

CITY OF VERGAS
COUNCIL MINUTES
VERGAS EVENTS CENTER & ZOOM
Tuesday, December 14, 2021

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:30 pm, on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at the Vergas Event Center and on a Zoom for a hybrid regular council meeting with the following members present: Mayor Julie Bruhn, Council Members: Bruce Albright, Paul Pinke, Logan Dahlgren and Natalie Fischer. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers, Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane, Sherri Hanson, Carol Albright, Kevin Niemann, Glen Bunkowske, Attorney Tom Winters and Engineer Scott Kolbinger.

Call to Order

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the meeting to order.

Citizens' Concerns

No citizens' concerns were addressed.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to approve the agenda with the addition of personnel committee. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the following agenda with the removal of Council bills: Council Minutes of the Oct. 12, 2021, and November 9, 2021, liquor store bills for November 2021 totaling \$75,406.16, bills paid between Council meetings totaling \$9,890.58, late water/sewer bills, general fund/special revenue money market account report, 2021 investment schedule/bond schedule, American Rescue Plan Funding 2021-2026, American Rescue Plan Resolution (complete copy of resolution located at the city office), MN Lawful Gambling Permit for the Lions on 12-31-2021, Polling Place Designation Resolution (complete copy of resolution located at the city office), 2022 Licenses for Liquor: Billy's Corner Bar, Skal, Otter Coffee (wine only-on sale), Olson Oil (3.2 beer-off sale) and Vergas Lion's (3.2 beer on-sale), Cigarette: Vergas Liquor Store, Olson Oil and Lakes Area Co-op and for employee training; . MN Rural Water Conference – March 1-3, 2022 (DuFrane) St Cloud, MN Clerks and Finance Officers – March 22 -25, 2022 (Lammers) St Cloud, Clerks Advanced Academy- (Lammers)Waite Park, LMC, Loss Control Workshop (DuFrane, Engebretson, Lammers), League of MN Cities Annual Conference (Mayor, Council & Lammers)and Municipal Beverage Association (MMBA) (Theisen) Arrowwood. Motion passed unanimously.

Lammers reviewed Council bills stating the Arvig invoice for \$638.03 needed to be removed as it is being paid with the Arvig invoice paid on the listing. Dahlgren stated the late utility billing names were not provided in the packet and Lammers stated who was on the list. Motion by Pinke, seconded to Dahlgren approve the Council bill listing totaling \$74,889.02. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Sherri Hanson reviewed the Park Board meeting held on November 18, 2021 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Requested the ordinance regarding advisory board membership be updated and the ability to have members who are not city residents. Reviewed a plan for NDSU Landscaping program to do a project in the Vergas Long Lake Park. There is a \$1,000 fee for this plan and the park board will bring a written agreement to the council in the future. Discussed damage to the boardwalk from snowmobiles and DuFrane is looking into coverage with the current warranty. Discussed speed limit along Frazee Avenue by the Long Lake Beach. Lammers will contact MNDOT for speed study information. Council may need to contact State Legislature regarding the state setting the speed limit within the city.

Albright reviewed the EDA/HRA meeting held on December 1, 2021 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Discussed the City West Lake Street property which the EDA had a bid opening for sale of property. EDA members recommended to the Council to sell the property for \$40,000.00 to Josh

Hanson. Albright reviewed some concerns the street committee addressed at their meeting regarding the sale of City property. Discussed the current use of the property, the need to have it cleaned up, need for buildings to be removed and we are using it for a use that is not in accordance with our zoning ordinance. Motion by Dahlgren, seconded by Fischer to sell 310 W Lake St, parcel number 82000500024001 to Josh Hanson for \$40,000.00. Motion passed unanimously.

Albright reviewed the Street/Sidewalk/Yard Waste committee meeting held on December 3, 2021 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Pinke, seconded by Dahlgren to approve the resolution 2021-14 approving Complete Streets Policy (complete copy of resolution located at the city office and on the city web page). Motion passed unanimously. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to approve the resolution 2021-18 approving seal coat with Otter Tail County (complete copy of resolution located at the city office and on the city web page). Motion passed unanimously. Discussed transferring funding from our current street budget to the money market account. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to transfer \$14,894.00 to the money market account. Motion passed unanimously. The city has received an easement to remove brush along Townline Road until we have permanent easements in place.

Albright reviewed Planning Commission meeting minutes of November 22, 2021 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Discussed grass ordinance and asked Attorney review ordinance and make recommendation. Discussed snowmobile ordinance and path for them to enter the city.

Bruhn reviewed Liquor Store Committee meeting minutes of December 7, 2021 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to purchase a 3-door cooler from Tweeton Refrigeration for \$4,944.50. Motion passed unanimously.

Lammers reviewed the Vergas Event Center meeting held on November 10, 2021 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to reimburse the Vergas Lion's for \$225.00 of their event center rental due to the Event Center being closed from January-March of 2021. Motion passed unanimously.

Bruhn reviewed budget committee recommendations of the proposed budget numbers for 2022 and proposed 2022 fee schedule. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fisher to approve the resolution 2021-17 (complete copy of resolution located at the city office and on the city web page) for the proposed 2022 budget of \$428,764.00. Motion passed unanimously. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to accept the proposed fee schedule for 2022 with the following being changed from 2021 water rate changed from \$3.50 to \$3.75 per 1,000 gallons, sewer rate changed from \$2.50 to \$2.75 per 1,000 gallons and the yard waste fee from \$40.00 to \$60.00 a year. Motion passed unanimously. The fee for mowing lawns will continue at a rate of \$200.00 an hour with a minimum of one hour. City employees spend a large amount of time writing letters, taking phone calls and setting up someone to mow these properties and hopefully this rate will deter residents from using the city to mow their property. Discussed certified letters and making the residents aware they will be charged \$30.00 for a certified letter if they do not pay current invoice. The amount for a certified letter will be addressed in communication with residents to avoid residents from being surprised by cost of letter delivery. Bruhn reviewed personnel committee recommendation for 2.5% employee cost of living raise. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to give city employees a 2.5% employee cost of living raise effective January 1, 2022. Motion passed unanimously.

Fischer reviewed water and sewer committee meeting minutes of December 13, 2021 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). The media filter at the water plant is leaking and needs to be replaced as soon as possible. The wells need to be inspected immediately due to a loud noise coming from Well #1. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to have DuFrane repair wells as soon as possible. Motion passed unanimously. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to purchase Kurita media for \$113,400. Motion passed unanimously. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke for Lammers to seek financing with Minnesota Rural Water for 10 years for a Micro Loan for \$126,000. Motion passed unanimously.

Utility Bill Late Fee-460 S Pelican Ave

Kevin Niemann owner of 460 S Pelican Avenue requested late fee of \$20.59 be removed from his current utility bill due to him not receiving the bills. The property was sold by foreclosure from US Bank to Niemann and the bills were being sent to US Bank and neither party informed the City of the sale. When bill was to be certified City Office staff found the property had been sold. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to waive the late fee of \$20.59. Motion passed unanimously.

Construction Permits

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the following construction permits: 410 E Scharf Ave for a sign, 906 E Frazee Ave for siding and 137 Main Street for an archway door. Motion passed unanimously.

Information & Announcements

No additional information or announcements were discussed.

Adjournment

The business for which the meeting was called having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45p.m.

Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers, CMC