

**Vergas EDA/HRA**  
**Government Services Center & Zoom**  
**2:00 PM on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

EDA/HRA Mission: Retain and promote business in our community, adding housing so that we prosper and increase our tax base, keeping Vergas a vital community.

The City of Vergas Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA) met on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 2:00 pm in a hybrid meeting at the Vergas Government Services building and on Zoom.

<b>2025</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>
DuWayne Ditterich, President	N/A	P/P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	
Bruce Albright, President/Council Liaison	N/A	P/P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Paul Sonnenberg, Member	N/A	P/P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	
Kevin Zitzow, Member	N/A	A/P	A	P	A	A						
Joy Summers, Member	N/A	P/A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	
Vanessa Perry, Member	N/A						P	P	A	A	P	
Julie Lammers, City Clerk-Treasurer	N/A	P/P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	

*P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting*

Also present: Editor Bob Williams of the [Frazee-Vergas Forum](#), CEDA Representative Jordan Grossman and SBDC Representative Ian Carlstrom.

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Albright at 2:06 PM.

#### **Agenda Additions and Deletions**

Grossman added "My Town" video to the agenda. Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Perry to approve the agenda with the addition made by Grossman. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Status of Recommendations to City Council**

##### **Extension of Dianne Avenue**

Albright reported that he and Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane had inspected the site before the last council meeting. He noted it was a difficult site with a lower area, though the road does extend all the way to the property line with the right of way in place. Albright expressed his opinion that if someone were interested in the lot, they should take the existing dirt pile on the site, level the lot, and install the approach themselves, as it would be expensive just to put a driveway in. Albright did not believe the EDA should spend money on a lot that may not be saleable, and suggested that if someone is interested in the lot, they should make an offer below asking price and incorporate the excavation work into their plans. Sonnenberg added that there is currently a barricade where the road ends, and it drops about 15 feet down. He noted they wouldn't want to end the street in case of future development. Lammers clarified that lot 415 was sold, leaving only two lots still available - one on Eva and the lot on Dianne Avenue. She mentioned that two people had looked at the Dianne Avenue lot but were concerned about access. She would inform them that they could install a driveway across the basement area. Discussion ensued about whether someone buying the lot would be required to put in a driveway or could access it through adjacent property. Albright suggested informing potential buyers that the road right-of-way is there for access, or they could negotiate an easement with neighboring property owners.

## **Resignation**

Albright reported that the Council accepted DuWayne's resignation effective at the end of the year. Lammers suggested reaching out to Joshua Carlson, a realtor with The Carlson Group, as a potential replacement. She also mentioned that Joy Summers was leaving and Kevin Zitzow would be taking her position. Discussion followed about meeting times, with Lammers noting that Zitzow had indicated afternoon meetings don't work for his repair business schedule. Sonnenberg mentioned that Kevin proposed changing meeting times to 5:30 PM or allowing remote participation through Zoom. Perry shared that she has difficulty with morning meetings. Lammers said she would look into potential board members and meeting time options.

## **Minutes**

Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Albright to approve the minutes from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Financial Update**

### **2025 Income and Expenses**

Lammers reported that Pickleball expenses amounted to \$12,000 from West Central Initiative fund. The EDA also paid \$3,182 to CEDA for the quarter. She noted that grant funds approved last month had not yet been distributed as the projects were not completed. Albright clarified that the mailbox expense was for Lawrence Lake Acres and had already been taken care of, with the developer Josh having paid for it. Motion by Perry, seconded by Sonnenberg, to accept the financial update. The motion passed unanimously.

