

City of Vernon Center
1/14/2025
Public Hearing & Regular Council Meeting

Council Present: Acting Mayor Lisa Peterson, Wendy Bennett, Emily Edwards, & Adam Finney
Staff Present: Clerk Kara Hansen,= and PW Supervisor Mark Willette
Others Present: Casey from MRM, Engineer Chris Knutson, Todd Schwarz

Public Hearing

Acting Mayor Peterson called the Public Hearing to order at 6:00 PM. Clerk Hansen discussed the fee changes in 2025. All water rates increased 2%. There were no questions about the fee schedule.
Councilor Finney made a motion to close the public hearing. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

Acting Mayor Peterson opened the Regular Council Meeting at 6:04 PM.

Approve Agenda

Councilor Edwards asked to pull the resolutions out of the consent agenda & move them to Additional Bills under e, f, g, & h. PW Supervisor Willette asked to add letter c. to infrastructure Project and name it Punch List Items. He asked to add letter c. to Public Works and name it WTP. He asked to add letter d. to Public Works and name it WWTP. Councilor Finney asked to pull the Emergency Plan and Contact List and put it under a. in Follow-Up from Previous Meeting.
Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the agenda with the changes. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included the 12/10/2024 mtg minutes, Check Reconciliations, Nov. Cap Funds, Nov. Cash Balance Investment Report, Checks for Month showing in \$1,235,087.73 deposits and \$910,244.34 in checks, City Expenditure Guideline, City Revenue Guideline, 2020-23 Project Balance Excel Spreadsheet, January & February calendar of events, the BEC Call Log for Dec., & the Dec. FD Report.
Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the consent agenda. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

Additional Bills

a). Add'l Bills

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the additional bills. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

b). Northland Trust Invoice

Clerk Hansen said a motion is needed as this is payment for a bond.

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the Northland Trust Bond Payment in the amount of \$81,000.00. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

c). Resolution 2025-06

Clerk Hansen said this transfer is due to the \$4,358.00 the City paid back to DEED at the recommendation of Judd Schultz.

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-06 Funds Transfer. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

d). Resolution 2025-07

Clerk Hansen explained the transfer for the well work was between the 403 Future Projects Fund and the 101 General Fund, and it should have been between the 403 Future Projects Fund and the 601 Water

Fund.

Councilor Finney made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-07 Funds Transfer. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

e). Resolution 2025-02

Councilor Finney made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-02. 2nd by Councilor Bennett Appointments and Designations. All approved. Motion carried.

f). Resolution 2025-03

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-03 Approve Subscriptions, Dues, and Memberships. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

g). Resolution 2025-04

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-04 Authorizing Clerk to Pay Bills. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

h). Resolution 2025-05

Councilor Finney made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-05 Authorizing Clerk to Make Electronic Payments & Wire Transfers. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion Carried.

i). 601 Water Fund Negative

Clerk Hansen said Clerk Roelofs pointed out the negative in the 601 account. After some research, Clerk Hansen deduced the negative balance was because of the Northland Trust Bond Payment, and asked for direction on what to do with the negative balance. Councilor Edwards said the next Finance Committee meeting will be on January 28th and it could be discussed then and a plan made for that account.

Public Comment

Todd Schwarz asked if the trench work was going to be done and if it was going to be assessed to the property owners. Acting Mayor Peterson said since Mayor Ziegler was involved in the discussion and recommended the issue be tabled until he can be at a meeting, but the work wouldn't start until spring.

Infrastructure Project

a). Pay Application #12

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve Pay Application #12 for \$89,014.24 but the City will only pay when it is reimbursed from state bonding, and all USDA-RD funding. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

b). WWTP Calibration

Engineer Knutson said the contractor will need to temporarily bypass the systems. RPR Doug Maeder is working on a bypass plan with the contractor which would need to be approved by MPCA and PW Supervisor Willette. Post construction calibration of equipment will be needed for the WWTP. PW Supervisor Willette said the calibrations will need to happen every six months. Acting Mayor Peterson asked if the fire hall had been properly calibrated. Engineer Knutson said they're working on it, and also reported RPR Doug Maeder is looking into the sign placement on Park Ave and Main St.

PW Supervisor Willette asked about street sweeping. Engineer Knutson said the city can choose to do it themselves, or he could ask the contractor to do it. If the contractor agrees to do it, the City is looking at continuing to setup for the sweeper to come out in March or April. Acting Mayor Peterson directed Engineer Knutson to look into the matter, and deduce what the City needs to do verses what is needed in terms of street sweeping for the project.

Acting Mayor Peterson asked Engineer Knutson about warranty items with the Project. Engineer Knutson

said he would like to do a walkthrough of the project areas in August of 2025 after the contractor has finished with their work.

