

CITY OF VERGAS  
 Event Center Advisory Minutes  
 Vergas Event Center & Zoom Teleconference  
 3:00 P.M. on Wednesday, January 14, 2026

2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
James Stenger, Council Appointment	P											
Vanessa Perry, Member	A											
Rachel Nustad, Member	P											
Robert Jacoby, Member	P											
Jay Norby, Member	A											

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

Also present: Citizens Vanessa Perry and Deb Jacoby.

**Call to order**

The meeting was called to order by Stenger at 3:02 PM.

**Assign Positions**

**Chair**

Motion by Stenger, seconded by Jacoby, to elect Stenger as the Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

**Vice Chair**

Motion by Stenger, seconded by Jacoby, to elect Jacoby as the Vice Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

**Secretary**

Motion by Stenger, seconded by Jacoby, to elect Nustad as the Secretary. The motion passed unanimously.

**Set Time, Place and Date of Regular 2026 Meetings**

Motion by Stenger, seconded by Jacoby to hold the meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 3:00 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

**Additions and Deletions**

Nustad requested adding discussion about stairs for the stage to the Building Review section. Stenger noted they needed to add a request about tables and chairs that had been received.

**Minutes**

Motion by Jacoby, seconded by Stenger, to approve the minutes from December 10, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

**Status of Recommendations to City Council**

Stenger reported that the City Council approved the rental checklist and commended Nustad for her work on it. The Council also approved discontinuing the free and reduced rental form as no better option could be identified.

**Income and Expense**

Stenger noted that the year-to-date expenses appeared high because grants for the solar project had not yet been received. The refund and reimbursement line showed \$85,000, which reflected where they were financially before accounting for the solar project.

**Rental**

**2025 and 2026 Review**

The board discussed 2025 rentals and prospects for 2026. Nustad expressed optimism about rental income for the upcoming year, mentioning a wedding scheduled for May and an upcoming vendors market. She noted that the vendor market had 52 vendors sign up for the market, though they might not be able to accommodate all of them. Nustad plans to have rental forms available during the event to encourage future rentals. She also mentioned a recently scheduled baby shower and other pending reservations.

### **Events to raise awareness**

Perry suggested that the Event Center could host its own vendor markets as fundraisers a couple times a year, noting the strong interest demonstrated by the quick response to the vendors market post on the DL Buzz page on social media. She explained that such events would be relatively simple to organize compared to other fundraisers and would bring people to town who might also patronize local businesses. Nustad agreed this was a good idea.

### **Rental Form**

The board discussed simplifying the rental form pricing structure. Stenger explained that the current system has a large price difference between 3-day rentals with and without alcohol that doesn't properly reflect the actual costs of security. The recommendation was to establish base rates (hourly, daily, or 3-day) and then add alcohol service as a separate item based on hours needed. The board also discussed the need to clarify which areas are included in rentals. Stenger noted that the kitchen, bar area, and main room cannot be separated effectively and should be rented together. Perry confirmed that the previous rental form was confusing even for her as a board member and lifetime Vergas resident. There was discussion about whether the bar area had ever been rented separately. Jacoby recalled that Julie Lammers had mentioned wanting to replace the divider for separate rentals. Perry questioned the practicality of renting the bar area separately since people would need to walk through the main area to access restrooms. The board agreed to follow up with Julie Lammers on this question.

### **Building Review**

#### **Ash Tray**

Stenger reported on a discussion from a prior municipal store meeting where Mike DuFrane took responsibility for the ashtray fires, acknowledging he had not emptied it frequently enough. Stenger recommended getting a separate ashtray that could be moved away from the building if a fire occurred. Perry suggested mounting the existing ashtray on a post in the grassy area to the right of the back door as an inexpensive solution. She emphasized the seriousness of the safety issue, noting that she had personally put out fires in the ashtray on four separate occasions, including twice in one night when 300+ people were in the building. Perry also expressed concern about Mike DuFrane's statement that all requests need to go through the City Council. She felt that emergency safety issues should be handled immediately rather than waiting for council approval. The Chair agreed to bring this to the City Council.

Nustad noted she had just received a text from Julie Lammers that Mike DuFrane had ordered new ash trays for the Event Center.

#### **Solar**

Stenger provided an update on the solar project, which had been delayed due to weather and scheduling of other grant-based projects. The electrical work was scheduled for the second week of March, with the roof work to be done the second week of May. The battery area work was scheduled for the last week of the month. Installation was expected by mid-May with approximately a month needed to work out any issues. Jacoby asked about electrical capacity for a new stove the Lions wanted to purchase, noting concerns about ground faults that had occurred. Nustad recalled an incident where equipment was causing breakers to trip but was resolved by Zitzow Electric. The board discussed waiting until after the solar installation to address this issue.

#### **Higher Chairs and Tables**

The board also discussed a request for higher chairs for elderly attendees of church events. Perry questioned whether the request was for bar-height seating, noting that the current chairs were already standard height. She suggested chairs with armrests might be more helpful for elderly individuals with mobility issues. The board decided to take the request under advisement but had no immediate plans to replace chairs.

#### **Stairs for Stage**

Nustad brought up the idea of purchasing movable stairs for the stage, suggesting they would be beneficial for weddings and other events. Stenger expressed safety concerns about allowing the general public to access the stage. Perry suggested looking into removable railings as a safety measure. The board agreed to research options further.

**Adjournment**

Motion by Stenger, seconded by Jacoby, to adjourn the meeting at 3:36 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Nustad, Deputy Clerk  
Event Center Coordinator  
(Assisted by ClerkMinutes)

**Council Recommendations**

- Recommend to City Council that committee is given policy regarding giving City Employees direction.

**Follow Up Actions**

- Nustad: Provide the height of the stage to Stenger for further research on portable stairs.
- Research pricing and feasibility of portable/folding stage stairs and removable railings for stage safety, and report back.
- Nustad: Check into the current rental rate paid by the church for the Event Center and report back.
- Nustad: Talk to Julie Lammers about the history and feasibility of renting the bar area separately, and report findings to the group.
- Assess items stored underneath the stage (e.g., old beanbag boards) and consider options for storage of portable stairs/railings.