

Street/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee Meeting Minutes
Vergas City Office
December 8, 2022

1.) A meeting of the Vergas Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste (SSYW) Committee was held on Thursday, December 8, 2022 at 4:00 PM at the Vergas Event Center. Present was Bruce Albright and Paul Pinke, Vergas City Council; Mike DuFrane, Utility Superintendent; Julie Lammers, City Clerk, Blaine Green, Widseth via Zoom, and Cristi Field, OtterTail County Highway Department. Albright called the SSYW meeting to order at 4:07 PM.

2.) Agenda Additions or Deletions. Lammers wanted to add County Garage to the agenda.

3.) Minutes for the 10/25/22 SSYW meeting were attached in the agenda packet. Pinke said he read them, and made a motion to approve, seconded by Albright, approved.

6.) Snow Removal. The City has been working on a number of changes to the snow removal policies, ordinances, and rules. They will hopefully come to hearings early January, 2023. With the addition this summer of diagonal parking on the west side of South (S) 1ST Avenue (AVE)/ County Road (C.R.) Number (No.). 4, between West (W) Main Street (ST) and East (E) Linden ST, we now have created a snow removal issue. Field said the County's snowplows are 12' wide with an 8' wing. With the relocation of the County Garage from Vergas to Pelican Rapids, it is also going to now take longer to get the City of Vergas County roads plowed. Some type of resolution should be adopted for 1ST AVE S designated above, that includes signs saying "No Parking Nov. 1 to April 1 between the hours of 2:00 AM to 8:00 AM for snow removal". Two signs would be needed, one north and one south of the alley, Field said the signs could be placed on tall plastic traffic delineator posts, as it would be difficult to add steel posts through the concrete sidewalk at this time of the year. DuFrane thought he had a couple of the delineators. Another future option might look at removing the sidewalk on the west side of the AVE. This would give us more room to work with. Also by next year this time, we should have the new parking lot done where the County garage sets now. This should also help to alleviate some of the current parking problems. Albright asked if the County would help fund the sidewalk removal, Field said probably not. Lammers felt the necessary resolution could be handled at the upcoming 12/13/22 Council meeting.

4.) Signs. Field said that the County Sign people have been directed to change the sign on C.R. No. 60 near the intersection with C.R. No. 4 in the near future. The existing sign says "55 MPH", and the new sign will read "End 40 MPH". Hopefully this will help slow down the intersection traffic.

Regarding signs and road right-of-way (R/W), Field has checked the records for C.R. No. 4/ S 1ST AVE. She says they have 35' as measured from the road centerline, and the tractors are parked on the landowner's residential lot within the road R/W. The City contacted the owner of 170 S 1ST AVE, regarding Ordinance 71.08, Prohibiting Parking Areas in Front Yards In Residential Zones regarding the same issue. The homeowner said his property is zoned Commercial. Field said from a County perspective, she could get the tractors moved, as they are a road hazard. She will have a personal field meeting with the owner, before the County sends an official letter.

Regarding an additional sign for the Yard Waste site, Lammers will get pricing from JH Signs and Designs, Perham, MN. She will get two prices for a 4'x4' and a 4' x 8' sign. The sign will say "Yard Waste Permit Holders Only", "See Permit for Rules", "No Commercial Dumping",

“Permits can be Purchased at the City Office or Liquor Store”, and “Camera Surveillance in Use”. Lammers said for 2022, she’s issued 88 resident permits (no charge). For the nearby Townships, it is as follows: Dora - 74, Edna - 57, Hobart/Candor - 47, Lida - 14. Lammers questioned that if a resident leaves town, should they be required to turn in their dumping permit? The Committee talked about prosecuting violators. It could be up to a \$300 fine, with two or more infractions, they loose use of the privilege. DuFrane said we also have the issue of unintended fires. This has happened at least 3 times, and we get billed from the Fire Department. DuFrane has also talked with the Solid Waste Department in Fergus Falls, and would still like to see some more gravel added around the blue bins. Albright said we should calculate some quantities in the spring, and contact the County again.

Regarding the barricades placed on the trail wooden walkway bridge along Long Lake, Albright thought that the south barricade had to be placed closer to the bridge, as right now, a snowmobile can get around the barricade and onto the bridge. DuFrane said he could move it closer to the bridge.

5.) Sidewalk Policy. We talked earlier about the snow removal issues along S 1ST AVE. 71.04 Declaration of Snow Emergency; Parking Prohibited. Is an Ordinance that will come to the Council at their meeting on December 13th. Snow removal on streets and sidewalks gets addressed again in Chapter 93, Streets and Sidewalks. Last year, Albright said we contacted a number of neighboring towns regarding their snow removal policies, A revised Ordinance was drafted in this regard. The Committee felt they would like to see it again before passing it on the Council for them to schedule an Ordinance hearing.

7.) Lawrence Lake Acres. Lammers said the developer has agreed to extend Glenn ST to his subdivision property line, at his expense. Widseth has the “preliminary plans” for the improvement of W Lake ST. Green felt that his cost estimate numbers were pretty good, maybe except for R/W, which we now know on the east end of W Lake ST, we don’t have R/W. Green plans to attend the next Council meeting, where he can present the “preliminary study”.

Regarding the Pavement Management Study, Green said he also plans to present that study at the next Council meeting, and wanted to attend in person for said presentation. Once filed, it will be “public information”.

8.) County Garage Parking. Widseth has presented two options for potential parking, once the building is demolished. Option 1A, is for perpendicular parking on the west side, with two-way traffic, and for a possible 6 parking spots on the east side (parallel parking). Someone thought these could be used for vehicles with trailers in the summer. If the parallel parking is utilized, then the traffic would be one-way (alley to E Linden ST). This is Option 1B. Option 2 is for diagonal parking on both sides, again with one-way traffic, yielding 18-20 stalls. Lammers thought we’ll probably need a fence on the west side of property. Signage for the parking lot could include “No Vehicles Over 24 Hours”. We already know that the Altona Square people would like to rent 7 of the spots for their apartment tenants. The will pay \$10/month for each spot, said fee will be added to their rent.

9.) Adjournment. Albright adjourned the meeting at 5:54 PM.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by;

Bruce E. Albright, City Council Member

Council Recommendations:

- “No Parking” signs for snow removal along S 1ST AVE, between Main and Linden ST.

Follow up Actions:

- Feasibility reports for W Lake Streets.
- Address R/W needs for W Lake ST improvement project.
- Continue to work on R/W needs for East Lake Street and N Railway AVE.
- SSW Committee to continue to work on budgets, and future road funding needs.
- Continue to work on City parking, issue engineer work orders to analyze parking potential behind the Event Center, along S 2ND AVE, S Railway AVE (assuming Railroad approval), and behind City Offices including County shop. Work on handicap parking spots.
- Assess needs/budget for Small Cities Assistance Program funding. Lobby legislators for future funding, explain our needs to Legislators.
- Evaluate County and MnDOT speed study data regarding public safety concerns along trail. Look at creating an “urban” district.
- Continue to work on snow removal, sidewalk, and parking ordinances/policies to address concerns. Snow emergency routes?
- Look at making W Sunset Strip an official street.
- Cost estimate for N Railway AVE repairs north of Elm ST intersection.
- Start “budgeting” for Street Condition Survey work.

Additional Future Meeting Agenda Items:

- none.