

Street/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee Meeting Minutes
Vergas Event Center
November 13, 2023

1.) A meeting of the Vergas Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste (SSYW) Committee was held on Monday, November 13, 2023 at 1:00 PM at the Vergas Event Center. Present was Bruce Albright and Paul Pinke, Vergas City Council; Julie Lammers, City Clerk; Mike DuFrane, Utility Superintendent; Blane Green and Brian Dawson, Widseth, via Zoom. Albright called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

2.) Agenda Additions/Deletions. DuFrane wanted to add Glenn Street (ST) to the agenda. Approved.

3.) Minutes for the 10/18/23 SSYW Committee meeting was presented. **Motion** by Pinke to approve, **seconded** by Albright, **approved**.

4.) Street Lighting. Currently, we have 4 studies ongoing or completed with Otter Tail Power (OTP). Lawrence Lake Acres is completed, Main ST, broken down into 4 segments is done, and we're awaiting studies for Keilley Shores (Phases 1, 2, and 3), and Sunny Oaks Subdivision. DuFrane questioned if we should also be looking at lighting the Bennett Road (RD)? Pinke noted that the County Highway Department installed a new light at the intersection of County (CO) RD Numbers (Nos) 35/4. Lammers said the Community Club meets the first Monday of the month, but they are currently busy in December with the Holidays and typically don't meet in January. Lammers will get the SSYW Committee on their 02/05/24 meeting agenda to discuss Main ST lighting. She will also see if Lori Moxness, OTP, is available. We may also want to include the EDA/HRA at this meeting. Kevin Zitzow, current EDA/HRA chair is term limited out on 12/31/23, and Paul Sonnenberg will be his replacement.

5.) Streets. For West (W) Lake ST, Widseth has submitted the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) grant application to the State. The application also required County Board approval.

For East (E) Lake ST and North (N) Railway Avenue (AVE), Widseth has completed the right-of-way (R/W) drawings. Brian Dawson, Widseth, is one of their surveyors, and was available on Zoom to answer any questions. R/W will need to be acquired from 3 parties: Franklin Fence; Soo Line Railway Company; and Railway Property holdings, LLC (former insulation plant). The R/W will need to extend all the way to Main ST. Green questioned if it might be easier to vacate E Lake ST? Albright said this was discussed with the neighboring landowners, and they are not in favor of this option. The existing road R/W, which is in the wrong location, cannot be vacated, as it contains the water line. The SSYW Committee is ready to recommend to the City Council that the engineer's information be forwarded to the City Attorney, so he can prepare the necessary easement documents.

An informational meeting with the affected landowners was held on October 18, 2023 for W Sunset Strip. The landowners preferred the cul-de-sac option. The SSYW Committee felt Widseth could prepare the R/W calculations for this option. Green asked if this roadway could be vacated? Albright said it is a mail route. Since this roadway is "officially" not a City ST, the intent of this initiative was to make it a "legal" ST. Lammers said that Planning and Zoning (P&Z) referenced Appendix III: Minimum Road Standards. It says that all roads should have a permanent minimum width of 66' feet of R/W. Albright said the Vergas Zoning Ordinances have a variety of definitions for roads, streets, and alleys. As we work on cleaning up the ordinances, we probably need better definitions for each. To acquire 66 feet of R/W for W

Sunset Strip, we'd be taking people's yards, or we'd have to rebuild the road to realign it. Rebuilding the road was never the intent of this effort. We're trying to deep the costs down.

6.) Ordinance Updates. Chapter 93, Streets and Sidewalks, is currently being updated. Section 92 also talks about sidewalk maintenance. DuFrane said with winter coming, one of the issues we should deal with is where private landowners pile their snow. The City also has to work with the landowners on where the City can pile our excess snow. Lammers mentioned that she has received a Gopher One notice regarding Paul Bruhn's garage behind the new City Office. He wants to install a sign. Albright hoped that Bruhn could work with us on the new office location, as he also has no place to deposit his snow. Snow behind the new City office can also flood the Post Office or the Hardware Store if the manhole doesn't open. Lammers said that Bruhn has already parked a trailer between the buildings. The businesses behind the Liquor Store really have no place to push their snow without placing it on City property. We're also going to incorporate the Ordinance about culverts, and add a permit requirement for utility work on City owned property.

7.) Budget Setting. Lammers and Mayor Bruhn recently attended a workshop sponsored by Senator Rasmusson on securing grant funding. It's important that proposed projects meet the goals listed in our Comprehensive Plan. It might also be time to update our Capital Improvement Plan, dated August 2019, and was completed by KLJ Engineering. The Plan includes water infrastructure improvements; wastewater infrastructure improvements; storm sewer infrastructure improvements; and street improvements, which references W Lake ST, East Scharf AVE, and Bennett RD.

8.) Glenn ST. Lammers received a complaint on 11/08/23 on the condition of Glenn ST, being muddy because of the recent construction, the recent rains, and the associated utility work. She contacted Widseth, and spoke with the developer and his contractor. They felt if the weather improves, they should be able to blade the road and add some gravel. Albright said he also visited with the project contractor. Their intent, had the weather held, was to place about 1/2 of the Class V road gravel this fall. The remaining 1/2 would be placed next spring after the thaw, and when things could be regraded. Albright doubted if the City will be able take over the subdivision roads until next spring/summer, as the work is not finished at this time. The developer is building a spec house in the subdivision, and there were questions that if that is sold this winter, who will have to do snow removal? Albright thought if necessary, the City has an obligation to provide a passable road for the landowners at least to the subdivision boundary. DuFrane said we'll also probably have some drainage/flooding issues to deal with in the spring around the City Shop. All the water runs downhill from the water tower towards the shop. Albright felt we may also need some additional gravel around the City Shop, especially where the water hydrant was relocated.

9.) Other Issues. Lammers said Sonnenberg Excavating should start demolition of the old County Shop this week. Albright talked with DuFrane about patching the alley between Hanson's Plumbing and Heating and the Hardware Store. Hanson's repaved their parking lot, and DuFrane thought it was an opportune time to also repair the damaged alley. Albright agreed. The 2005 Chevrolet pickup has been sold. The 1990 Ford snowplow has also been sold, DuFrane was able to get \$1,100, which was \$100 more than the asking price.

10.) Next Meeting. A date for the next SSWW Committee meeting was not scheduled at this time.

11.) Adjournment. Albright adjourned the meeting at 2:35 PM.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by;

Bruce E. Albright, City Council Member

Council Recommendations:

- Authorize Widseth to complete R/W study for E Lake ST, including acreage calculations and to turn drawings over to Attorney to prepare easements.

Follow up Actions:

- Continue to work on budgets, and future road funding needs.
- Continue to work on City parking, Work on handicap parking spots.
- Continue to work on snow removal, sidewalk, and parking ordinances/policies to address concerns. Snow emergency routes?

Future Meeting Agenda Items:

- none, at this time.