

CITY OF VERGAS.
 Park Board Advisory Board Minutes
 Vergas Event Center & Zoom Teleconference
 3:00 PM on Thursday, April 9th, 2026

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dean Haarstick, Council Appointment	P	N/A	A	A								
Sherri Hanson, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Chuck Hanson, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Steph Hogan, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Tiffany Prindle, Member	A	N/A	A	A								
Tony Sailer, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Rachel Nustad, Secretary of the board	P	N/A	P	P								
Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent	P	N/A	A	A								

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

Present via person: Julie Lammers

Present via zoom: Editor Bob Williams of the [Frazee-Vergas Forum](#)

Call to order

The City of Vergas Park Advisory Board was called to order by S. Hanson on Thursday, April 9th, 2026 at 3:00 PM.

Additions and Deletions

The board discussed removing items from the agenda that were not relevant for this meeting. There was some confusion about which agenda version was being used, as some members thought pickleball and Story Walk items had already been removed. Rachel Nustad suggested keeping soccer nets on the agenda as she wanted to discuss that topic, while agreeing to delete Story Walk and pickleball items.

Minutes

Motion by Hogan, seconded by Sailer, to approve the minutes from March 12, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

None.

Long Lake Park Master Plan

Review of the Plan

The board engaged in extensive discussion about the Long Lake Park Master Plan, which was originally developed in 2022. The preliminary cost estimate for the full master plan was \$1,273,000, which includes landscaping, mulch, limestone, bike racks, tables, trash receptacles, rubber surfacing, benches, a stage pavilion projected at \$145,000, and flush restrooms estimated at \$95,000 with \$45,000 for city sewer connection.

The board discussed the need to break the project into manageable phases rather than attempting to complete the entire plan at once. Key priorities identified included:

Bathhouse/Restroom Facilities: This emerged as the top priority, with multiple board members emphasizing the poor condition of current facilities. A letter from a 7-year-old was referenced, stating "the bathroom the parks bathroom smells. I could not sit on it because it was cold and smelly. It was dark in there, and I did not feel safe." The board agreed that connecting to city sewer with flush toilets would be the most impactful improvement.

Traffic Pattern and Parking: The plan includes a one-way traffic pattern with entrance near the current bathhouse location and exit where the current entrance is located. The county has already approved this change. New diagonal parking would be created on the lakeside of the driveway, though the board noted the angles shown in the current plan appear incorrect for the proposed traffic flow.

Amphitheater/Pavilion: The board discussed combining the bathhouse with an amphitheater structure, which would share walls and reduce costs. The Vergas State Bank has expressed interest in sponsoring this facility, potentially calling it the "Vergas State Bank Pavilion."

Safety Concerns: The board emphasized safety improvements, particularly closing off the current parking area where families watch children to prevent vehicle-pedestrian conflicts. This area could be converted to sand or potentially include a splash pad, though cost concerns were raised about splash pad maintenance and water usage.

Engineering Challenges: Sailer raised concerns about the natural spring location and its impact on the proposed entrance location. There was also discussion about the positioning of the highway and whether the county would consider moving it, though this was deemed unlikely.

Sales Tax Update

Lammers provided an update on the sales tax legislation. The house has introduced bill HF 4718, with Tom Murphy presenting the introduction and first reading while waiting for a hearing date. For the senate, Lammers testified before the committee on bill SF 4727. Other cities that testified included Taylor Falls, Northfield, Baxter, Milton Lake, Elk River, and Saint Cloud. Committee chair Anne Rust called Vergas's request "a really unusual request, but very fiscally responsible," which Lammers noted as the most positive feedback heard. The city is asking for 5 years of sales tax authority. Sydney, Jordan Rasmussen's aide, conveyed that Jordan said Lammers "did a really good job" with her testimony.

The timeline requires approval by the end of May to meet September ballot requirements for the November election. If approved, September and October would be used for public education and campaigning for voter approval.

Budget

Sailer reviewed the current budget, noting that repair and maintenance supplies had already been heavily utilized. The bathhouse funds showed \$67,000 available. The board discussed wood chips for playground areas, which are typically ordered every other year. Nustad suggested exploring recycled tire surfacing as a potentially more cost-effective long-term alternative, though initial costs would be higher.

Other Business

Baseball Committee Update: Sailer reported ordering 600 feet of tubing for fence repairs and a new sprayer for field paint. He emphasized the importance of using the correct size paint cans and noted that paint is preferable to chalk for field marking.

Detroit Lakes Partnership: Sailer discussed conversations with Nick Courney from Detroit Lakes about potentially hosting part of their baseball tournament in Vergas. Detroit Lakes is facing field limitations due to their JV field reconstruction, and using Vergas fields would save travel costs. The fee structure is \$100 per game, with Detroit Lakes being willing to pay this rate due to fuel savings.

Soccer Nets for Little Field: Nustad proposed adding soccer nets to the little field as an accessible recreational option. She researched costs, finding that heavy-duty steel/aluminum semi-pro nets cost between \$700-1200 per pair, while official stadium grade nets cost around \$4000. She posted on Facebook seeking donated or used nets and suggested conducting a survey to gauge community interest before making purchases. The board discussed the possibility of building nets using PVC pipe or having them constructed locally to reduce costs.

Water Ski Team: The board reviewed the transfer of the water ski team business to a new LLC. The new operators plan four shows during the season with practices on Tuesdays and Fridays. They will use the same dock location and are seeking sponsorships with temporary signage during show season. Sponsors include McLaughlin and surf boat dealers who want to display boats during shows. The team requested permission for a demonstration using surf boats during their Saturday night show. The city maintains liability protection while the team carries their own insurance for shows and practices.

Trail Connection Meeting: A trail connection meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 16th at 6:30 PM at Hobart Town Hall to discuss the Heartland Regional Trail and Heartland Lakes Trail connections.

EDA Annual Meeting: The annual EDA meeting is scheduled for April 29th at 5:30 PM at Billy's Corner Bar, featuring speakers Katie Gehring and Darren Dunlop. The meeting includes a free roasted chicken dinner and will discuss the Long Lake Master Plan among other community development topics.

Next Meeting Date/Time

The next meeting is scheduled for the second Tuesday of May, which is May 14th.

Adjournment

Motion by C. Hanson, seconded by Hogan, to adjourn the meeting at 4:10 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Nustad, Deputy Clerk (assisted by ClerkMinutes)
Secretary of the Park Board

Recommendations to City Council

None.

Follow Up Actions

- Nustad: Create and distribute a survey (potentially via Facebook/community club) to gauge community interest in soccer nets and other uses for the little league field
- Lammers: Update the group once she hears back from the state regarding the sales tax bill status
- Lammers and Nustad: Work on visuals/diagrams showing proposed bathhouse and amphitheater locations for the April 29th EDA meeting and email to all members
- Nustad: Add swimming lessons to the agenda for the next meeting
- All interested: Attend the trail connection meeting at Hobart Town Hall on Thursday the 16th
- Lammers: Present update on sales tax and phased master plan at the EDA meeting on April 29th

DRAFT