Public Works

a). PW Supervisor Notes

PW Supervisor Willette said MRWA will be coming to the City to do flow testing on the hydrants in April or May. He also said he compiled the numbers for the WWTP, and the City met the limit for phosphorus in 2024. Flows were down in 2024 save for June and July due to the rain event. The City saw a water usage of 9,937,000 gallons with a daily average of 27,152 gallons and the peak day was June 1st with 93,000 gallons. PW Supervisor Willette said he's bringing these numbers up because if the council decides to go forward on the WWTP and WTP work, whoever is doing the work will need to accommodate some of the peak pump days. Engineer Eric Meestner will be having a meeting with PW Supervisor Willette and Clerk Hansen to discuss the options for the WTP plans on January 22nd.

Follow up From Previous Meeting

a). Emergency Contact List

Councilor Finney said some names need to be double checked as the Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial Superintendent is different than who is listed. He said he would get the name of the current Superintendent and let Clerk Hansen know so she could update her paperwork.

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve with emergency contact list with the updated information. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

b). Consolidated Proposal

Clerk Hansen said the council asked her to report back about the MRC and the NRC. She said the MRC is the monthly rate, and the NRC is the one-time fee for a webinar for instructions to use the new phone. Acting Mayor Peterson asked what the City is paying for telephone and internet. Clerk Hansen said currently it is \$355.33 a month. Councilor Finney asked if Consolidated Communications was going to bring Fiber Optics to the City. Clerk Hansen said the last she heard the City was scheduled to have it installed in 2025, but she was given this information in 2023. Acting Mayor Peterson directed Clerk Hansen to reach out to Consolidated Communications to see if they are still planning on bringing fiber optics to the whole city this year, and in the meantime the council tabled this matter until the next meeting.

c). Part time Clerk Dropbox Access

Clerk Hansen said Clerk Roelofs wants the council to approve her access to Dropbox.

Councilor Finney made a motion to add Clerk Roelofs to Dropbox. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

d. Fire Invoices

Clerk Hansen said as of today she still has not received payments for the 9/8/2023 Skid Steer fire and the 4/13/2024 Grass Fire. She reached out to Pheasants Forever for the skid steer fire last week, and the contact gave Clerk Hansen the phone number to the manager of the property. She was told by Pheasants Forever that if the individual had not paid the invoice by Friday January 17th, then Pheasants Forever would foot the bill. Clerk Hansen reached out to this individual, and received voicemails in return, but otherwise nothing. She also said her attempts at reaching out to the homeowner of the Grass Fire have been unsuccessful. Acting Mayor Peterson directed Clerk Hansen to reach out to M&M Insurance and inform them the city never received a payment for the fire.

Selling Fire Trucks

Clerk Hansen said the fire department would like to know what the council recommends for them to sell the 1-ton and the old tanker. Councilor Finney said as long as the trucks don't sell for more than \$25,000.00 then they can put an ad. Acting Mayor Peterson said they can do that so long as they don't sell it to a city employee. She directed Clerk Hansen to tell the fire department they can sell the trucks.

MVAC Lien on 100 Kendall

Clerk Hansen said the homeowner of 100 Kendall St passed away in December, and his fiancé, April Hurst, is living at the house. She said her fiancé didn't have a will, and there is an MVAC lien on the house due to rehab work. Clerk Hansen said she reached out to Judd Schultz of MVAC who said since Ms. Hurst was living in the house at the time of the rehab work, she wouldn't have to pay back the lien on the house. However, if the house went to another family member who wasn't living there at the time the lien was put in place, then that person would be responsible for paying back the lien amount. Acting Mayor Peterson said she appreciated Ms. Hurst reaching out to the City and being transparent on the situation. Clerk Hansen said at this point the City should wait and see what comes out of 100 Kendall St.

Clerk's Conference 2025

Clerk Hansen said MCFOA has an annual conference for city clerks in March 18-21 in Brooklyn Center. Acting Mayor Peterson asked if this was the same conference Clerk Hansen attended in 2024. Clerk Hansen said the conference she attended last year was put on by the League of Minnesota Cities, and this is put on by MCFOA, and \$1400 was set aside for clerk training and instruction and an additional \$650 for lodging in the budget. The council directed Clerk Hansen to attend the training.

Minnesota Paid Leave Information

Clerk Hansen said the Minnesota Paid Leave takes effect in 2026, and this is information to prepare the City as it will need to be budgeted for. Councilor Edwards said the state is currently figuring out what it will cost employers, but employers can choose to have their employees pay for up to 50% of the cost.

2025 Fee Schedule

Councilor Finney made a motion to approve the 2025 City Fee Schedule. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Next Meeting Scheduled for 2/4/2024

Adjourn

Councilor Bennett made a motion to adjourn. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM.

Kara Hansen, Clerk-Treasurer

Dana Ziegler, Mayor

Date approved