

The Council of the City of Vandalia Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Mayor Mike Blakesly, Councilmember Amber Aivalotis-Weaver, Councilmember Cindy Doogan, Councilmember Candice Farst, Councilmember Corey M. Follick and Councilmember Dave Lewis.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Richard Herbst.

OTHERS PRESENT: Jerry McDonald, Kurt Althouse, Rob Cron, Angela Swartz, Darren Davey, Steve Clark, Alicia McCracken, Bridgette Leiter, Mike Hammes, Ben Borton, Bridgette Leiter, Chad Follick, Scott Jacobs, Candice Jacobs, Leann Hanf, Mark Schwieterman, Brandon Sucher, Ben Walker, Jason Friedman, Eddie Hunt, Larry Doogan, Robert Shanahan, Corey Shanahan, Alex Gunter-Dray, Tammy Weaterhead, Steve Ponscheck, Amos Knipp, Barbara Spurgeon, Bud & Tanya Brown, Mary Blakesly, Don Hutchison, Ed Burke, Patricia Chavez, Cooper Kohlrise, Jeni Suber, Liam Suber, Gloria Shanahan, Shari Coover, Barbara Breisah, Robert Hussong, Landon Oliver, Isabella Beam, Mikayla Molesky, Kyle Smith, Chad Garver, Joseph Manning.

Vice Mayor Blakesly called the council meeting of the Council of the City of Vandalia to order at 7:05 p.m. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** called for a moment of reflection followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Boy Scout Troop 307.

Approval of Previous Minutes: None

Communications, Petitions and Awards:

Mr. Althouse advised Council, the audience and residents online, there is a significant power outage on the Eastern side of the City as well as several joining communities. He advised with the current extreme cold temperatures; the Fire and Police Departments have been in contact with the County's Emergency Management Authority and have made the determination to open up the Vandalia Recreation Center as a warming center for those residents without electricity or heat until the power is restored. **Mr. Althouse** advised residents will be updated via the City's Social Media and news outlets.

Introduction: Landon Oliver, Vandalia Recreation Custodian

Mr. Althouse introduced Landon Oliver, Vandalia Recreation Custodian who began employment January 6, 2025.

Introduction and Oath of Office: Isabella Beam, Firefighter/Paramedic/EMT

Mr. Althouse introduced and administered the Oath of Office to Isabella Beam, Firefighter/Paramedic/EMT who will begin employment January 22, 2025.

Introduction and Oath of Office: Mikayla Molesky, Firefighter/Paramedic

Mr. Althouse introduced and administered the Oath of Office to Mikayla Molesky, Firefighter/Paramedic who will begin employment January 23, 2025.

Introduction and Oath of Office: Kyle Smith Firefighter/Paramedic

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Mr. Althouse introduced and administered the Oath of Office to Kyle Smith, Firefighter/Paramedic who will begin employment January 24, 2025.

Retirement Acknowledgement: Captain Chad Garver

Mr. Althouse introduced and acknowledged Captain Chad Garver for his full-service retirement.

Retirement Acknowledgement: Officer Joseph Manning

Mr. Althouse introduced and acknowledged Officer Joseph Manning for his full-service retirement.

Public Hearing: None

Comments from Interested Citizens:

Vice Mayor Blakesly addressed the City meeting decorum. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** called for comments from interested citizens advising as they come to the podium, please clearly state their name and address for the record. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** asked those who speak to please follow the etiquette of communicating with respect to others, to please stay on topic with their statements, while addressing council. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** reminded the audience, this is not the forum for arguments and asked in an effort to give all citizens an opportunity to express their thoughts and concerns, to keep their comments as brief as possible. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** advised with the number of people in attendance, a five-minute limit will be given to each person speaking. **Donald Hutchison**, 1058 Bristol Drive, addressed Council expressing the need of a traffic study on South Brown School Road, noting if there are calamities on I-70 and I-75, the traffic is very heavy on South Brown School Road and with adding a house development, it will be worse, making it difficult for emergency vehicles to get through. **Mr. Hutchison** expressed his concern with production homes being built, the hours they will be working, and the conditions of the roads, asking Council to consider a traffic study. **Amos Knipp**, 207 James Bohanan Drive, Apt 2, expressed his concern on the figures that were given in the presentation which might be misleading on the percentages of people who can and cannot afford to buy new homes, and he feels \$300,000 is not an affordable home. **Mr. Knipp** noted growth in Vandalia is a good thing but doesn't want to pawn off Vandalia's culture in order to accommodate it. **Alex Gunter-Dray**, 751 Foxfire Trail, shared he is not opposed to residential and commercial growth in the City of Vandalia, but asked Council to do it in a tactful way, to do an independent traffic study for South Brown School Road. **Mr. Gunter-Dray** expressed his concern about the current heavy traffic on South Brown School Road, lowering the speed limit and the number of cars, delivery trucks and construction trucks that would be coming in and out of the new development, the size of the cul-de-sacs and the lot size comparisons between Foxfire and the new development. **Corey Shanahan**, 527 Shadowood Drive, expressed his concerns on the impacts the proposed housing development may have on the school district, referring to a letter to

