

# The Council of the City of Vandalia Meeting Minutes

**February 17, 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, Kristen Carnes, Ben Borton, Chad Follick, Leann Hanf, Mark Schwieterman, Ben Walker, Danny Knife, Jake Hayslett, Robert Shanahan, Gloria Shanahan, Tammy Weatherhead, Amos Knipp, Barbara Spurgeon, Don Hutchison, Donald Engle, Donna Plant, Terrie Manuel, Barbara Breisch, Elizabeth Langford, Karla Lamb, Alex Gunter-Dray, Diane Dohn, Patty Tackett, Leonard Green, Venetia Green, Leon Mable, Liam Suber, Jeni Suber, Kimberly Bish and Ed Burke.

**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 Liam Suber with Boy Scout Troop 307.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

The Council Study Session Minutes from January 6, 2025, and Council Meeting Minutes from January 6, 2025 were approved as presented.

Communications, Petitions and Awards: None

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, provided Council with a page from December 18, 2006, referencing Resolution 06-R-33, with the concerns of the Brown School Road being extended due to the land clearing for the new Public Works Facility and what the emergency access would mean. **Councilman Lewis** addressed Mr. Hutchison, advising him the intent of the service drive is in the event there is an emergency and not for general use or for general traffic and Council is committed to honoring Resolution 06-R-33. **Mr. Hutchison** inquired

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where the large debris drop off would be located at the new facility. Councilman Lewis advised it would be at the new facility, where there would be enough room avoiding any back up onto the road. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** advised Mr. Hutchison to get with Staff for a copy of the preliminary plan of the new Public Works Facility, reiterating the service drive access would be gated and only used for emergencies. **Mr. Hutchison** inquired why the land on Webster Street was not considered for the new Public Works Facility. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** advised Mr. Hutchison the Webster Street site had been a looked at for the Public Works Facility, but the Northwoods site was a better fit for the project. **Mr. Hutchison** inquired why there were no emergency service roads for the west end of Alkaline Springs and the north end of Damian, stating the citizens want to me make sure Council does not recind on the Resolution. **Mr. Hutchison** inquired if the increased water, sewer and storm water rates were being used for the Public Works Facility. **Mr. Althouse** advised Mr. Hutchinson that a portion of those rates do go towards the funding of the new Public Works Facility because a fair amount of the work that is performed on restoring water main breaks, replacing sewers and the equipment is done and used by the City's Public Works. **Robert Shanahan**, 7733 South Brown School Road, expressed his concerns about the PUD, Addison Properties, the schools hiring additional teachers, construction of additional classrooms and the additional traffic issues.

**Patty Tacket**, 7771 Johnson Station Road, addressed Council expressing her concerns of the new development, stating her shooting range was involved in litigation with Jamie Spencer, where he alleged the presence of lead contamination on the property where the new housing development is proposed, and she would like the prospective developer and Council to know this and requested to be contacted if there has been lead testing done on the property. **Gloria Shanahan**, 7733 South Brown School Road, addressed Council that she is speaking on behalf of Tanya Brown, who resides at 4428 Poplar Creek Road, who was unable to attend the meeting tonight. **Ms. Shanahan** read a letter from Ms. Brown, stating she has concerns regarding the proposed development on South Brown School, with the small lot sizes, the materials used for the proposed homes, the traffic issues once the development is completed and the resale values of the surrounding homes. **Beth Langford**, 410 South Brown School Road, addressed Council expressing she agrees with what has already been said and it is not a good development or a good look for Vandalia. **Donald Engle**, 859 Bolton Abbey Lane, addressed Council expressing that the City of Vandalia has high standards, better schools and less crime than some of the surrounding areas. **Mr. Engle** expressed that Foxfire is an upscale, high quality housing development and ultimately this is what should be built in the proposed development on South Brown School Road. Mr. Engle provided Council with copies of the Foxfire Protective Covenants and Restrictions and the Foxfire Quality Features. **Mr. Engle** stated several times, Vandalia Ohio, Small City, Big Opportunity. **Leon Mable**, 778

