

CITY OF VERGAS  
COUNCIL MINUTES  
VERGAS EVENTS CENTER & ZOOM  
Tuesday, January 10, 2023

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:30 pm, on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, 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 (located at Kapuskasing, Ontario), Paul Pinke, Dean Haarstick and Natalie Fischer. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers, Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane, Liquor Store Manager Kyle Theisen, Sherri Hanson, Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum, Brad Huddleston, Mallory Huddleston, Paul Sonnenberg, Patrick Hollister, Dwight Berven, Attorney Tom Winters, Mike Summers, Joy Summers, Engineers Jeff Kuhn and Blaine Green.

**Call to Order**

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the meeting to order.

**Oath of Office**

Lammers administered the oath of office to Mayor Julie Bruhn and Council Members Paul Pinke and Dean Haarstick.

**Council Orientation**

Lammers reviewed council orientation.

**Mayor's State of Address**

Bruhn reviewed the past year in Vergas.

**Citizens' Concerns**

Letter was read from Myles Flateland regarding the Event Center. Items will be addressed with the event center committee report.

**Agenda Additions and Deletions**

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to approve the agenda as presented. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the following consent agenda:

1. Council Minutes of the December 13, 2022 and Public Hearing December 29, 2022
2. Bills paid between Council meetings and Council bills
3. Liquor Store bills for December 2022
4. Late water/sewer bills
5. 2022 Investment Schedule/Bond Schedule
6. General Fund Special Revenue Money Market Account
7. 2022 Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances
8. American Rescue Plan Funding 2021-2026
9. LG220 Application to Conduct Off-Site Gambling

Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

**Set Time, Place and Date of Regular 2023 Council Meetings**

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to hold 2023 Council meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in a hybrid setting at the Vergas Event Center. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

### **Appoint Acting Mayor**

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Haarstick to appoint Natalie Fischer as acting Mayor. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Abstain: Fischer. Motion carried.

### **Appointments**

Bruhn reviewed the 2023 City of Vergas Portfolio's/Councils/Committees/Board. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the following appointments:

1. Council Portfolios
2. CDH-Vergas Fire Board Representative-Julie Bruhn
3. Planning Commission Representative and Appointments- Bruce Albright, Judy Kvam and Rebecca Hasse
4. Economic Development Authority and Housing Redevelopment Authority Representative and Member - Bruce Albright
5. Appoint City Attorney- Ramstad, Skoyles and Winters, P.A.
6. Designate Official Newspaper - Frazee-Vergas Forum
7. Designation of official place of advertisement of projects: [www.cityofvergas.com](http://www.cityofvergas.com)
8. Designate Official Depositories: Vergas State Bank

Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

### **Complete Streets Presentation**

Engineer Blaine Green provided a complete streets report.

### **Lawrence Lake Acres Variance**

Council discussed the variance request to allow wells on lots in the development without hooking up to municipal water lines. Fischer reviewed the requirements of a variance. Kuhn reviewed the project and stated the cost for infrastructure usually starts out private and then is later publicly owned. Development is forever and working around private infrastructure is difficult if public infrastructure is added. Discussed lot size, they are probably large enough to have drain fields and wells. Planning Commission had asked the Developer to provide feasibility study which was not provided. Discussed the cost being approximately \$1.8 million and would the developer consider breaking it down into phases. Sherri Hanson representing the developer stated he was not interested in doing this project in phases. Suggested City paying for the lift station to support the project which costs between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Haarstick questioned water for firefighting. Questions were asked regarding W Lake Street right of way. Green reviewed 30 foot right of way and there is no right of way on one property. The development will need to meet conditions of the state standards when drilling for water or putting in proper drain fields for sewer. Variance has already been granted for the 4 lots along West Lake Street. Council stated they need to look at each variance request on a case-by-case basis. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to grant variance to allow lots with wells and drain fields subject to planning commissions recommendations. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright and Fischer. Voting No: Haarstick. Motion carried.