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City Council from the School District dated October 21st, 2024. **Mr. Shanahan** inquired if Council had done its due diligence on a cost analysis for solutions that would be required to solve the building space issues to accommodate more students, construction cost for the schools and the hiring of additional staff for the schools and cost. **Mr. Shanahan** inquired if the City would be lowering his taxes due to new homeowners moving into the school district. **Barbara Breisch**, 898 Deerhurst Drive, expressed her concerns of being impacted by the building of the new subdivision, noting she sent an email to Council today. **Ms. Breisch** shared she does not feel Deerhurst should go straight through as an extension, as it is currently planned, at the peak of the hill, because an increase of traffic will cause more accidents. **Ms. Breisch** suggested moving the entrances farther North, would like to see larger lots and feels Council has an obligation to the people who are already living near the proposed development. **Robert Shannan**, 7733 South Brownschool Road, expressed to Council his concerns of the proposed PUD, for the schools, the traffic, the size of the lots, storm water discharge and wetlands on the proposed property.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Information Items:

Mr. Althouse shared information regarding snow removal, with more snow predicted in the weather forecast, the City of Vandalia is asking residents to do their part to help us all get through the blustery conditions. Making sure their sidewalks are cleared as soon as it is practical. City ordinances require property and business owners to keep their sidewalks clear of snow and move their car off the street when snowfall is heavy enough for the plows to be out. By parking in their garage or driveway, they will help us clear the snow more quickly and their car won't be stranded at the curb. When clearing snow from driveways or sidewalks, do not move snow into the street. This creates an obstacle/hazard for passing motorists and makes the roads extra slippery. Give the snowplow plenty of room to operate. The plow driver's field of vision is limited. If residents can't see the plow truck's side mirrors, the truck driver can't see them. Always stay two to three car lengths behind the plow. Snowplows travel well below the posted speed limit. Be patient and provide plow drivers with the room they need to complete their work. Try not to pass the plow. Watch for sudden stops or turns.

Action Item: None

Old Business: None

Resolutions:

25-R-07 A Resolution Authorizing The Purchase Of A Toro Groundsmaster 4000-D, Requested By The Parks And Recreation Department, From Century Equipment/ A

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Jerry Pate Company At The Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Contractor Bid Price Of \$96,932.18 And Requesting Council Declare The Current 2016 Toro Groundsmaster Rough Mower Being Replaced Surplus Property. **Mr. McDonald** read Resolution 25-R-07 by title. **Mr. Althouse** advised Council the Parks and Recreation Department is requesting to purchase a Toro Groundsmaster 4000-D Rough Mower from Century Equipment/ A Jerry Pate Company through the Sourcewell Contract #031121-TTC a total cost of \$96,932.18. The 2025 capital budget has \$105,000 allocated for the purchase based on a price quote received during our budget preparation process. This specialty piece of equipment provides versatility when mowing fairway rough areas, following the contour of the terrain so there isn't scalping of turf. The golf maintenance division's current Rough Mower proposed for replacement is a 2016 Toro model with 2,227 hours of service. There were no comments from Council. It was moved by Councilwoman Farst, second by Councilman Follick to approve Resolution 25-R-07. Motion passed 6-0.

25-R-08 A Resolution Authorizing The Purchase Of A Toro Greensmaster 3150-Q, Requested By The Parks And Recreation Department, From Century Equipment/ A Jerry Pate Company At The Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Contractor Bid Price Of \$50,762.25 And Requesting Council Declare The Current 2007 Toro Triplex Tee Mower Being Replaced Surplus Property. **Mr. McDonald** read Resolution 25-R-08 by title. **Mr. Althouse** advised the Parks and Recreation Department is requesting to purchase a Toro Greensmaster 3150-Q Triplex Tee Mower from Century Equipment/A Jerry Pate Company through the Sourcewell Contract #031121-TTC a total cost of \$50,762.25. The 2025 capital budget has \$60,000 allocated for the purchase based on a price quote received during our budget preparation process. This specialty piece of equipment provides versatility in the ability to mow tees, green banks, and collars. The golf maintenance division's current Triplex Tee Mower is a 2007 Toro model with 3,685 hours of service. There were no comments from Council. It was moved by Councilwoman Doogan, second by Councilman Lewis to approve Resolution 25-R-08. Motion passed 6-0.

