

**Minutes  
Committee of the Whole  
City Council Meeting  
February 17, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER—The City Council of the City of Villa Grove met as a Committee of the Whole session on **March 16, 2026**, in Council Chambers. Mayor Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll call found the following members present: Alderman Taylor-Sanford, Fulk, Nieto, Clark, Elston and Hooker. City Administrator/Comptroller Athey, Clerk Osborne, CC Director Rea, and PW Director Mixell were also present.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**-No comments.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**-Jacki Athey reported Budget planning has begun. The council will need to approve the budget at the second April meeting, which will be a voting meeting, on April 27,2026. The Arrow Ambulance contract amount will be \$105,853 for the year 2025. The TIF fund reimbursement requests from Tri City Country Club and the VG Schools will be on the next voting meeting. Approval for buying new chairs for council chambers is asked. Council gives consensus on the chair purchase.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:**

**CPS:** Director Rea said the ball field lights at RSC Field 3 would bring the number of lighted fields there to 2. Consensus was given for lights at RSC. Henson lights have to be replaced since they cannot be fixed. It would cost approximately \$50k to install new lights there. If the lights aren't fixed, they need to be taken down due to the liability if they remain installed. The first and second week of June they are hosting 2 tournaments for baseball.

**VGPD**-Chief Tibbetts No updates.

**PUBLIC WORKS**-Director Mixell reported they were very busy responding to storm damage these past weeks from the high winds/rain/tornado that passed through on different days. That has delayed other items that need work and they hope to get back to normal by the end of this week.

**VGFD**- Chris Elston reported from the fire department that the storm siren is not working, as many found out from the storms over the weekend. They are trying to get it fixed along with the remote access to it. If they cannot repair it a new one needs to be installed and that purchase may run close to \$50k. Elston also offered a report on Oculus Rail, which is a sensor for the trains being on the tracks. A positive for this would be data collection on the trains and when they block the crossings, however the cost is estimated at \$30k. Council did not think this would be worth acquiring.

**Mayor:** Mayor Rasmussen is planning for the fireworks display along with public works, and plans for the condemnation of the house continue.

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**DISCUSSION OF BUSINESS (NON-VOTING)**

**1. Gather interest on TextMyGov options** - Jacki gave an overview of a program called TextmyGov that could be an alternative way to contact the city and gather information from the city instead of using social media. At this time, the council came to the conclusion to stay with what we have and work with that. Social media is free and adding another software would bring an extra cost.

**2. Battery Stewardship Program** - Discussions of the new state law banning batteries being thrown in the garbage and they have to be recycled. Can we create a program with a standard drop off area available to everyone most of the time and who would be responsible for collection and recycling? This program could end up costing the city more money depending on how large the collections become. More study is needed for a solution to this.

**3. Review of liquor license laws in relation to proximity of religious properties** -Jacki also gave an overview of the updated law requiring liquor licenses cannot be given closer than 100 feet of a religious property. At present, we do not have any that are in violation of this and with no open licenses, there won't be any conflicts. This will be something that has to be considered with future licensing.

**4. FY27 Budget update**-Department Directors reported they are almost done with their budgets. We will be having a budget meeting only on March 30,2026. This will prepare us for voting on the final budget in April. One item that was brought up is how many city events will we be planning to host? In past years, we were doing about 4 per year-one in each season. With limited resources, volunteers, etc., the council decided to go with two major events-one in summer and one in Fall/winter (Hot weather/ cold weather). We are hopeful to have good turnouts and maybe bigger events this way.

**CLOSED SESSION:** No closed session needed.

**ADJOURNMENT**-With no further business, Alderman Elston motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 pm. Alderman Hooker seconded the motion. Roll Call: Taylor-Sanford, yea, Fulk, yea, Nieto, yea, Clark, yea, Elston, yea, Hooker, yea. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

*Michelle L. Osborne*

Michelle L. Osborne, City Clerk

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