

Minutes
Committee of the Whole
City Council Meeting
November 25, 2024

CALL TO ORDER—The City Council of the City of Villa Grove met as a Committee of the Whole session on **Monday, November 25, 2024**, in Council Chambers. Mayor Eversole-Gunter called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Roll call found the following members present: Alderman Blaney, Cheely, Pangburn, and Hooker. City Administrator Athey, Clerk Osborne, City Attorney Miller, PW Director Mixell and VGPD Chief Tibbetts were also present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE -The Mayor stood and led all attendees in The Pledge of Allegiance

PUBLIC COMMENTS-A representative from the Rotary Club was present to talk about the club wanting to plant some trees at the Community Rec Center at Richman Park. And they also would like to do so at Harrison Park. They will be doing their updating work on the park in the Spring and asked if their name could be added to the sign at the park showing they were involved in rehabilitation of the park. No objections were brought by the council for this.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT-Jacki Athey stated: She was at the Treasurer's conference last week and it was informative as usual. She led a discussion about the TIF and Tax Levy information with the council to explain and answer questions. The insurance billing from IML will be \$78,000. She talked to the State Comptroller's office about where the check is we have been waiting on and they told her 'it's in the mail!'-hopefully it will be arriving within the next week, or by our next council meeting.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

PUBLIC WORKS-DIRECTOR MIXELL reported The leaf collection is done as of today. They are ready for the Christmas Tree Lighting Festival to occur this weekend. There is an issue with the tennis court lights that will need to be repaired. They discovered the feeds for the power are not well coordinated and need to be replaced. The Christmas light decorations on Main Street are in dire need of replacing. They are old and don't work well, and cannot be repaired further. The Mayor suggested speaking with the Chamber of Commerce for some possible help with that project. The Christmas tree is not in very healthy condition so Marc led a discussion of ideas for replacing it next year. Some mentioned possibly putting multiple trees up, moving a large tree from another city property location to the lot, and discussions will continue on a good replacement. The tree is very large, but the branches are brittle and he is concerned about it possibly coming down in a storm.

CPS: DIRECTOR and Public Safety Coordinator Bob Rea: The rec center has been very busy with the 5-6th grade basketball games and crowds have been good. The concession stand sales have been pretty brisk. That age group volleyball will be signing up and beginning soon. He discussed an update to the website with a vendor and they are trying to get an idea of what is needed. Kyle Miller is doing well and catching on quickly with the software for scheduling and that is a huge help. Still no return calls from the landscaping company. Plaques for the donor wall are getting done, but we are running out of room on that wall, so some modifications of the plaques were discussed. Membership inquiries have picked up.

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VGPD: Chief reports he will be back full time by the end of the week. No resolution has been reached on the Oak Street property with the excessive items in the yard. He has researched some of the costs of a K9 unit, and found the cost would be around \$20,000 to get the dog and upgrade a squad car.

The large tree on the corner of Henson and Harrison streets has been removed by the homeowner of the property, which is a direct result of the ordinance violation notification program. The owner was cooperative with the police department in this process. The radar that can read while the squad car is moving is no longer working and has to be replaced. It is too old to be repaired-this is what allows the officers to conduct radar while their car is in motion. All of the cars will need theirs replaced. He will be getting quotes on these.

MAYOR: No mayoral report.

DISCUSSION OF BUSINESS (NON-VOTING)

1. Pending TIF1 Grant/Loan applications-City Manger reports there are 2 applications for TIF funds that have been received and are waiting review. A discussion of the terms in the agreements commenced, with her suggesting we do an across the board maximum amount of 75% funding-regardless of if the requestor is for profit or non profit. The consensus was given for the 75% funding amount/year/business.

2. Replacement of moving radar-Consensus was given to replace the radar equipment as presented by Chief Tibbetts.

3. Aquatic aeration proposal for reservoir- PW Director Mixell discussed the issues at the John Leon Park reservoir with the health of the pond being very poor. He met with a specialized vendor for this work and got quotes. In the spring, they would come in and kill the unwanted vegetation in the pond to help with the health of it. A second step will also be to install an aerator in the pond to get more flow, which will be better for the aquatic environment. Marc would be trained as they do these things so he could become certified for application of the chemicals to save some money in the future. He asked to get licensed for this at the same time as he renews licensure for pesticides. Consensus was given with the recognition of the large issues with the pond and potential for better usage and savings in the long run having someone on staff to keep the vegetation under control.

4. Tentative 2024 tax levy amount (collectible 2025)-The tax levy amount will be \$479,574 as the tentative amount. A public hearing will be set in December as will passage of the levy.

5. Approval of administrator's attendance to Rural Community/ED Conference in late February-Consensus was given for this conference for the manager.

6. Approval of treasurer's attendance to annual dual state/national conference in July 2025 (FY26 expense)-Even though this is not until next fiscal year, registrations must be done early and in this FY. Consensus was given for this conference.

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7. 2024 Holiday schedules-Suggestion is for December 24 & 25 to be the holiday for Christmas, and on Dec. 31-a half day of the office open in the morning, but in the afternoon year end items will be completed, just not open to the public. January 1, 2025 is the full day off for the holiday.

8. Tentative 2025 meeting calendar-Consensus was given on the tentative calendar.

9. Other items brought before the Council for discussion-volunteer of the year will be presented Dec. 9.

CLOSED SESSION: No closed session needed.

ADJOURNMENT-With no further business, Alderman Hooker motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m. Alderman Blaney seconded the motion. Roll Call: Blaney, Pangburn, yea, Cheely, yea, Hooker, yea. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle L. Osborne

Michelle L. Osborne, City Clerk

XC: Mayor and City Council; Building Inspector; Department Heads; File