

CITY OF VERGAS
 Event Center Advisory Minutes
 Vergas Event Center & Zoom Teleconference
 3:00 PM on Wednesday, March 11, 2026

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

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

Present via zoom: Jay Norby

Call to order

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

Additions and Deletions

None.

Minutes

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

Status of Recommendations to City Council

None.

Income and Expense

Stenger presented the budget year-to-date figures and Nustad provided a summary of all events booked so far. The board discussed various upcoming events including a "Bring in Spring" event and "Kids' Art Camp". There was discussion about whether these events actually rent the building or just hold it in case of rain for \$200. Perry clarified that neither event typically uses the building unless it rains, but they do use the restrooms.

Rental

Rental Form

Stenger reported that he and Nustad had revised the rental form. The major changes included removing the security requirement from the base rental packages and restructuring the pricing to offer three-day, day, and hourly rates. Security would now be available as an additional fee of \$35 per hour if requested by the renter. However, this change would require the board to recommend that the city council no longer require security at events. Nustad noted concerns about past incidents where security discovered property damage (broken toilets, sinks ripped from walls) that might not have been found until later without security present. Perry raised significant concerns about the current security service, stating that security guards often leave at midnight when bar service ends, despite being supposed to stay an hour after bar close. She questioned the value of requiring security when guards aren't performing their duties effectively and noted that the requirement makes the venue less competitive since other venues don't require security. Jacoby expressed reluctance to change existing policy without clear justification and suggested the board needed more information before making a recommendation. The discussion revealed that most current council members weren't present when the security requirement was originally implemented. Perry suggested researching other venues' security policies and gathering more information before presenting a recommendation to the council. She also noted that security guards have no legal authority and can only call the sheriff if needed.

Jacoby pointed out formatting issues in the rental form, specifically that the day rate should say "8 hours or more" rather than "over 8 hours" to avoid a gap in coverage. The discussion also covered liquor liability insurance requirements, with Perry seeking clarification on what documentation was needed. The board confirmed that bars must provide copies of their liability insurance policies naming the city as a beneficiary. Jacoby suggested adding language about THC products being prohibited on city property by Minnesota state law.

Exercise Opportunity

Nustad explained that she had met with someone from the "SAIL" program (Stay Active and Independent for Life), which provides strength and balance fitness classes for adults 65 and older. The instructor wanted to offer classes a couple nights per week during the summer months and requested that the rental fee be waived since the classes would be provided free to participants. Nustad

informed her that any fee waiver would need city council approval, so the instructor plans to present her program directly to the city council. Perry noted the difference between this situation and Zumba classes, which pay rent but also charge participants, while the SAIL program would be entirely free. The board discussed the pros and cons of waiving fees, acknowledging the community benefit while noting ongoing facility costs and the current financial position of the event center. Since the matter would go directly to council for decision, the board did not need to make a recommendation.

Building Review

Tables

Norby provided an update on the table replacement project. He reported having received bids and indicated that the board would make their decision at their March 30th meeting. He noted they would likely need to purchase additional table racks along with the new tables.

Policy

Stenger presented both the current policy and proposed policy changes for board review. However, the discussion was tabled due to the unresolved security issues from the rental form discussion and concerns about liquor license compliance. Perry explained that under Minnesota law, a catering liquor license is only valid if the same entity providing alcohol also provides food service. Currently, many events have separate vendors for bar service and catering, which technically violates state law. The board discussed potential solutions, including returning to one-day liquor permits issued by the city or ensuring that alcohol vendors also provide catering services. Perry noted that this legal issue poses greater liability concerns than the security requirement, since events operating under invalid catering licenses would already be breaking the law in case of any incident.

The board agreed to table the policy discussion until the next meeting to allow Nustad to research one-day permit options and determine what legal compliance measures need to be implemented.

Additional Discussion

Perry asked about planning potential fundraising events to address building improvement needs, noting that the event center currently lacks funding for necessary projects. Nustad agreed to take a leadership role in organizing such events with board support and guidance. The board briefly discussed the success of the recent vendor market, which had an estimated 300-350 attendees. Feedback was positive, though organizers noted that having food options and folding chairs would improve future events.

Jacoby inquired about the solar panel installation timeline. The board learned that a security cage was no longer needed and that the panels should be operational by June 1st, with installation work planned for March through May.

Adjournment

Motion by Perry, seconded by Jacoby, to adjourn the meeting at 3:41 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Council Recommendations

None.

Follow Up Actions

- Nustad: Research the possibility and requirements of obtaining one-day liquor licenses for event bar service, including restrictions, who can apply, and associated costs, and report findings to the group before next month's meeting.
- Norby: Present bids and make decision on new tables and racks at the lions board meeting on the 30th.
- Nustad: Ensure the SAIL program representative is on the agenda for the upcoming City Council meeting to present and discuss the possibility of waiving fees for the SAIL program classes.
- All members: Consider and prepare to discuss at the next meeting: (a) prioritization of building projects/facility improvements, and (b) fundraising ideas to support these projects.
- Nustad: Prepare recommendations for the next meeting after gathering more information on security practices at comparable venues.