### **Committee Reports**

#### Parks

Sherri Hanson reviewed the Park Board's request to replace fence on trail located between 88 Park View and Long Lake Park for \$17,000.00 Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the quote from Bradley Eastman for \$17,000.00 to replace the fence with funds coming from the park's improvement fund. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried. The committee will get volunteers to remove the current fence. Hanson reviewed the engineering proposal from Widseth regarding the proposed Long Lake Beach plans. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the \$6,830.00 quote for Widseth with the funds be paid out of \$2300 Looney Days donation, \$1700 Keilley Shores donation to parks, \$2830 Engineering Funds. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

#### Event Center

Lammers reviewed Event Center meeting of January 4, 2023 meeting (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Committee reviewed a letter from Myles Flateland. The commercial coffee pot is having issues with the pressure gauge. Percolating coffee pot has been disposed of as it is not able to be repaired. Committee is looking at how to mark the exhaust fan switch. Speaker system needs to be requested before event as we do not have any staff

on weekends. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the flooring bid from Custom Concrete Coatings for \$50,572.00. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried. Motion by Fischer, seconded by Pinke to pay for the floors by using \$10,000.00 of the American Rescue Plan Funds, \$10,000 out of 2022 capital outlay funds. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to use the final advertising spot on the electronic sign to advertise the event center. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

#### Heartland and Heart of the Lakes Trail Plan

Bruhn reviewed engineering quote for Heartland and Heart of the Lakes Trail Plan. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Haarstick to approve Engineering bid of \$15,000.00 for the trail plan. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

#### Veteran's Memorial Park and Pickle Ball

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve resolutions 2023-001 and 2023-002 regarding Pickleball and Veteran's Memorial projects (complete copy of resolution located at the city office). Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

#### Personnel

Bruhn reviewed personnel meeting of December 19, 2022 meeting (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve the presented drug and alcohol testing policy. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

#### Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste

Albright reviewed streets/sidewalk/yard waste meetings of December 8 and 28, 2022 meetings (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Green reviewed the rough numbers of making W Lake Street a wider street, cost would be approximately \$430,000.00. Discussed assessments and how to pay for the new construction would be assessed at 80% according to our policy. This will be divided between 11 lots. This will continue to be discussed at the next streets committee meeting. Discussed a Request For Qualifications for snow removal. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve solicit for snow removal. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried.

### **Ordinances**

#### Tetrahydrocannabinol Product Sales

Bruhn reviewed drafted ordinance and discussed lack of ability to provide compliance checks and inspections due to no police force. Otter Tail County currently has a moratorium on the sales of Tetrahydrocannabinol Products beginning February 1, 2023 for no longer than 1 year.

#### 71.04 Declaring Snow Emergency, Parking Requirements

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the updated ordinance 71.04 Declaring Snow Emergency, Parking Requirements. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried. Ordinance will go into effect after publication.

#### 72.03-72.07 Snowmobiles

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the updated ordinance 72.03-72.07 Snowmobiles. Voting yes: Pinke, Albright, Fischer and Haarstick. Voting No: None. Motion carried. Ordinance will go into effect after publication.

#### 91.02 Cats and Dogs

Albright stated he has checked with the following communities who do not regulate cats: Alexandria and St. Cloud. Discussed only requiring cats to wear a tag when leaving its own property or dwelling. Council agreed to table the ordinance and have planning commission review and update.

## **Staff Reports**

Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent stated he had no report.

Kyle Theisen, Liquor Store Manager reviewed 2022 fiscal reports.

## **Information & Announcements**

Currently until Feb. 1, 2023 Board of Review Training <https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/board-appeal-and-equalization-training>

- a. MN Rural Water Conference – March 7-9, 2023 (DuFrane) St Cloud
- b. MN Clerks and Finance Officers – March 21 -24, 2023 (Lammers) St Cloud
- c. Local Board of Review, Vergas Event Center Council Chambers, 1:00 pm (Mayor, Council and Lammers)
- d. IIMC Conference - May 14-17, 2023 (Lammers) Minneapolis
- e. Clerks Advanced Academy- (Lammers)Waite Park
- f. LMC, Loss Control Workshop (DuFrane, Engebretson, Lammers)
- g. League of MN Cities Annual Conference (Mayor, Council & Lammers)
- h. Municipal Beverage Association (MMBA) (Theisen) Arrowwood

## **Adjournment**

The business for which the meeting was called having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer  
Julie Lammers, CMC