

VERGAS COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
VERGAS EVENT CENTER & ZOOM
Thursday, November 10, 2022

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:30 pm, on Thursday, November 10, 2022, at the Vergas Event Center and on a Zoom for a hybrid regular council meeting with the following members present: Mayor Julie Bruhn, Council Members: Bruce Albright, Natalie Fischer, Paul Pinke and Rebecca Hasse. Absent: None. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers, Attorney Tom Winters, Robert Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum and Engineer Brian Green.

Call to Order

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the City Council meeting to order.

Citizens' Concerns

Parking horizontal in the diagonal parking spaces. Parking ordinances 71.06 overnight parking and 71.08 prohibiting parking areas in front yards. Motion by Albright, seconded by Fischer to send letter to 170 1st Ave regarding tractors on front lawn. Motion passed unanimously. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke ordinance 71.08 be added to the Planning Commission for change in wording. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Hasse to approve the agenda with the following additions: Vergas Community Club street closing and lights on Municipal Building. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Hasse to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Council Minutes of the September 26 and October 11, 2022
- Bills paid between Council meetings and Council bills
- Liquor Store bills for October 2022
- General Fund/Special Revenue Money Market Account Report
- 2022 Investment Schedule/Bond Schedule
- American Rescue Plan Funding 2021-2026
- Late water/sewer bills.

Motion passed unanimously.

Canvas the 2022 Elections

Lammers provided council members with the election results from Otter Tail County; Mayor Julie Bruhn 134 votes and 16 write ins, Council Members Paul Pinke and Dean Haarstick both with 101 votes and 67 write ins. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to approve the vote. Motion approved unanimously.

Heart of the Lakes Trail Connection to Vergas

Patrick Hollister, Clay County Public Health proposing a grant for the City of Vergas to engineer a trail to the Heartland Trail which goes from Pelican Rapids to Perham through Maplewood State Park. The city would need to provide Clerk-Treasurer staff time and a committee to work with engineering firm designing trail. Hollister will attend December meeting with grant proposal.

Easements – Townline Road

Attorney Tom Winters is working on easements and will speak with property owners and attorney of one property owner to proceed with easements.

Vergas Community Club
Street Closing

Fischer requested Main Street and 1st Avenue be closed from 1:30-5:30 pm on Saturday, November 26, 2022 for Small Town Christmas celebration. First Avenue will be used for parking only. Motion by Pinke, seconded by Hasse to barricade 1st Avenue to Linden and from Main to Elm Street allowing parking from 12:30-6 pm and close Main Street from 1st Avenue to Railway Avenue on Saturday, November 26, 2022. Motion passed unanimously.

Municipal Building Lights

Vergas Community Club will be purchasing lights for the buildings on Main Street. Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to allow lights on the municipal building and to use municipal electricity. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Budget

Bruhn reviewed budget and requested to committees to submit changes to the City Office by the end of the month for final budget at the December meeting.

Park Board

Park Board meeting held on October 11, 2022, (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). No recommendations.

Streets/Sidewalk/Yard Waste

Streets/Sidewalk/Yard Waste meeting minutes of October 25, 2022 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Pinke, seconded by Albright to purchase F-350 pickup. Motion passed unanimously. Complete Streets presentation will be made at the December meeting.

Liquor Store/Licenses/Municipal Buildings

Bruhn reviewed Liquor Store/Licenses/Municipal Building Committee meeting minutes of October 13, 2022 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). No recommendations.

Planning Commission

Albright reviewed Planning Commission meeting minutes of October 24, 2022 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). No recommendations.

Personnel

Bruhn reviewed Personnel meeting minutes of October 5 and 17, 2022 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Pinke, seconded by Fischer to approve 2 % cost of living allowance (COLA) increase for city employees for 2023. Motion passed unanimously.

Lammers stated she has provided Liquor Store Manager Kyle Theisen with his 1-year employee review, and he is fully successful in meeting the performance standards.

EDA/HRA

EDA/HRA meeting minutes of November 1, 2022 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). No recommendations. Council questioned if comp plan goals would be added to the goals.

Event Center

Lammers reviewed Event Center meeting of October 10, 2022 and November 2, 2022 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke to change line 7 regarding the Event Center Policy to state Fundraising events will not be recommended to the City Council unless fundraiser is sponsored by a group that has donated to the event center. Motion passed unanimously. Discussed fundraising ideas the committee is proposing.

Water and Sewer Committee

Fischer reviewed Water/Sewer Committee meeting minutes of November 1, 2022 (minutes available at the Vergas City Office). Budgets will be discussed at the December meeting with wages changed to 2%.

Staff Report

Utility Superintendent provided written report.

1. Wastewater

Ponds are empty and ready for winter. Currently 2 pounds of biological bugs (T-195) being placed in the ponds weekly and we will be increasing the amount to 5 pounds a week. Cost \$800.00 for 50 pounds.

Due to increased levels of grease in the ponds the City is needing to have additional care at the ponds. Adding 5 pounds of biological bugs (T-199) will be added starting as soon as City has MPCA authorization. (Kevin Peterson, MPCA) Cost \$475.00 for 25 pounds.

2. Water

Hydrants are flushed.

Water tower is in winter mode. Approximately 45,000 gallons of water is in it.

3. Streets

Gravel streets were bladed by Driveway Service.

4. Parks

Parks are closed down for the season

Information & Announcements

2040 Transportation Plan Update, Public Information Meetings, Monday, November 14, Otter Tail Operations Center, Otter Tail, 5:00 to 6:30 pm

2040 Transportation Plan Update, Public Information Meetings, Tuesday, November 15, Government Services Center Fergus Falls, 5:00 to 6:30 pm

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas Clerk-Treasurer