

City of Vergas Planning Commission Minutes
Monday, August 4th, 2025 at 6:00 pm
Government Services Building and Zoom

The City of Vergas Planning Commission held a regular hybrid meeting on Monday, August 4, 2025, on Zoom and at the Vergas Government Services Building with the following members present: Alex Ohman, Bruce Albright, and Rebecca Hasse. Absent: Jim Courneya, and Shane Hasse; Also present: Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers.

Call to Order

Chairman Ohman called the meeting to order at 6:13 PM

Agenda Additions or Deletions

No additions or deletions were made to the agenda.

Motion by Hasse, seconded by Ohman to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Motion by Ohman, seconded by Albright to approve minutes for June 23, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Council Recommendations

None

Construction Permits

Lammers, City Clerk/Treasurer, informed the commission that several construction permits that were scheduled to be approved at the July 24th meeting had already begun work without formal approval. She noted that the lean-to and driveway projects were already completed, though she was unsure about the status of the shed and garage. The chicken coop project had not yet started.

The commission discussed the issue of projects beginning before approval. Given the delay in the approval process due to the missed July meeting, the commission determined that it would be appropriate to waive any fees associated with the premature starts.

Lammers presented information on permits approved by Otter Tail County. Ohman requested that future county permit reports include property addresses and descriptions of work being done, in addition to the parcel numbers currently provided. Lammers agreed to add this information to future reports.

Motion by Ohman, seconded by Hasse to approve all pending construction permits and waive any associated fees due to the delay in approval. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Nuisance Properties

Lammers informed the commission that a resident at 371 South Pelican Avenue has had a demolition derby car in their front yard for most of the summer and recently acquired a second one. The commission discussed whether this violated city ordinances. Hasse noted that other demolition derby participants in town keep their cars at locations outside city limits to comply with ordinances.

Ohman suggested that Albright and Courneya (code enforcement) should visit the property to discuss the issue with the owners and inform them of the ordinance requiring vehicles to be licensed, operable, and insured. The commissioners agreed that starting a conversation would be the appropriate first step before pursuing enforcement action.

Hasse reported that she had driven by the 120 E Elm property and noticed that the windows that were previously broken had been completely removed from the garage rather than repaired.

Lammers mentioned that the city now has a new attorney who specializes in nuisance properties and would be willing to assist with enforcement.

The commission also discussed a complaint about the fire department siren that sounds at 7:00 AM, 12:00PM, 1:00 PM, and 6:00 PM daily. Albright shared that a resident found the siren disruptive, particularly for visitors unfamiliar with the schedule. The commission reviewed the city's noise ordinance and discussed whether the siren could be considered a violation, especially considering its impact on individuals with sensory sensitivities and young children.

While some commissioners noted the siren was a traditional part of Vergas life, they acknowledged it could be problematic for those living close to it. The commission decided to recommend that the City Council review the issue and conduct a survey to gather public input.

Motion by Ohman, seconded by Albright to recommend the City Council review the fire department siren schedule and conduct a survey to gather public input on whether to continue the practice. The motion passed unanimously.

City Ordinance Update

The commission deferred discussion on city ordinance updates to the next meeting. Lammers requested that commissioners review the three chapters she had previously sent them and offered to resend the materials with a reminder.

New Business

RV Permit

Lammers presented a request from a resident wanting to place a 22-foot camper on his property at 1150 and 1155 Kelley Shores. The resident plans to use the camper on weekends while building a house on the property.

The commission discussed the city's ordinance prohibiting camping within city limits without a permit. Lammers noted that while campers can be parked on private property, people cannot camp in them without permission. She also mentioned that during special events like Looney Days, the city typically does not enforce this ordinance.

Albright suggested issuing a one-year permit to allow the temporary use of the camper, with the requirement that the resident would need to renew it if needed beyond that timeframe.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Ohman to approve a one-year RV permit for 1150/1155 Kelley Shores, requiring renewal after one year if needed. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion by Ohman, seconded by Hasse, to adjourn at 6:43pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorded by Rachel Nustad (assisted by Clerk Minutes)

Secretary,
Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

Council Recommendations:

To recommend that the City Council review the fire department siren schedule and conduct a survey to gather public input on whether to continue the practice.

