

CITY OF VERGAS
 Event Center Advisory Minutes
 Vergas Event Center & Zoom Teleconference
 3:00 PM on Wednesday, April 8, 2026

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
James Stenger, Council Appointment	P	P	P	P								
Vanessa Perry, Member	A	P	P	P								
Rachel Nustad, Member	P	P	P	P								
Robert Jacoby, Member	P	P	P	A								
Jay Norby, Member	A	P	A	P								

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

Present in person: Deb Jacoby

Present via zoom: City Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Stenger at 3:00 PM.

Additions and Deletions

None.

Minutes

Motion by Norby, seconded by Perry, to approve the minutes from March 11, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

Stenger reported that they had sent no recommendations to city council from the last meeting. He noted that the only recommendation they had made was regarding the "SAIL" program (Stay Active and Independent for Life). The program instructor, Cynthia McDonough, went to council and it was approved for 12 weeks, meeting twice a week. Perry inquired about advertising the SAIL Program as free of cost, explaining she had messaged about putting this information on Facebook advertisements to incentive participation, especially for older people on fixed incomes. She noted that Cynthia had declined to include that it was free, which Perry found strange. Nustad explained that it had to do with grant requirements - Cynthia said she wasn't allowed to advertise it as free due to grant policies, though Nustad could tell people directly that it was free. The board discussed attendance, with reports that the first class had 13-14 people, and a more recent class had over 20 participants. Word-of-mouth promotion was helping spread awareness of the program.

Income and Expense

Nustad reported that Lammers' report was included in the materials. Nustad noted scheduling several more graduation parties, which was positive timing as people were beginning to think about them. She also mentioned booking many children's birthday parties and indicated her calendar was full with more activity than she had previously experienced. Stenger inquired about utility services listed in the report. Lammers, explained these were costs for Otter Tail Power and Great Plains utilities. Stenger noted concerns that they were already approaching half of their budgeted amount for utilities, which had been budgeted lower than the previous year's actual expenses. Lammers clarified that the budget had been reduced because they anticipated having solar power installed, which had not yet been implemented, explaining the higher-than-expected costs.

Building Review

Tables

Norby provided an update on table replacement, asking whether they preferred rectangular or round tables. He mentioned they had originally discussed rectangular tables but had switched their preference. Lammers confirmed they wanted round tables, explaining that weddings and receptions frequently request round tables because people prefer the conversational arrangement they provide.

There was discussion about replacing the heavy, fake wood particleboard tables with new round plastic tables. Norby clarified they would need to purchase a new cart for round tables and confirmed they would dispose of the old brown tables. Various disposal options were discussed, including selling them at a community rummage sale, or advertising them on Facebook. The board confirmed their preference for round tables to replace the existing problematic ones.

Policy

Current Policy

Stenger noted they had discussed event center policy at the previous meeting and tabled it pending additional information. He had

spoken with Lammers about security requirements, noting the policy had been in place for a considerable time, predating Lammers tenure.

Proposed Policy

The board engaged in extensive discussion about security requirements. Norby questioned whether security was truly necessary and asked about the certification status of their current security company. Nustad confirmed the security personnel were first aid and CPR certified. There was confusion about which security company they currently used, with Stenger believing they had switched companies in recent years. Lammers clarified they had used the same company since she started, though they had previously employed a city employee for security but were unable to find someone willing to work only eight nights per year. Perry questioned the actual authority of private security personnel, noting they legally cannot take physical action unless weapons are involved and essentially can only call police. Norby shared experience from working at Zorbaz, explaining that hiring employees as doormen actually provided more authority than hiring outside security companies. Lammers explained that security personnel can shut down events if they become disorderly, turn lights on and off, direct people to leave, and call the sheriff's department. She described an incident where she had to intervene when security wanted to shut down a wedding dance, successfully de-escalating the situation by speaking with the disruptive individuals. The board discussed alternatives, including having bar staff take on security responsibilities since city employees would have similar authority to security personnel. They also considered requiring larger events to provide their own security. Perry expressed concern that requiring bar staff to arrange their own security would complicate bookings and potentially deter business, noting the limited profitability of events after paying for staffing and security. The discussion was tabled, with Perry suggesting that whoever ultimately takes responsibility for the event center should make these policy decisions.

Future of the Board

Stenger presented a proposal to dissolve the Event Center Advisory Board. He explained that with the Event Center Coordinator now handling much of the event center operations, there was duplication of oversight. The board had originally been created when there was no dedicated staff person and fewer rentals. Now that the facility had dedicated management and strong rental activity, the board's original purpose had been fulfilled. Stenger noted ongoing challenges with filling board positions and scheduling meetings that worked for all members. He proposed reassigning the board's responsibilities to the Event Center Coordinator position and having oversight fall under the municipal building committee. Lammers acknowledged the board's contributions, noting it was originally started by a few Vergas locals to increase building usage and improve the facility. She presented members with a formal proposal explaining the transition and resolutions to present to city council on April 21st.

Motion by Norby, seconded by Nustad, to recommend to City Council dissolution of the Event Center Advisory Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Julie Lammers asked about timing for the dissolution. Perry explained that with ongoing projects needing funding but no one having time to organize fundraising events, continuing to meet without the ability to move forward served little purpose. Norby confirmed they recommended immediate dissolution following city council approval on April 21st.

The board discussed fundraising limitations, with Lammers explaining that cities cannot fundraise directly due to state statute - they raise funds through taxes and liquor store profits. Any fundraising activities would need to be conducted through partner organizations like the Community Fund, Lions Club, or other local groups. Nustad expressed willingness to work with these organizations for future fundraising needs.

Adjournment

Motion by Perry, seconded by Norby, to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Council Recommendations

- Recommend to City Council immediate dissolution of the Event Center Advisory Board following City Council approval on April 21st.

Follow Up Actions

- Nustad: Email Cynthia to ask why the sale program cannot be advertised as free and report back to the group.