

CITY OF VERGAS
COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING ON CANNABIS & PUBLIC MEETING ON THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
VERGAS EVENTS CENTER & ZOOM
Monday, March 31, 2025

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:30 pm on Monday, March 31, 2025, at the Vergas Event Center and on Zoom for a hybrid public hearing with the following members present: Mayor Dwight Lundgren; Council Members: Bruce Albright, Paul Pinke, Dean Haarstick and James Stenger. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers; Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Sarah Stone; Liquor Store Manager Kyle Theisen; citizens: Pat Strand, Macia Huddleston, Cal Miller Bayleigh Lautenschlager, Carol Albright, Mary Creed Vanessa Perry, Carissa Trites and Robert Jacoby.

Call to Order

Mayor Dwight Lundgren called the meeting to order.

Quick recap

The city council discussed a proposed cannabis ordinance, including potential regulations for cannabis stores and events, with plans for further review by the planning commission and city council. The council also addressed the need for a liquor store remodel, considering various improvements and funding options. Additionally, they explored the design and implementation of an awning for a building, discussing its impact on drainage and potential additions like picnic tables and a flagpole.

Summary

Cannabis Ordinance Review and City Council

Vergas discussed the new cannabis ordinance proposed by the city, which is similar to the county's ordinance but allows cannabis stores in the commercial district, unlike the county's 500 feet from a park restriction. The city's ordinance will be reviewed by the planning commission and then presented to the city council for a decision. The city's ordinance can be more lenient than the county's, as the county has allowed cities to choose certain areas. The process will continue with the planning commission and then the city council.

Cannabis Event Restrictions and Definitions

Bayleigh Lautenschlager discussed the definition and potential restrictions of cannabis events, including the possibility of holding them on public property and the designated hours. Lautenschlager also raised concerns about the inclusion of minors in cannabis events and the need for clearer definitions between cannabis and other products. The team agreed to further discuss these issues and consider the implications of these restrictions on future events.

Cannabis Law and Medicinal Use

Lautenschlager discussed the need for workable laws that would last for 30 years, expressing concerns about blanket statements and potential issues with the county. V Lautenschlager also clarified that the age requirement for consuming cannabis products is 21, with a permission slip from parents for those under 21. The county is still in the draft stage with the cannabis law, and the state has not yet issued licenses. A resident also mentioned that the use of cannabis products for medicinal purposes should not be refused, citing his late wife's experience with cancer treatment.

Cannabis Regulations Discussion and Implementation

The council discusses the potential implementation of cannabis regulations in the city. Lammers is

gathering information from the county and will draft an ordinance to be read at two council meetings before a decision is made. The discussion covers various aspects, including sales hours, licensing, taxation, and banking issues. The council acknowledges that cannabis will be present in the community regardless of regulations and aims to be proactive in managing its effects. They also consider the potential economic impact, noting experiences from other states where cannabis has been legalized. The council agrees that more discussion is needed and plans to hold further meetings on the topic.

Adjournment

The business for which the meeting was called was completed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Vergas Clerk-Treasurer
Julie Lammers, CMC

Next steps

- Lammers to contact the county to clarify cannabis event hours and regulations.
- Lammers will investigate the definition of "unorganized territory" as it applies to Vergas.
- City Council will discuss and decide on the number of cannabis stores allowed in Vergas.
- The Planning Commission will review and finalize the cannabis ordinance for Vergas.
- Theisen to proceed with the liquor store renovation project using funds from the capital improvement account.
- Theisen to work with contractors to finalize design details, including billboard placement and height, gutter system, and drainage.
- City to check ordinance for billboard height restrictions.
- Theisen to explore options for picnic table placement and installation in the renovated area.
- Theisen and DuFrane to discuss and plan the most feasible and safe drainage system for the new awning.