25-R-09 A Resolution To Continue Participation In A Multi-Jurisdictional Plan In Conjunction With The Montgomery County Office Of Emergency Management. **Mr. McDonald** read Resolution 25-R-09 by title. **Mr. Althouse** advised Council this resolution will allow us to continue our participation in the Montgomery County Emergency Management Authority's multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Hazard Mitigation Plan includes all hazards to which Montgomery County and its municipalities are susceptible as per Section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The plan includes goals, objectives, and

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strategies to mitigate against the hazards, that have been identified in the County, including the City of Vandalia, have been developed and mitigation measures for the city and surrounding areas have been analyzed and prioritized and then worked into the City's Emergency Operations Plan. The City of Vandalia commits to implement the actions to the extent feasible and in a manner consistent with the City of Vandalia's needs, resources, and responsibilities to lessen the vulnerability of the community to the impact of disasters, as established in the 2024 Montgomery County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Tornado warning and public notification has been the project we have committed to for the past 5-8 years; we continue to work to identify funding that would assist us or allow us to cover the cost of adding two (2) outdoor warning sirens in the area of the City Building, St. Christopher, or Jeffers Park. Second, to add a siren (that could be cost shared with the County) to an area near Art Van Atta or the Dog Park. It was moved by Councilman Follick, second by Councilman Lewis to approve Resolution 25-R-09. There were no comments from Council. Motion passed 6-0.

Ordinances – First Reading: None

Ordinances – Second Reading: None

Ordinances – Emergency Reading:

25-01 An Ordinance Approving Individual Assessments Amounts And Directing The Finance Director Or Her Designee To Certify The Amounts To The County Auditor For Collection And Declaring An Emergency. **Mr. McDonald** read Ordinance 25-01 by title. **Mr. Althouse** advised Council this emergency ordinance assesses properties for delinquent accounts related to storm water fees, trash collection, delinquent sewer & water, weed cutting and property maintenance. There were no comments or questions during the public hearing. There were no comments from Council. It was moved by Councilwoman Farst, second by Councilwoman Doogan to approve Ordinance 25-01. Motion passed 6-0.

Reports from Boards and Commissions:

Vice Mayor Blakesly called for comments or questions on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes from November 20, 2024 and the Planning Commission Minutes from December 10, 2024. There were none.

Vice Mayor Blakesly reviewed the December 2024 Bill Listing \$ 2,731,913.38, Monthly Expenses over \$25,000 and Monthly Purchasing Card Detail in the amount of \$24,759.50. He solicited comments or questions. There were none.

Council Comments

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Mr. Althouse congratulated the new employees and two retirees, wishing them all the best. **Mr. Althouse** advised all power has been restored that was out in the City and encouraged residents to check on their neighbors during this cold weather season.

Councilmember Doogan welcomed the new employees and congratulated Captain Garver and Officer Manning for their retirement.

Councilmember Lewis congratulated Chad and Joe on their retirement and hoped they enjoyed retirement as much as he has.

Councilmember Follick congratulated the two retirees and highlighted Officer Manning being selected by his peers as the Police Division's Officer of the Year for 2024.

Councilmember Follick congratulated Support Services Manager Deborah Wright who was selected by her peers as the Police Division's Civilian of the Year for 2024.

Councilmember Follick gave kudos to Jack Marshall, Custodial Supervisor in the Parks and Recreation Department and to Recreation Superintendent Alicia McCracken for securing a BWC Safety Intervention Grant for just under \$20k for use of equipment at the Recreation Center. **Councilmember Follick** congratulated Officer Blackford for being recognized on ABC 22 Fox 45 as a Hometown Hero for recently helping shovel out a Vandalia resident who was snowed in their driveway. **Councilmember Follick** acknowledged and thanked the Public Works and Parks and Rec departments for their snow removal efforts and their work on the water main breaks over the past weeks.

Councilmember Farst thanked Mr. Althouse for acknowledging our retirees by coming to the Council meetings. **Councilmember Farst** thanked Captain Garver and Officer Manning for all their years of service and welcomed the new employees.

Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver thanked the Boy Scouts leading the Pledge of Allegiance tonight. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** welcomed the new employees and wished Captain Garver and Officer Manning well and hoped to still see them around in the community. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** made a motion to excuse Mayor Herbst from the meetings tonight. Councilwoman Farst seconded the motion. All members present voted yes. Motion passed 6-0. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** reminded everyone that this is National Passenger Safety Week, whose motto is one courageous voice can change a deadly choice and noted 56 percent of teen deaths happen as a passenger in a teen vehicle, asking the teens in the community to be cautious. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** thanked the community for the messages,

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emails and for coming to the meeting to speak about the issues that Council makes decisions on.

Vice Mayor Blakesly echoed everything that has been said. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** congratulated Captain Garver and Officer Manning on their retirement, noting they will be missed and wished them both good luck. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** thanked the Boy Scouts for accepting his invitation to come tonight, noting they will be back on February 17th to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** thanked Council for being patient with him tonight.

The Regular meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

APPROVED:

Michael Blakesly, Vice Mayor

ATTEST:

Angela Swartz, Deputy Clerk of Council

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