 155 acres as well, but to help this process along, the properties being properly annexed and zoned will assist in helping purchasers commit to the land. Koch stated signatures from all landowners from both proposed areas were obtained. Today, August 24, 2026, Koch filed two different petitions for conditional zoning and two different petitions for annexation. President Eikenbary has before him, one conditional zoning petitions, one for the 684 acres and one for the 155 acres. Those same properties had annexation petitions were filed today and a hearing will be held on those tomorrow. These are commenced at the commissioners office. Those are expected to be submitted and approved to City Auditor Blackmore on Wednesday, August 26th for the required 60 day waiting period. Anticipated timeline would conclude October 26th. Koch is requesting the President Eikenbary make a referral of the zoning petitions to the planning commission for their initial review and recommendations back to council.

Let the official record reflect that President Eikenbary acknowledged the filing of two (2) conditional zoning petitions to be referred to the City Planning Commission and for the Commission's recommendation back to City Council.

Questions and Comments from Council and Public:

Jody Huth, proposes limiting "tarped" cars to two per city lot. Huth wants clarification on when the public will be able to speak on the annexations proposed in Judiciary and Annexations report. Hatcher stated that must happen within the next 60 days. Hurless reminds Huth that the best form of communication on city business is to talk to your ward representative. Ringwald reiterated the amount of information and detail that was provided for the public in past experiences and expressed experience with repeat questions that had been answered multiple times

Mark Davis, 402 S. Tyler, asked why Stripe Rd (north) was closed. Fleming answered that it was closed due to pavement failure. Davis is also requesting that identification be added to the front of city police vehicles for reporting purposes; identifiers are currently only on the side and rear of the vehicles. Davis asked if an officer must identify himself during a stop. Hatcher stated he will research, but does not know any changes to this requirement. Davis reminds Block (chair of

Streets & Alleys) that there are several ordinances that need reviewed in relevance to street/traffic signage. Davis lastly states frustrations with not being able to review drafts of ordinance readings while council discusses.

Faith Wallace, 1014 E Crawford, would like further clarification on the rule of "tarps" in the junk and rubbish ordinance proposal. Hurless explains that there needs to be additional discussion among council on defining if covering a vehicle with a tarp would be allowed and if this would be limited to classic cars. Wallace expresses frustration with residents who would continue to bend the rules of even newly proposed ordinances.

Linda Sidle, Chestnut Street, expresses needs for rules or stipulations specific habitual junk & rubbish offenders.

Unfinished Business:

No Updates.

New Business:

Ringwald made a motion to recall the council appointment of President Thad Eikenbary to the CRA Board. Hurless seconded; all concurred.

Block asked for opinion/input of Eikenbary on this situation to which Eikenbary shares this will surely enhance communication among the schools and CRA Board as a whole. Johnson wants to know how a tie vote would be handled with six members on the CRA Board. Mayor Markward shares that in the case of a tie, the motion would fail.

Ringwald made a motion to appoint Lincolnview Superintendent, Jeff Snyder to the CRA Board to serve the remainder of Thad Eikenbary's term. Roberts seconded; all concurred.

Markward will notify Jeff Snyder of the appointment.

Resolutions and Ordinances:

Hurless made a motion to table Ordinance Number: 26-07-039. Block seconded; all concurred.

Second Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-07-037. All concurred.

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

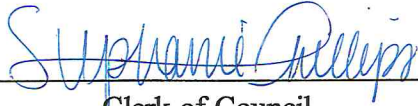
Second Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-08-045. All concurred.

First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-08-046. All concurred.

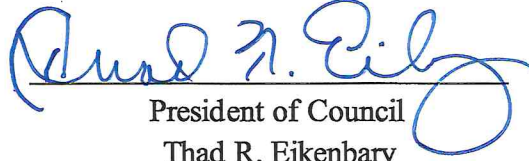
First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-08-048. All concurred.

First Reading Advisory for Ordinance Number: 26-08-049. All concurred.

Johnson made a motion to adjourn at 7:46 pm. Block seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Stephanie R. Phillips



President of Council
Thad R. Eikenbary

Approved on: September 14, 2026