

Street/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee Meeting Minutes
Vergas City Office
April 6, 2022

- 1.) A meeting of the Vergas Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste (SSYW) Committee was held on Wednesday, April 6, 2022 at 3:00 PM at Billy's Corner Bar. Present was Bruce Albright and Paul Pinke, Vergas City Council; Mike DuFrane, Utility Superintendent; Julie Lammers, City Clerk; and Shane Poss, Vergas Citizen. Albright called the meeting to order at 3:15 PM.
- 2.) Agenda Additions or Deletions. Albright requested we add City pickup, Liquor Store Drainage, and Street Speed Limits to the agenda. Poss wanted to add maintenance of Bennett Road. So noted, approved. Items 6 and 7 on the agenda, will be combined.
- 3.) Bennett Road. Poss felt this road was not being properly maintained. This is a bus and mail route, and there is a daycare facility. Last summer, although it was dry, the road was not graded to late fall, after it contained a bunch of washboards, etc. The grader brought in from Driveway Service was not heavy enough to remove the bumps. As far as Poss was concerned, it was a waste of City money. He also felt the road needs graveling this spring. It's been over 3 years since it was last graveled. DuFrane said he has not been able to locate another contractor to grade the road. Poss said the winter snow removal has been fine. Albright said Poss's concerns will be noted for the record.
- 4.) Yard Waste Township Meetings. The SSYW Committee agreed to meet with the Dora, Candor, and Hobart Township Supervisors to discuss some of the issues the City is dealing with at the yard waste collection site. On January 11, 2022, Albright and Pinke attended the Hobart Township meeting. Pinke attended the 02/14/22 Candor Township meeting, and they requested a breakdown of how many Candor Township citizens actually use the site, which should be able to be tracked via the permits the City issues. They meet the second Monday of each month, in the CDH Firehall. We have not met with Dora Township, and they meet the first Thursday of the month, at Dave Antonsen's farm. Their next meeting will be May 7th, at 7:00 PM. Albright and Pinke will try to attend. The Committee told Poss that residents will also be required to display a permit (free) in 2022. Poss was not aware of this, as they don't have city sewer or water, and therefore don't receive the City monthly newsletter. Albright felt the City newsletter should be mailed to all citizens within the City's boundaries.
- 5.) East Lake Street (ST) Relocation. Lammers said we are still waiting for the documents from the City Attorney. She will contact him again.
- 6.) Townline Road. The right-of-way (R/W) documents have been mailed to the affected landowners (4). One has responded that they will sign, one wants to meet with Lammers and the Attorney, and two have not responded. Lammers will contact the non responsive parties.
- 7/8.) Main Street Snow Removal Policy/Sidewalk Policy. Today's agenda packet included copies of the existing Ordinance and Proposed Ordinance for 93.02, 93.03, and 71.04. The suggested changes were provided by Albright, who also redlined the Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy adopted 02/09/21. Lammers did not include a copy of the Policy with today's agenda. Albright felt since the noted ordinances and policy were all related, they need to be consistent amongst themselves. The packet also included a map of the City, showing the walking trail and public and privately owned sidewalks. Albright felt another color could be added, differentiating between the owner maintained and City maintained sidewalks? The proposed changes were suggested after reviewing a number of neighboring city's policies in

said regard. If a public sidewalk is not cleaned by an owner, then the City could come in and do the work and bill them accordingly. DuFrane mentioned Karen Hill's sidewalk at 220 W Linden ST. The sidewalk is located on the south and east sides of the property. She has asked the City in the past about removing said sidewalk, as it needs considerable maintenance. The City has told her she couldn't remove it, but yet its shown on the map, as a "private" sidewalk. The sidewalk is located within the road R/W. A permit would be required to remove it, and there are concerns that the sidewalk is also helping to support a retaining wall on her property. Albright said there is probably no hurry now to modify the snow ordinances/policies, as winter should be over. Lammers would like to combine a number of these ordinances at one time for a hearing. The dog license, and the word "temporary" needs to be defined, perhaps adding in parenthesis "14 days". Lammers will send out the modified policy for the Committee's review.

9.) City Shop. At the shop's current location along Glenn ST, when the sewer and water was redone approximately 30 years ago, the City obtained the property where the shop is at through a tax-forfeiture from the State of Minnesota. At the time, the City had to list what they were going to use the property for, and the Clerk put down, sewer and water facilities. Since that time, the City shop was constructed, which is a different land use. The State's reporting requires that 30 years after the transfer, if the land use has changed from what was stated, then either the recipient has to buy the property from the State for the market value, or a form (\$250 fee) needs to be filled with them, requested approval of the use change. Lammers hoped they would approve the form, since the property is still being used for "public" purposes. The SSW Committee approved filing of the form and payment of the permit fee. County transfers of properties are handled differently. DuFrane said the former Todd Bunkowski property along with the location of the current recycling site were both tax forfeited properties, so do some of the same restrictions apply?

10.) City Long Range Road Plan/Funding. The SSW Committee has been so busy, we haven't had time to work on said policies. Poss felt this was important is road systems within the City are properly maintained and planned for. The Council is doing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for engineering services, and Lammers suggested added this item to the RFP, as some cites have their engineer assist with this planning.

11.) Parking. We now have the agreement from the County for "diagonal" parking along S 1ST Avenue (AVE), between W Main ST and and E Linden ST. The permit requires we obliterate the current centerline and move it south (about 8'), remarking the new location (\$3,000 total), and painting the diagonal parking spots (\$500), with the County noting that they must be painted twice annually. The Committee felt this was excessive, and wondered if the County would accept language, such as "adequately marked"? Lammers will check with the County Engineer. Assuming if the language change is acceptable, she will sign the County Agreement. The proposal creates 10 diagonal parking spots on the west side of the road. With the new, Altona Square, the need for additional parking is evident. The design concept for the diagonal parking was approved by both the City and County Engineers.

