

City of Vernon Center  
Regular Council Meeting  
10-4-22 @ 7pm

Council Present: Emily Edwards, Mayor Dana Ziegler, Lisa Peterson, Wendy Bennett, Eric Pederson  
Staff Present: Clerk Diane Roelofs, PW Supervisor Mark Willette  
Others: MR Jennifer Brookens, Shierah & Joah Parks, Chad Osterman, Eng. Chris Knutson, Susan Giefer & guest, Dept. Elijah Blakesley

Mayor Ziegler called the meeting to order at 7pm.

**Agenda:** 9c will be moved up to 3a. Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the agenda with the change. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Bennett, all approved, motion carried.

**Public Comment:** none

**102 West St. N:** Sump Pump extension of compliance. After a meeting with the property owner, Susan Giefer, the public works supervisor stated that there is no good way to drain the water away from the property. The water put out to the lot will create water to the neighbors or go back to the building or create other hazards if directed to the curb on Poplar St. A sump pump basket will be needed to properly divert the clear water. The clear water is currently going to the sanitary sewer main until correction. Council decided to put a June 30, 2023 extension to the correction. Property owner Susan Giefer stated that the building basement appears to be only 8' to 10' under the ground and not 20' as once thought and she has no idea where the water is coming from. The old sewer needs to be cut off at the project time. The city will send a letter of extension to Susan Giefer listing June 30, 2023 as the deadline and that only the city can extend it.

**Public Safety:** Deputy Elijah Blakesley reported 48 calls for the month of Sept. resulting in 11.7 hours per week average.

**304 Hilltop St.:** Deputy Blakesley reported that he spoke with the property owner to get the trusses removed from the property. They have cleared up all of the other items, but the long grass is discretion of the city. The owners are cooperating and it has been a lot better this year.

**M&M Insurance, Chad Osterman:** Mr. Osterman reported to council that the property insurance does show an increase in coverage of \$191,000 for the 2022 Property/Casualty which included additions to the inland marine. Cyber security which has always been covered is now separated out to keep track of claims more efficiently. The 2022 Renewal Summary shows a total premium of \$20,244 with a 2021 dividend of \$2845. The city has had 9 claims in the last 5 years. Raising the deductible will not save a lot. The increase is 15% or \$2743. Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the 2022 Renewal Summary package and to waive the tort limit. 2<sup>nd</sup> By Councilor Pederson, all approved, motion carried.

**Infrastructure:** Eng. Chris Knutson presented the change order in order to add the 4 extra manholes and installation for the allies. **Change Order #1** would result in deletions and additions to the project totaling a net additional amount of \$11,277.86. This amount would be covered by the grant from DEED. Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve Change Order #1. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Edwards, all approved, motion carried.

**Supplemental Agreement:** A bulk of the work will be done this year and finishing up next spring. Contractor has 10 days to provide a construction schedule. Eng. Knutson will ask Holtmeier Const. for a bar chart tomorrow to give an idea of what is planned. After the construction schedule is received, SEH, Inc. will send out notices to affected property owners. The supplemental agreement between SEH, Inc.

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and the City of Vernon Center has listed \$17,600 for Final Design and Bidding and \$39,000 for Construction Services including RPR daily duties that can be different because of actual time recorded. Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the supplemental Agreement, with Construction Services not to exceed \$39,000. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Edwards, all approved, motion carried. Preconstruction meeting will be set for Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 9am.

**Consent Agenda:** the consent agenda included the 9-6-22 meeting minutes, (Bills & Fund Balance information for both August and September) including Checks for Month, the Cash Balance Investment Reports, excel City Savings & Loan balances, Revenue and Expenditure Guidelines, Calenda of Events, Safety Training report, MDH Plan Review Approval letter, Blue Earth County Housing Study, and State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program. Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Edwards, all approved, motion carried.

**Additional Bills:** After review, Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the additional bills. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Bennett, all approved, motion carried.

**Res. 2022-32 Authorizing Transfer of 607 Capital Reserves to 411 Fund:** Council discussed what the appropriate transfer amount should be from 607 general capital reserves to 411 2022 SS&WM Fund. After reviewing the supplemental agreement, it was determined to transfer \$86,500 to 411 savings fund and that it can be transferred as needed to checking. Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve Res. 2022-22 authorizing transfer from 607 general capital reserves to the 411 Fund of \$86,500 to be put into savings and transfers to checking as needed. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Edwards, all approved, motion carried.

**Special Assessments:** Clerk Roelofs asked council if special assessment notices should be sent out and a Public Hearing be set for delinquent accounts. For the future, a resolution should be created to set up procedure. Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve sending letters for special assessments for delinquent utility bills. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Pederson, all approved, motion carried.

**Public Works:** PW Supervisor Willette reported to the council about his meeting with AquaPyr, MPCA & GNE on 9/20/22 and at this time Pam from MPCA stated that they will not be reissuing the city permit at this time. There may be a few violations as a result of this. Until the city gets it's I&I under control, the pilot study will not happen. The trees have been trimmed throughout the city allies, PW is totally out of the FD building now and he asked if he should keep monitoring the department each day. Assistant Chief Eric Pederson confirmed that he should keep monitoring it. There are remaining Christmas decorations that the community club did not want and there is a citizen that would like them. Council decided that there may be more citizens interested in the decorations as well and that a note in the newsletter should let the public know of this. If there are more than one who wants them, then the names will be put in the hat for one to be drawn out. The condition would be that if they take one, they take all. Flushing water mains is done, there are a couple of hydrants needing repair. The city will need to have a copper and lead inventory of the whole city by the end of 2023 for MDH. Sanitary sewer flows are down.

**Zoning—203 S Centre St:** Council again reviewed the recommendation of the Board of Appeals and also the measurement of the north property line. The north property line was determined by duplicate measurements from the corner survey marker to the backside of the curb and a parallel line where the accessory building will be placed showing a 2'9" space between shed and property line. Councilor Pederson made a motion to approve the variance and permit. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Peterson, all approved, motion carried.



**Mankato/BEC Affordable Housing Action Plan:** Council reviewed the information and chose Option 2 to engage in a conversation around local housing priorities with the whole council. If that does not work a TEAMS meeting with 2 council members could be set up.

**Elections:** A special meeting was set for canvassing the elections on Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 7am. The regular council meeting will then be held on Thursday, November 3, 2022.

**Fire Department:** Councilor Pederson reported that there was 1 fire call for September. No grant news. The fire department voted to have Shierah Parks join the fire department. Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve Shierah Parks as a new member of the VCFD. 2nd by Councilor Edwards, all approved, motion carried.

**Miscellaneous:** Clerk received an email from GovOffice stating that for cyber security reasons, it would be no threat to put VC Cemetery link on the Vernon Center website. Council decided that a policy should be in place for requests of links on the city website. All the links should be listed under a community tab and not on the front page of the website. Nate Sowers should be notified that it will put on but not until January 2023 pending an approved policy. The city will have the ultimate authority to allow and not allow who should be on the website.

The newsletter this month can contain general project information for the citizens of Vernon Center.

**Adjourn:** Councilor Edwards made a motion to adjourn at 8:00pm. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Bennett, all approved, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
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Diane Roelofs, Clerk

  
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Dana Ziegler, Mayor

11-3-22  
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Date Approved