

City of Vernon Center  
10/7/2025  
Regular Council Meeting

Council Present: Dana Ziegler, Wendy Bennett, Emily Edwards, Adam Finney, & Lisa Peterson  
Staff Present: Clerk Kara Hansen & PW Supervisor Willette  
Others Present: Chad Ostermann of M&M Insurance, Paul Welckle of Consolidated Communications

Mayor Ziegler opened the regular council meeting at 6:00 PM.

### **Approve Agenda**

Councilor Finney asked to move Consolidated Communications to Public Comment 5b, and Chad Ostermann to 5c.

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve the agenda with the changes. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Peterson. All approved. Motion carried.

### **Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda included the 9/4/2025 Meeting Minutes, August bank reconciliations, September Cap Funds, September Cash Balance Investments Checks for the Month showing \$40,184.91 in deposits and \$76,158.02 in checks, City Expenditure Guideline, City Revenue Guideline, 2020-23 Project Balance Excel Spreadsheet, October & November calendar of events, the September Public Safety Report, the September FD Report, SSS Replacement Participants, & the FD PPE list.

Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

### **Additional Bills**

#### **a. Add'l Bills**

Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the additional bills. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

#### **b. Resolution 2025-26 Funds Transfer**

Clerk Hansen said this transfer for payment of the 2022 Rebid Project Assessments. Councilor Peterson asked why the 2015 Assessment was paid off, but there was no transfer for that. Clerk Hansen said she researched what the City did for that, and couldn't find any documentation of the 2015 Project Assessments being moved to savings. Councilor Peterson instructed Clerk Hansen to prepare a transfer for this payment of the 2015 Project Assessment.

Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-26 Funds transfer in the amount of \$1,420.11; \$766.86 of which is to be transferred from the 601 Water Checking Account to the 601 Water Savings Account and \$653.25 of which is to be transferred from the 602 Sewer Checking Account to the 602 Sewer Savings Account. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

### **Public Comment**

#### **b. Consolidated Communications**

Paul Welckle from Consolidated Communications said he wanted to talk about bringing fiber optics to the WWTP. He said it would cost about \$13,500.00 up front, or the City could choose to pay \$700.00 a month for the duration of the contract which is 36 months. Councilor Finney asked if residents in town were going to be charged the same amount as City Hall. Paul Welckle said City Hall has many more expenses that residents in town do not have as it is a business upgrade. The Council decided to speak more on the subject and reach out to Mr. Welckle with questions.

#### **c. Chad Ostermann M&M Insurance**

Chad Ostermann said there wasn't a lot added to the insurance rates. The premium will be going down, and there is increased coverage to the property due to inflation. The biggest decrease is to workman's comp, and there wasn't a workman's comp claim this year. There also wasn't a liability claim. The general maintenance rate dropped, and the volunteer firefighter rate also dropped based on population. To wrap up, the coverage for the city increased while the rates decreased. To accept the insurance rate, the Council needs to make a motion, waive the tort limit, and purchase the access umbrella liability. Councilor Finney made a motion to accept the new insurance rates for 2025, waive the tort limit and purchase the access umbrella liability. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Peterson. All approved. Motion carried.

### **Infrastructure Project**

#### **a. HWY 169 Manholes**

PW Supervisor Willette said he has been in contact with MPCA about the manholes. New manholes castings were installed in 2024 and the gaskets are already worn, coming apart, and splitting. This includes manholes on the streets. The council looked at pictures PW Supervisor Willette took on the manholes and gaskets. Mayor Ziegler directed Clerk Hansen to send an email to Engineer Chris Knutson and instruct him to call Mayor Ziegler as soon as possible to talk about the manholes.

### **Public Works**

#### **a. PW Supervisor Notes**

PW Supervisor Willette said there is a hydrant that is leaking and he has contacted the city engineer about it, and has not heard back. All mains and nine hydrants were flushed and gate valves were also exercised.

#### **b. 103 Poplar St E**

PW Supervisor Willette said the property owner at 103 Poplar St E wanted to know the sewer depth.

### **Follow up From Previous Meeting**

#### **a. MN Paid Leave**

Clerk Hansen said she's been researching and has been in contact with the League of Minnesota Cities on how the City should handle the upcoming MN Paid Medical and Family Leave Act. According to the League of Minnesota Cities, the city doesn't need to update their personnel policy. However, the City needs to decide how to split the cost of the leave as they are required to formally notify their employees by December 1<sup>st</sup>. The amounts are already in the budget for the City to cover 100% of the leave, but the council should make a decision on that by November at the latest.

Mayor Ziegler made a motion for the City to cover the .88 of MN paid leave. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

#### **b. Consolidated Communications**

Mayor Ziegler said he wasn't in favor of spending the money to bring fiber optic to the WWTP. The rest of the council were in agreement. Mayor Ziegler asked to look at the contract at where it stated there might be limits to 911 service if the power or the internet went out. They directed Clerk Hansen to reach out to Paul Welckle and ask what the three seats were on the contract, what would it take to maintain at least one landline for emergency purposes, and could there be a separate line between City Hall and the Fire Hall.

### **Minutes Adjustment**

Clerk Hansen said Wayne Krosch approached her and said the motion to approve the Garden City Rod

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and Gun Club's license upgrade had an error. It states "MN Gun and Rod Club" instead of Garden City Rod and Gun Club. She said the original approved minutes would need to have the error struck out, the correct verbiage written in, and then dated when the approval was given. There should also be a motion to show the council acknowledges the change.

Councilor Finney made a motion to amend and correct the 9/4/2025 minutes. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

**Next Regular Scheduled meeting 11/4/2025**

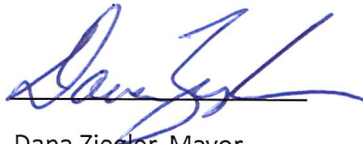
**Adjourn**

Councilor Peterson made a motion to adjourn. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM.



Kara Hansen, Clerk-Treasurer



Dana Ziegler, Mayor

11/13/2025

Date approved