## **CEDA Representative Jordan Grossman**

### **Child Care**

Grossman began by expressing concern about the changing narratives in public meetings regarding the childcare project. She asked how involved the board wanted to be with monthly updates on the project to ensure accurate information was being shared. Grossman reported they were continuing to explore options for childcare solutions in the area. She had compiled a list of potential providers who had expressed interest, which she noted was typically the more challenging aspect. She had connected with the county licenser and Mahube regarding available programming. Grossman emphasized the need to focus on securing a location first before determining who would run, own, or operate the facility. She reviewed previously discussed potential locations including the Schmid's property next to Jesus' Little Lambs, Jesus' Little Lambs itself, various churches, and the Eva and Dianne properties. She suggested that taking the initiative to designate a specific location would be a good first step, as it would provide a concrete foundation for funding and programming discussions. Albright offered to meet with the Schmid's alongside Grossman to discuss land acquisition and pricing. Albright noted that a traditional approach would be to negotiate a purchase agreement with contingencies that would allow enough time to address the remaining details of the project. Albright volunteered to accompany Grossman to meet with the Schmid's, as he has a personal connection with them. Sonnenberg asked if there was an outside entity that had completed a daycare in Otter Tail that might be interested. Grossman explained that in Otter Tail they had spent nine months establishing nonprofit status, which could be an option for Vergas but should have happened a year ago. The board discussed potential funding sources, with Sonnenberg suggesting there would likely be donors willing to support the project. Grossman emphasized the importance of having visual plans and secured land to attract larger donors.

Grossman then announced that Maddi Petrick had successfully applied for the RCCIP program, a technical assistance initiative. Only three communities in Minnesota were selected, with Vergas being one of them. Due to Vergas's size and lack of current providers, they would participate in the "Child Care Strategic Supply Plan" program, a condensed 9-month version rather than the 18-month program. Grossman was working on revising the task force list, which included Ruby and Greg Schmid, Perry, Albright, Lammers, and Kelsey. The board agreed to focus on communication with Greg and Ruby Schmid in the next 30 days to discuss land acquisition. Albright noted

that the RCCIP program would provide valuable knowledge and assistance, particularly regarding business planning aspects such as determining how many children would be needed to break even. Discussion followed about operational models, including who would own the building, potential rental costs, and whether the city would charge reduced rent to make it feasible for providers. Grossman mentioned that parent-aware rated providers can accept grants for low-income families, and that the maximum charge in a town of Vergas's size would be approximately \$300 per month per provider. Grossman also offered to arrange tours of daycare facilities in Perham or New York Mills to see their city-led operations. Albright suggested waiting until after the initial group meeting so interested task force members could join.

#### **Vergas EDA Community Rehab Grant**

Grossman reported there were no new applications this month. She noted there had been a delay in signing paperwork, but the previously approved grant funds would be distributed once projects were completed. She offered to reach out to local businesses to remind them of the program. Grossman also introduced a potential marketing opportunity called "My Town," an online blog series featuring WCCO anchor Corey partnering with a local production company from Pelican Rapids. Communities can apply to be featured, resulting in a dedicated episode and 5-10 promotional videos that the community would own. Grossman noted the service costs approximately \$25,000-\$40,000, but she had spoken with Sherry at the bank who expressed interest in potential partnership. Sonnenberg commented on the quality of the productions and their effectiveness at attracting visitors to featured communities. The board discussed the promotional value but made no decisions, with Grossman suggesting they keep it in mind while focusing on the childcare initiative.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Perry to adjourn the meeting at 2:50 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorded by Rachel Nustad (assisted by ClerkMinutes)

Julie Lammers, CMC  
City Clerk-Treasurer  
City of Vergas

#### **Council Recommendations**

None.

#### **Follow up Actions**

- Lammers: Contact Joy regarding lot access and driveway options for potential buyers
- Lammers: Reach out to Joshua Carlson about joining the EDA board
- Lammers: Distribute approved grant funds once recipients complete their projects
- Albright and Grossman: Meet with Greg and Ruby Schmid to discuss property purchase for childcare facility location
- Grossman: Revise task force list created by Maddi and share with EDA members
- Grossman: Reach out to businesses in the next month about Facade Improvement Program
- Grossman: Send email with link to all "My Town" videos for EDA members to review
- Grossman: Look for grant opportunities related to marketing/My Town program
- Committee : Schedule tour of daycare facilities in Perham or New York Mills