

City of Vernon Center
5/6/2025
Regular Council Meeting

Council Present: Mayor Dana Ziegler, Wendy Bennett, & Emily Edwards
Staff Present: Clerk Kara Hansen and PW Supervisor Mark Willette
Others Present: Engineer Chris Knutson, Engineer Eric Meester, & Casey from MRM

Mayor Ziegler opened the regular council meeting at 6:01 PM

Approve Agenda

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

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included the 4/3/2025 mtg minutes, Check Reconciliations, March Cap Funds, March Cash Balance Investment Report, Checks for Month showing in \$50,969.17 deposits and \$36,591.33 in checks, City Expenditure Guideline, City Revenue Guideline, 2020-23 Project Balance Excel Spreadsheet, May & June calendar of events, the April FD Report, SSS Replacement Participants, & the FD PPE list.

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

Additional Bills

a. Add'l Bills

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

Public Comment

Infrastructure Project

a. Pay Application #13

Engineer Knutson said Pay Application #13 was for work done up to date, and it's fully from the bonding bill and mostly for work done at the WWTP.

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve Pay Application #13 in the amount of \$167,302.27. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

Engineer Knutson said the contractor will be in next week to do over seeding. PW Supervisor Willette asked if cleanout were going to be marked. Engineer Knutson said he could have someone come out to spray paint the cleanouts.

b. PW Supervisor Notes

Engineer Knutson said he had contact with the co-op and the county about the curbs because there was damage being done to the curbs, aprons, and wings due to heavy truck traffic. He said the crosswalks would get done and the ones on the east side of Main St. PW Supervisor Willette asked if he could rent a machine to do the yellow paint. Mayor Ziegler said he could once the contractors were out of town.

c. WWTP Laptop Quotes

Clerk Hansen said she spoke with her IT Specialist and he provided her two quotes. She spoke with Engineer Knutson and he recommended some changes and the quotes were updated.

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve the laptop for the WWTP for \$2,044.61 including all labor to have it installed. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

Public Works

a. PW Supervisor Notes

PW Supervisor Willette said Peterson Motor Grader started tile work at Railroad St this week. Councilor Edwards asked if there is a spreadsheet so the council would know what streets would come off warranty at one time. PW Supervisor Willette said most of the punch list items are done. Clerk Hansen said she would reach out to Engineer Knutson about the street warranties.

b. WTP Cost Study

Engineer Meester discussed the plans for the WTP. He said there wouldn't be any room for the membranes as they needed cold space. The long-term challenge with the membranes they would need pretreatment with the iron and the manganese. He said it was roughly a million dollars for the equipment, but there may be a time and place in the future where the membranes become an unnecessary treatment component. Mayor Ziegler said there was only a difference of \$200,000.00 to add a new building, which wasn't much. PW Supervisor Willette said if the WTP project was not going to happen for a few years or longer, the City would need to rehab the current online filters. The life cycle of the current filters is 15-20 years, and they are currently on year 27. The council will need to decide what type of plant and whether to build a new plant or correct the current one, but the equipment the City bought from Rushmore will have to be incorporated either way.

c. Nero Invoice & WTP Spreadsheet

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve the Nero Engineering Invoice for \$30,209.75. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

d. Resolution 2025-13 Fund Transfer

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-13 transfer funds from 403 Public Works Future Projects Fund to 601 General Water Fund in the amount of \$30,100.00. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

e. Sewer Laterals

PW Supervisor Willette said this is an updated list of sewer laterals around town, and he is not yet finished with it due to the Project, project work at the WWTP, upcoming projects at the WWTP & WTP, and normal PW duties.

Follow up From Previous Meeting

a. Cannabis Ordinance & Resolution

Clerk Hansen said this resolution was tabled from the previous meeting.

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-12 Providing Consent to Blue Earth County to Issue Registrations of Retail Cannabis Business. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

b. Records Retention Schedule

Clerk Hansen said by adopting the Records Retention Schedule, the City will be able to dispose of certain records and save space in the city office. She explained there are certain records that she has to keep for a predetermined amount of time and then properly dispose of as outlined by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the Minnesota Historical Society's General Retention Schedule for Minnesota Cities. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

c. Updated Forms from Previous Meeting

Clerk Hansen said these are forms the council asked her to put together from the last meeting. One was

an expense report, and she has a blank one for PW Supervisor Willette to fill out and for her. The other was a contractor report for property owners who have the option to do a lining as opposed to open cut.

d. Mayor Clerk's Meeting 7/10/2025

Clerk Hansen asked for ideas for the Mayor and Clerk's meeting the City would be hosting in July. Mayor Ziegler recommended reaching out to the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department and speaking with Jeff Wersal about coming down and talking about the new gun range and how it would benefit the department.

e. MN Paid Leave Update

Clerk Hansen said she signed up for a webinar about the MN Paid Leave Act on June 5th and she would update the council with what she learned.

LJP

Clerk Hansen said she's been doing an organization project in the office and learning the different documents and came across the contract with LJP and learned what LJP is charging on the contract is not what the residents are being charged for garbage. The residents are currently billed \$14.39 for a 64 gallon trash bin and \$12.30 for a 35 gallon trash bin. According to the LJP contract, a 64 gallon trash bin is being billed \$12.91 and a 35 gallon trash bin is being billed \$10.82. It is set to raise to \$13.42 & \$11.25 respectively at the end of June according to the contract. Mayor Ziegler directed Clerk Hansen to look into the fuel surcharge and environmental fee and how it applies to the fee schedule.

Seasonal Help

PW Supervisor Willette said in the past the City has offered the seasonal job to the previous year's seasonal employee. Councilor Edwards said the City needs to post the job position and have a public hearing so they could hire seasonal help for the June meeting. Councilor Edwards said the position needs to be opened to the public yearly and the council can vote on seasonal help at the next meeting. She directed Clerk Hansen to post notices about the position and schedule a public hearing before the council meeting in June.

Tiny's Park

a. Citizen Concern 2025-02

The citizen concern was for access to a restroom at Tiny's park. Clerk Hansen said the individual who submitted the citizen concern stated they are fine with a porta party. She did preliminary searches for prices on a single Porta John, but there wasn't any readily available without contacting an agency and she wanted to get a feel for the council's direction they wanted to go with his.

b. Gazebo

The matter was tabled until the next meeting.

Satisfaction of Mortgage

a). 205 Poplar St E

Councilor Bennett made a motion to accept the Satisfaction of Mortgage document for 205 Poplar St E. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

b). 301 First St E

Councilor Bennett made a motion to accept the Satisfaction of Mortgage document for 301 First St E. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Zoning

a. 200 West St N

Clerk Hansen said the Planning Commission had a public hearing earlier that night and they were recommending the property at 200 West St N be rezoned from R-1 residential to B-1 commercial. Councilor Bennett made a motion to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation to rezone 200 West St N from R-1 residential to B-1 commercial. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Part Time Clerk Termination

Mayor Ziegler said he reached out to Clerk Roelofs who asked to be released from city employment. Councilor Edwards made a motion to terminate the part time clerk treasurer. 2nd by Councilor Bennett. All approved. Motion carried.

Tanker & 1 Ton Sealed Bids

There were seven sealed bids for the 1 ton and one sealed bid for the tanker. Both trucks were awarded to the highest bidder.

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve the sealed bid for the 1-ton truck of \$ 13,501.00. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve the sealed bid for the tanker truck of \$1,700.00. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Next Meeting Scheduled for 6/12/2025

Adjourn

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Kara Hansen, Clerk-Treasurer

Dana Ziegler Mayor

Date approved