

**Street/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Government Services Center**  
**October 2, 2024**

1.) A meeting of the Vergas Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste (SSYW) Committee was held on Wednesday, October 2, 2024 at 9:00 AM at the Vergas Government Services Center. Present was Bruce Albright and Paul Pinke, Vergas City Council; Julie Lammers, City Clerk; Mike DuFrane, Utility Superintendent; and Dwight Lindberg, Citizen. Attending via Zoom, was Blaine Green, Widseth. Albright called the meeting to order at 9:08 AM.

2.) Agenda Additions/Deletions. DuFrane wanted to add snowplowing. Albright noted the agenda should have the 08/28/24 meeting minutes, rather than the 07/10/24 minutes. He also wanted to add TRAINFO and yard waste. **Motion** by Pinke to approve the revised agenda. **Seconded** by Albright, **approved**.

3.) Minutes for the 08/28/24 SSYW Committee meeting was presented. **Motion** by Pinke to approve, **seconded** by Albright, **approved**.

4.) Glenn Street (ST) Extension. A field review of the project was held on 09/06/24. Attending was the developer, DuFrane, Albright, the contractor, and Green. Each site on the punch or cleanup list was reviewed. The City has been informed that the work has now been completed, and the developer would like the City to accept the road. The acceptance should also include Oak Circle. It was noted the Contractor/developer, has not removed the silt fence from the City's Lot 1/park. Also, acceptance of the roads should include language that the lot owners are responsible for mowing of the road right-of-way (R/W). Hanson would like the road accepted, so the City can assume winter maintenance.

Discussion took place regarding the status of the road extension by Bunkowske for Scharf Avenue (AVE). Based on a very preliminary review of the project, Green said he has some issues that need addressing before the City could accept the road. The Committee doubted that the developer will need winter maintenance. Green said the stormwater pond seems to be about 1/2 as big as it should be. Green called Bunkowske a couple of months ago, but Bunkowske never returned the call. Albright and Green also reviewed the project earlier this summer, and both agree the cul-de-sac at the end of Phase 2 of Bunkowske's development should be removed, now that he has a cul-de-sac at the end of Phase 3. Lammers also said we are dealing with an assessment issue with one of the landowners on Phase 2. They were assessed too much for the paving project based on an incorrect lineage footage determined by the former City engineer. The matter has been turned over to the City Attorney, Tom Winters, for review. Lammers has not heard from him.

DuFrane said there are houses currently being constructed in both subdivisions that do not have the required silt fences in the shoreline areas. Lammers will contact them. Lammers said she was in the field last week with the team from the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). The ordinary high-water elevation (OHW) was staked along Lawrence Lake. Bunkowske has had the City's right to enter the property for inspections, including City staff and personnel.

**Motion** by Pinke to recommend to the 10/08/24 Council meeting that the City accept the Lawrence Lake Acres roads with the caveats noted. **Seconded** by Albright, **approved**.

5.) Parking Lot/Alley Paving. The project preliminary hearing was held by the Council on 08/14/24. The next step is preparation of the plans and specifications. Green said that Widseth is finishing up the construction field season on a number of projects, and as soon as

construction stops due to the weather, he'll have staff available to finish the plans and specifications. He felt we were still on schedule for a January-February, 2025 bid letting. Lammers said both Bruhn and Hanson's Plumbing and Heating would like to see bids for including their properties. Lammers questioned if the area behind the Government Services building could be concrete rather than paving?, as she felt it would better help delineate the property line with Bruhn. He doesn't like it when people park on his property. Green thought others options might include a fence or a painted line. He can look into the costs. Lindberg also questioned if the alley will be designed for 10-ton traffic? Lammers estimated that there are probably 5 semi-tractor/trailer rigs that use the alley daily. Right now, the project is designed for 7-ton traffic, which is about 3.5" - 4" of asphalt. It wouldn't take that much to bump up the alley itself to a 9-ton section.

