

CITY OF VERGAS  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES  
VERGAS EVENTS CENTER & ZOOM  
Wednesday, August 14, 2024

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, at the Vergas Event Center and on Zoom for a hybrid regular council meeting with the following members present: Mayor Julie Bruhn; Council Members: Bruce Albright, Paul Pinke, and Natalie Fischer. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers; Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane; Editor Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum; Attorney Tom Winters; Engineer Blaine Green; and Citizens: Dean Haarstick, Jill Hoffman, Felicia Singer, Cathy Moe, Kathy Wouters, Lynnae Salveson, Carol Albright, Paul Sonnenberg, Rosemary Sandua, Jason Hanson, Jeff Hanson, Tyler Schmid, Marcia Huddleston, Jeff Zitzow, Wendy Zitzow, Paul Bruhn, Jim Courneya, Kevin Zitzow and Connie Lee.

**Call to Order**

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the meeting to order.

Engineer Blain Green reviewed the 2025-001 project. Parking was the highest need in the Vergas Comprehensive Plan 2036. This project would update parking lots and update storm drainage. City assessment policy of 50% of project cost may be assessed. Total estimated alley cost is \$30,000, \$15,000 would be assessed per linear foot of frontage; \$27 per linear footage. These are all estimates at this point as the project has not been bid. If the project moves forward bids would go out in February and would try for completion of project in early spring.

Paul Bruhn questioned estimate as his area quoted at about \$45 per square foot. P. Bruhn questioned the seal quote in a couple of years would to also be assessed. This is not included in this project and the city has not decided if they will sealcoat. Bruhn questioned how his property would be protected if he did not tar his property. Green stated the final design has not been completed. P. Bruhn questioned why the city of Vergas does not require a bond from utilities when they break up our tar. P. Bruhn asked if they disturbed the property pins will they be replaced. Green explained they would.

Marcia Huddleston, Huddleston Hardware Inc., questioned the 3 city properties listed being owned by the city and what part do they play in this. Green explained they have frontage, and the city will assess itself. Huddleston questioned how much it is going to cost individual businesses to do this? Green explained how the 5 businesses would be assessed. Albright stated the street committee (Paul Pinke and himself) felt if they were doing the parking lot the drainage issue needed to be addressed.

This is a preliminary hearing and there will be another hearing before the project is completed.

Jason Hanson questioned if we would put new asphalt along the old asphalt if the property owners state they do not want to repave. Green answered yes, the city cannot go on private property. Felicia Singer questioned the concrete area behind the Government Services Center. Connie Lee questioned if the parking lot where the County garage was would be paved. Yes, the parking lot would be paved but not assessed. Kevin Zitzow questioned if street lighting would be a part of this project, this project needs to be done correctly and not pieced together. P. Bruhn questioned if a decision would be made tonight and if we would have another meeting. J. Bruhn stated that yes there will be another hearing, and we will need to give notice to everyone in town as financing comes out of city funds.

Public Hearing closed at 6:40 pm.

CITY OF VERGAS  
COUNCIL MINUTES  
VERGAS EVENTS CENTER & ZOOM  
Wednesday, August 14, 2024

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:43 pm, on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, at the Vergas Event Center and on Zoom for a hybrid regular council meeting with the following members present: Mayor Julie Bruhn; Council Members: Bruce Albright, Paul Pinke, Dean Haarstick and Natalie Fischer. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers; Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane; Editor Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum; Engineer Blaine Green; and Citizens Jill Hoffman, Felicia Singer, Cathy Moe, Kathy Wouters, Lynnae Salveson, Carol Albright, Paul Sonnenberg, Rosemary Sandua, Marcia Huddleston, and Connie Lee.

**Call to Order**

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the meeting to order.