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Foxfire Trail, addressed Council stating by Council making the property a PUD, Council has the authority to make changes and asked Council to consider changing the lot sizes due to the traffic and cars parked on the streets. **Mr. Mable** expressed his concerns of the potential traffic issues the development will cause on Brown School Road and Little York Road and the property values. **Tammy Weatherhead**, 4555 Poplar Creek Road, addressed Council stating she has lived in her home for 30 years, which is on the north side of the development. **Ms. Weatherhead** expressed her concern of the building materials used for the proposed housing development, how it will affect her property value and the emergency services for the residents of Vandalia. **Leonard Green**, 867 Bolton Abby Lane, addressed Council inquiring how the proposed housing development would benefit the City of Vandalia and if City Council had the authority to change the lot sizes. **Mr. Green** requested that Council listen to the citizens and their concerns. **Kimberly Bish**, 792 Foxfire, addressed Council thanking Council for the opportunity for the residents to share their thoughts on the development on South Brown School Road. **Ms. Bish** shared she realizes the property would eventually be developed, expressing her dissatisfaction with the product of houses being proposed. **Ms. Bish** expressed her concerns of more traffic, more cars and the possibility of a train derailment. **Alex Gunter-Dray**, 751 Foxfire Trail, addressed Council inquiring why Council had not given the residents any feedback and how Council finds the proposed development in alignment with the 2020 comprehensive plan, siting the residents are the stakeholders in Vandalia, not the developers. **Mr. Gunter-Grey** expressed his concerns about the lot sizes, the quality of the building products and the need for a traffic study before Council makes their decision. **Ed Burke**, 2337 Upper Trent Way, addressed Council expressing his concerns with the layout of the proposed development, the cul-de-sac sizes, the increase of box trucks and traffic, mailbox clusters, who will maintain the wet-lands if the HOA bails and possibility of short-term rentals the proposed development will bring to Vandalia. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** thanked everyone for their comments. **Councilmember Follick** requested the Law Director explain the process moving forward to everyone in attendance. **Gerald McDonald**, Law Director for the City of Vandalia, advised at the March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 Council meeting, Council will consider the second reading of the PUD and the preliminary plan, and there will be public hearing in a second reading. **Mr. McDonald** advised Council has the ability to make changes to certain things, but there is criteria in the City's code that governs what can and cannot be required. **Mr. McDonald** gave different scenarios of possible changes Council could require, with the final development plan being adjusted accordingly if approved adding, all the procedures are outlined in the City of Vandalia Planning Code, which are passed by City Council, which must be followed to not put the City at a risk for litigation. **Mr. McDonald** advised that it is not unusual for Council to not express their views in the earlier stages, but will at the

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public hearing at the second reading to not be accused of making decisions before all the information is presented. **Donald Engle**, 859 Bolton Abbey Lane, addressed Council again, sharing traffic studies can show anything the person paying for the study want them to show. **Mr. Engle** expressed his concern of a potential lawsuit if this does not go in the developer's favor. **Beth Langford**, 410 South Brown School Road, addressed Council again, inquired about obtaining a copy of the Vandalia Zoning Code criteria for Plan Unit Developments, on what Council can and cannot change. **Mr. McDonald** directed Ms. Lanford to the City of Vandalia's website.

At 8:07 p.m. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** addressed the audience announcing Council would be moving on to the rest of the meeting agenda and gave the audience the opportunity to stay for the rest of the meeting or to leave if they so wish to.

## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

### Information Items:

**Mr. Althouse** shared the annual Employee Service Awards Luncheon will be held on Friday, February 28, 2025, at 11:30 am at the Cassel Hills Clubhouse. Councilmembers are invited to attend. Employees celebrating a service milestone in 2024 will receive an invitation in the mail. Attendance is limited to Council, department heads, supervisors, the employee being recognized and one guest. This year we will be celebrating 150 years of combined service.