Lammers showed a photo taken last week behind the Liquor Store. There were a number of business and contractors' pickups parked there, making liquor store deliveries difficult. DuFrane felt if the area south of the city building was property marked we would add parking spots. When the City obtains the County shop in 2023?, there will be additional parking to the north of their building. Albright felt if we mark the parking behind the liquor store, we need to consider the "big" picture, including the County shop. Poss questioned how we were going to enforce the parking, even if it is properly marked? Albright questioned if we've heard anything from the Soo Line Railroad (SLR) regarding the use of their property south of S Railway AVE, for public parking. She said the request is being routed through their system. Mike Summers was wondering if he could yellow paint markings along their property at 110 S Railway AVE, which they've recently purchased from Cheryl Lynn's? He's not opposed to letting the public use his

parking lots during “off” hours, and felt with some adequate marking, the lot on the north side of the building could accommodate more cars. If cars park along W Main ST, then access to the north side of their building is blocked. W Main ST is also County Road (C.R.) Nos 4 and 60. DuFrane should check with the County Engineer about any current sign removal, new sign placement, or painting of designated parking areas.

12.) Lawrence Lake Development. Lammers said she is working with the developer on the project. Eventually, W Lake ST and Glenn ST will need to be improved to accommodate the development. More information will be forthcoming.

13.) City Pickup. DuFrane has obtained State bids for a new 3/4 ton (\$34,702) and one ton (\$38,340) pickup. Due to shortages, neither pickup would be available to after August. Both Ford Super Duty pickups would be white in color. DuFrane has asked about installing a snow plow on the new pickup. He has not gotten a bid for a snowplow, but Poss felt they were in the \$10,000 range, and the City should consider getting a 9' wide blade, so you don't need to get close to buildings, curbs, etc. We are scheduled to replace the 2005 Chevrolet pickup, and the prices noted do not take into account the sale of this pickup. Earlier this year the snow plow broke off the 1990 Ford plow truck. An estimate to replace this snow plow is \$10,470 (insurance claim), but DuFrane said it will cost about \$5,000 to install the new plow on the old truck (hookups, hoses, etc.). The Committee felt it made sense to use the insurance money (Lammers will check) to buy a new snow plow for the new pickup, rather than installing a new plow on the old 1990 truck. A pickup snow plow would make plowing more accessible and more efficient for small areas, etc.

14.) Liquor Store Alley Drainage. An issue arose with the new Altona Square building. The City has had a historic drainage problem behind the Liquor Store, with water even entering the building. While the new building may not increase said problem, it also probably won't solve it. The alley between the Liquor Store and Altona Square is already partially tore up with the Altona Square property hooking up their roof drainage to the City's storm sewer drainage, with a manhole right by the Liquor Store entrance. The Council authorized KLJ to investigate this problem. Lammers distributed copies of their analysis. Option 1 is a “valley” gutter in the alley, estimated to cost \$5,000, Option 1a is a valley gutter and storm sewer, estimated to cost \$14,400, and Option 2 is a valley gutter behind the Liquor Store, draining east, estimated to cost \$4,000. Albright said their drawing shows the “valley” gutter right up next to the Liquor Store building, and questioned if it would be better to locate it in the center of the new alley? Lammers will check with Scott Kolbinger, KLJ. It appears he is draining the alley valley gutter to the street rather than the manhole, and in Albright's opinion, this was better, as the storm sewer has a history of freezing. While the quotes talk about asphalt removal, the Committee wondered if they included asphalt replacement? If the entire alley is tore up and regraded for the valley gutter, then the cost of the asphalt replacement would be split between Altona Square and the City, maybe something like 25/75? Lammers will contact KKJ for more information.

15.) Speed Limits. Albright thought he heard something on Public Radio that the 2022 Minnesota (MN) Legislature was looking at changing the laws, so Cities under certain circumstances could set their own speed limits. Lammers will check with the Minnesota League of Cities (MLC). Last summer, the OtterTail County Highway Department had 3 “temporary” portable speed limit indicators (CR. Nos. 4, 17, and 60). Albright questioned if the County will put them back this summer? Lammers will check. There has been talk about permanent solar flashing speed indicators (like by Lida Lake on C.R. No. 4), for Vergas. Lammers said they cost \$3,500 each, must be purchased by the City, and the County would install/maintain them.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by;

Bruce E. Albright, City Council Member

Council Recommendations

- Sign County Agreement for Diagonal Parking along 1st AVE E (assuming proposed language change is acceptable).
- Authorize City Staff to purchase new Ford Super Duty F-350 pickup with a new 9' bi-fold snowplow (Western or approved equal), using insurance money from damaged 1990 Ford truck if acceptable with the insurance company.

Follow up Actions

- Finish meetings with neighboring Townships regarding Yard Waste disposal site issues/concerns/costs. Hobart - done, Candor, get requested information, Dora - May 7th meeting.
- Continue to work on R/W needs for East Lake Street and Townline Road.
- Subdivision improvements for W Lake ST and Glenn ST.
- SSYW Committee to continue to work on budgets, and future road funding needs.
- Continue to work with developers at 105 Main Street regarding parking needs, need to address long range parking needs in comprehensive planning process. County County about yellow painting by Summers' building.
- Assess needs/budget for Small Cities Assistance Program funding. Lobby legislators for future funding, explain our needs to Legislators.
- Evaluate County and MnDOT speed study data regarding public safety concerns along trail. Contact MN League of Cities for their knowledge on speed issues.
- Continue to work on snow removal, sidewalk, and parking ordinances/policies to address concerns.
- Get questions answered from KLJ regarding Liquor Store drainage.