6.) Budgets - Goal Setting. At the last meeting, the Committee talked about the possible need for a tracked skid steer loader. DuFrane has State contract prices for a Bobcat machine. The State prices are about 33% lower than retail. The first quote was for \$66,659, which included attachments, a sweeper, grapple, and brush cutter. For a slightly smaller machine, the quote was \$55,251. Both machines could be purchased for \$1.00 and a 60-month lease. Albright said we should define the functions that a loader could provide. The City's tractor and loader are getting older. DuFrane said a skid steer loader would be nice for leveling the sand at the beach. Albright thought another option would be hire a local contractor to do this work. DuFrane said the problem is that he always has to wait for contractors. DuFrane noted that Feldt has done the slope work on Scharf and Dianne AVE's. The current drought conditions are probably not good for growing grass. The City's Budget Committee reduced pretty much everyone's financial requests, to keep the 2025 proposed budget to a manageable number. Lammers said because of the abnormal 2024 winter, we should have some leftover carry-over funds to transfer to 2025. Lindberg said the City of Perham has really good equipment, but they also own their own gas utilities, and have those profits to work with.

7.) 2024-2025 Snow Plowing. DuFrane said the Personnel Committee has done away with paid "on-call" time. DuFrane doesn't want this to become an issue, just something that should be addressed before winter. For example, if it snowed on a Friday night/Saturday morning, and DuFrane and Engebretson were both out of town, who would take care of the snow removal? We have a local contractor, who several years ago agreed to handle the City's snow removal if both staff were unavailable. However, Lammers said this individual only put in a bid for one year, that hasn't been renewed since, nor has she had any contact with him. Under the current policy, City Staff is paid 1.5 times their per hour pay for any overtime over 40 hours. They also receive a 15% increase in their hourly rate for work done between midnight and 6:00 AM. Lindberg said we also have to follow Department of Labor laws. He said in Perham, staff get two 15 minute breaks (one in the morning and one the afternoon), plus a 1/2 hour lunch break. He also said winter road maintenance staff get 4 hours of paid "on-call" time per week during the winter months. Albright questioned if the "on-call" policy could pertain to a set time frame, such as November 1 to March 31? DuFrane and Lammers felt it was important that City staff need to know the City's expectations for performance of their duties. Right now, the "on-call" time does not match with the City's snow removal policy. The SSW Committee agreed to ask the Council for a "Workshop" with the Personnel Committee to further discuss this issue.

8.) TRAINFO. The first meeting with the Otter Tail County Engineer on this topic was held on 09/26/24. The next meeting is scheduled for 10/15/24 at 10:00 AM. Lammers attended the first meeting conference call. Initially, the County was looking at Perham and Vergas for use of this tool. Now, it's just the City of Vergas. The equipment provides notifications to travelers' that a train is blocking Main ST in Vergas, with an estimated wait time. The equipment could include signs, FaceBook notifications, or text messages sent to cellphones. The County is researching the costs of the equipment. Longer trains have increased wait times. Lammers now has the contact information for a Soo Line official, to e-mail them, if a train has blocked

the intersection for an abnormally long time. They've also agreed to open the tracks between train switchings to minimize down time. Albright said these are all positive developments. Initially, the spur line was installed for Paul's insulation, but is no longer used for that purpose.

9.) Yard Waste. DuFrane asked if Albright has had time to investigate a possible cellular camera at the site to catch violators? He said he had not. Monthly plans start as low as \$5.00 per month. DuFrane said probably the biggest issue is where to locate the camera? Albright will take a look.

10.) Ordinance Updates. Albright still needs to review Section 7. Lammers said she's been busy, and there are still some ordinances that need to be reviewed by the Council.

11.) Next Meeting. A date for the next SSYW Committee meeting was not scheduled at this time. Committee members should check their schedules and get back to Lammers with possible meeting dates.

10.) Adjournment. Albright adjourned the meeting at 10:35 AM.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by;

Bruce E. Albright, City Council Member

Council Recommendations:

- accept the roads in the Lawrence Lake Development with the noted conditions.
- schedule a Workshop between the Personal and SSWY Committees to discuss snow removal policies and procedures for staff compensation.

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.
- Continue to work with the Community Club on possible lighting changes for Main ST.
- Research options for W Lake ST funding. R/W acquisitions. Meet w/Candor Twp.
- Status of E Lake ST and N Railway AVE R/W acquisitions. Finish process.
- Meet with Garrett Dahlgren/Heath Courynea regarding W Sunset Strip R/W.
- TRAINFO

Future Meeting Agenda Items:

- Alley/parking lot paving/drainage.