

**Minutes**  
**City of Villa Grove, Illinois**  
**Committee of the Whole Meeting**  
**August 26, 2024**

**Call to Order—Roll Call:** The City Council of the City of Villa Grove met in committee session on Monday, August 26, 2024, in the Council Chambers (Zest For Life Center). Mayor Eversole-Gunter called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Roll call found the following members present: Aldermen Blaney, Cheely, Hooker, Johnson, Nieto and Pangburn. City Administrator Athey, Police Chief Rea, CPS Director Surowka and PW Director Mixell were present. City Clerk Osborne was absent.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** The Mayor stood and led all attendees in The Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comments:** Petra Oberg was present to notify the Council that she has been working on bringing a faith-based service to the community, and will be having a meeting at the Zest for Life Center on September 30 at 6:30 p.m. She stated that she has spoken to several agencies from schools to Douglas County to Carle Missions and is excited to have a grass roots movement to help the City with issues such as homelessness, affordable housing, mental health resources or any other items identified.

**Reports:**

Athey – working on a lot of personnel issues in the past week; verbally notified members of the petition window open for the April 2025 election cycle; needs to confirm alternate dates for the upcoming Strategic Planning sessions; distributed a draft of a form to be required for liquor license permits (Class B) for one-time events hosted by businesses already holding permanent licenses and also noted that the fees for them have been in place 40+ years with no changes which should be reviewed; noted that Marc Miller will not be available in person this evening but would be by phone and that he will attend next month's regular COTW meeting; stated she will be out the following day (possibly two) for minor medical procedure.

Mixell – Zest for Life roof is completed and will be tied in to the last half of the roof still to be finished over the shop; work catchup; needs to replace cylinder on one of the mower lifts; referred to Alderman Hooker's concern about concrete damage done by ILAW contractors and that he would check multiple locations the following day, knowing that the alleys will also need to be graded when the contractors work is completed.

Rea – met with UP representatives concerning additional security needed for the steam engine visit and that they had requested two additional officers for whom they would reimburse the City's costs; still working with the City attorney and City's insurance concerning Camargo's request for police coverage before proceeding to an IGA for the services.

Surowka – adult wiffleball tournament is done; adult pickleball tournament going on now; fall soccer practice begins today with game/official schedules being finalized for the season; fall ball games began last week at Henson Park; splashpad will be closing September 3 with contractors coming to

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winterize it a week later; working on organizing items to facilitate a smooth transition in the next few weeks.

Black – thanked the Council for their quick response on the purchase of a fire truck to replace the 103; explained the difference in how the two trucks were built and why the newly-purchased truck should last longer; anticipates only minor spots needing rust repair and a couple lighting upgrades along with decal replacements needed on the truck; for staffing he stated they have four new applicants and a new explorer on the department.

Mayor – asked Mixell the status of the generator for the City building, and the electrician is stating for the damaged Genset to be replaced; asked Rea what types of policing had been requested by Camargo (ordinance enforcement versus general patrol), and Rea replied that they currently were looking at 4 hours per week that he assumed would be focused towards the weekend shifts; asked Black for an updated on the brand-new truck ordered (No. 102), which Black replied that he was requesting a virtual meeting with the vendor concerning delays in the production (originally April 2025 versus new current delivery expected the following November); reported that she and Athey had been working with Emily from Moran Economic Development regarding the new subdivisions; new pharmacist is still waiting on a federal permit and will be opening as soon as it is received; she has received requests from the media concerning the steam engine information but she has pointed them back to Union Pacific; she reported that she will be riding in the steam engine cab from the Watseka stop into Villa Grove as the opportunity was offered to local mayors.

Alderman Hooker reported that he had received complaints about young people out past curfew in the Main Street corridor and asked if the chairs in front the library could be removed to keep people from loitering there. The Mayor responded that the wi-fi was the issue and that if it could be turned off again it would help the situation.

**Discussion of Pending Business:**

After discussing the acquisition of various lots within the City due to ordinance violations/ demolitions and legal processes, the consensus of the Council was to have Director Mixell acquire bids to have a survey done of the parcel immediately north of the City's Administrative building. This lot specifically will need to be marked off for storage of materials, whether by backstop blocks or fencing.

Consensus was also given to move the next voting meeting, scheduled for 9/9, to Thursday September 12 at the Community Center Conference Room B, due to the UP Big Boy Steam Engine event and the Mayor's absence for the same.

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The VFW is working to create a community electronics recycling event and will be fundraising to pay for it (making it free for residents). They are proposed a two-day event on the first weekend of October and would like assistance from the elected officials to do pick-ups for homebound residents or potentially paying an employee from Public Works to assist. The Mayor asked that someone from the VFW come speak at a meeting concerning the entire process.

Items E4 and E5 of the agenda were tabled until Monday, September 23 when City Attorney Miller would be present to give his direction, per consensus of the members.

Alderman Pangburn motioned to go into Closed Session at 6:55 p.m. under 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) Exceptions to the open meetings act for the discussion of appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees. Alderman Cheely seconded the motion. Roll call: Johnson, yea, Nieto, yea, Pangburn, yea, Blaney, yea, Cheely, yea, Hooker, yea. Motion passed. It was noted that there would be no action taken after the closed session.

Council returned to open session at 7:48 p.m.

**Adjournment:** With no further items to be discussed, all members concurred to conclude the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jacki Athey*

Jacqueline S. Athey, CIMT, CPFA, CPFIM  
City Administrator

xc: Mayor  
City Council  
Building Inspector  
Department Heads  
File