### **Citizens' Concerns**

Huddleston crosswalk request was addressed by Street/Sidewalk/Yard Waste Committee Member Albright. Crosswalks have been discussed with Otter Tail County. Committee requested crosswalks to be placed on all four corners of Main Street and County Highway 17, Main Street from Vergas Hardware to Billy's and a crosswalk on Pelican Avenue from the Fire Hall to Vergas 66. The County stated they do not like to put in crosswalks to driveways, so they agreed to all but the Pelican Avenue crosswalk at this time. The County will look at putting a crosswalk from Vergas 66 to Fire Hall during the 2026 project.

Huddleston Munibilling Request. Huddleston stated that some residents have been told they cannot make address changes from the owner to the renter. Attorney Tom Winters stated that it is state laws to keep the utility bills in the owner's name. The city will not be able to put the bills on the owner's property taxes if they are not in their name. Questions were raised regarding having Vergas State Bank pay utility bill and no longer stating it is paid by draft. Lammers stated she would have the receptionist write on the bills they would be paid by draft at Vergas State Bank. Bruhn encouraged those with questions to stop by or call the city office for employees to help with their process. Will follow up with Munibilling regarding set up and address in next city newsletter.

Ringdahl ALS Letter to Pelican Rapids Area Leaders was supplied to the Council.

### **Agenda Additions and Deletions**

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to approve the agenda with the addition of Glenn St and deletion of Proposed MN Basic Code Ordinances. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

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

Council Minutes of July 9, 2024

Bills paid between Council meetings and Council bills totaling \$92,208.71.

Liquor Store bills for July 2024 totaling \$151,262.81.

Late water/sewer bills

2024 Investment Schedule/Bond Schedule

General Fund Special Revenue Money Market Account

2024 Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances

Committee Report: Event, Budget/Personnel, Municipal Building, Vergas Energy Grant Timeline

Resolution 2024-007 Park Donation

Updated Forms:

2024 City of Vergas Portfolio's/Councils/Committees/Boards

Data Request Form

Motion passed unanimously.

### **Improvement No.2025-001**

Albright stated the street committee will bring forth a recommendation to the September meeting.

### **Lake Runners Trail Assn Request**

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve a public input meeting on September 10, 2024 at 6 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Glenn Street**

Albright stated there is drainage issues along Glenn Street and we are working with the developer, homeowner and the contractor. Albright stated that the street committee will bring a recommendation to the September council meeting. Lammers stated developer has asked for the road to be turned over to the city and the street committee and engineer will review the punch list before making a recommendation to the council.

### **Committee Reports**

#### Planning Commission

Lammers reviewed the Planning Commission meeting held July 22, 2024 (minutes available at the Vergas City Clerk's Office). Discussed the current chicken ordinance and changing it to allow the following:

1. No more than four (4) chickens shall be kept on the premises;
2. Chickens shall be kept in a coop or attached coop run/enclosed at all times;
3. No roosters shall be kept on the premises;
4. The premises must be located in a Single and Two-Family Residential (R-1) or Limited Multiple-Family Residential (R-2) zoning district; and
5. The premises must have a parcel of at least five thousand (5,000) square feet.

There was a lot of discussion about roosters and Council asked planning commission to review the proposal again.

#### Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste

No report as crosswalks were discussed in the citizen concerns.

#### EDA/HRA

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to approve the updated bylaws for the EDA/HRA. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to have Bookmobile move to the new parking lot 140 Linden E instead of the alley by the Liquor Store. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Staff Reports**

##### Utilities Superintendent

DuFrane stated he had no report. Bruhn reviewed the energy and building audits which will be done on Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

##### Clerk-Treasurer Report

The written report provided by Lammers will be emailed to Council as it was not pinned to the agenda and is available at City Office for the public.

#### **Information & Announcements**

Trainings:

- 1 Work Session, Opioid Settlement Funds and Otter Tail County Cannabis Ordinance, August 27, 1-2:30 pm Fergus Falls
2. Clerks Advanced Academy- September 19-20, 2024 (Lammers)

#### **Adjournment**

The business for which the meeting was called having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Vergas Clerk-Treasurer

Julie Lammers, CMC