Action Item: None

Old Business: None

### Resolutions:

**25-R-13** A Resolution Approving The Proposed 2024 Bylaws Of The First Suburbs Consortium Of Dayton Ohio Council Of Governments. **Mr. McDonald** read Resolution 25-R-13 by title. **Mr. Althouse** advised on October 23, 2024, the First Suburbs Consortium of Dayton Ohio Council of Governments (COG) Governing Board unanimously approved several changes to the COG's Bylaws. This is the first Bylaws change since 2017. In accordance with Section XIII of the 2017 Bylaws, each Member Community must also approve the new Bylaws by a Resolution before they can become effective. In the Council packet, you will find the revised Bylaws provided by Jack Jensen, Executive Director. There were no comments from Council. It was moved by Councilman Lewis, second by Councilwoman Doogan to approve Resolution 25-R-13. Motion passed 6-0.

**25-R-14** A Resolution Authorizing The City Manager To Purchase The Property Located At 10 W. National Road And Designating The Site As An Area For

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Revitalization. **Mr. McDonald** read Resolution 25-R-14 by title. **Mr. Althouse** advised the City of Vandalia is finalizing a contract to purchase real estate at 10 West National Road for \$2,150,000, for redevelopment purposes as part of the Vandalia City Center Overlay plan. The City's intent is to seek a desirable use for this property that aligns with the VCCO and the 2020 Comprehensive Plan that meets the desire of our community and supports quality economic development. Funds for this purchase will come from the Job Creation and Revitalization Fund, which is predominantly funded through building permit and land development fees. There were no comments from Council. It was moved by Councilman Follick second by Councilman Lewis to approve Resolution 25-R-14. Motion passed 6-0.

Ordinances – First Reading: None

Ordinances – Second Reading: None

Ordinances – Emergency Reading:

**25-03** An Ordinance To Revise Appropriations For Current Expenses And Other Expenditures Of The City Of Vandalia, Montgomery County, Ohio During The Calendar Year Ending December 31, 2025, And Amending Ordinance 24-24 And Declaring An Emergency. **Mr. McDonald** read Ordinance 25-03 by title. **Mr. Althouse** advised Council this Ordinance would approve the following supplemental appropriation for \$2,000,000 increase appropriations to account for expenses related to the purchase of real estate located at 10 West National Road for \$2,150,000, for redevelopment purposes as part of the Vandalia City Center Overlay plan. There were no comments or questions during the public hearing. There were no comments from Council. It was moved by Councilwoman Farst, second by Councilman Follick to approve Ordinance 25-03. Motion passed 6-0.

Reports from Boards and Commissions: None

**Vice Mayor Blakesly** reviewed the January 2025 Bill Listing \$ 4,241,234.77, Monthly Expenses over \$25,000 and Monthly Purchasing Card Detail in the amount of \$20,044.28. He solicited comments or questions. There were none.

### Council Comments

**Mr. Althouse** thanked Mr. Schwieterman for all the time and work he put into the Utility Rate Study, complimenting him on the fine presentation. **Mr. Althouse** advised the portion of the Utility Rate Study presentation video will be available on the City's website this week.

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**Councilmember Follick** thanked the Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff for their efforts with snow removal and the ongoing water main breaks.

**Councilmember Farst** thanked Mr. Schwieterman for his presentation and thanked staff for their efforts in keeping the roads cleared.

**Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** made a motion to excuse Mayor Herbst from all meetings tonight. Councilwoman Farst seconded the motion. All members present voted yes. Motion passed 6-0. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** thanked Vice Mayor Blakesly for organizing the Boy Scouts to attend the Council Meetings and thanked Liam Suber for leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance tonight. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** shared she does hear the citizens concerns about Helke Park not having a toddler playground, but the previous playground equipment had several safety concerns and had to be taken down. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** thanked the residents who spoke at the meeting tonight, sharing Council does listen. **Councilmember Aivalotis-Weaver** thanked Mr. Schwieterman for his presentation and wished everyone a happy Presidents Day.

**Vice Mayor Blakesly** thanked the Boy Scouts for leading the Pledge of Allegiance, noting it met the need for a badge requirement. **Vice Mayor Blakesly** thanked Mr. Schwieterman again for his detailed report and staff for their involvement.

**Vice Mayor Blakesly** advised the Council meeting will be adjourned and Council will reconvene to the Study Session to finish the agenda items.

The Regular meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Michael Blakesly, Vice Mayor

ATTEST:

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Angela Swartz, Deputy Clerk of Council