

**Regular Public Works Committee Meeting
City Of Virden
City Council Chambers
Thursday May 21st, 2026**

Meeting called to order by Alderman Bertolino at 7:12 PM

Alderspersons in attendance: Carter, Neighbors, Donley, Matrisch, Boster and Bertolino

Absent: Calloway, Karrick

Also in attendance: Mayor George Murphy, City Clerk Jon Myint, and Director of Public Works Gary Etter

Audience: Rick Maguire, Bill Sleeman, and Craig Carlile

Comments from Audience: Rick Maguire's comments in topic #9

Topics:

1. Approval of Minutes 04-16-26

Motion: made by Bertolino seconded by Carter to approve the Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes of 04-16-26. **Motion** passed with all in favor.

2. Review change order #1 for N W Drainage Bypass Project

Bill Sleeman of Benton & Associates presented and explained the reason behind the \$42,012 cost increase, saying that it was mostly due to state delay in authorizing the additional \$200,000 and the war with Iran. Bertolino and Boster challenged the change order, but was told the contractor could file a lawsuit for the additional funds.

Discussion: on the date the bid was do, how long the bid was good for, and when the contract was awarded.

Matrisch inquired if additional funds for fuel are to be expected, Bill Sleeman responded no, the \$5,460 increase in the change order was a one-time item.

Motion: made by Mayor Murphy seconded by Boster to send the N W Drainage Bypass Project change order request #1 as presented, to the Council for a vote.

Yeas: Bertolino, Donley, Matrisch, and Neighbors, **Nayes:** Boster, Carter
Absent: Karrick, Calloway, **Abstain:** 0, **Motion:** passed

3. Review pay application #2 (\$294,605.10) for NW Drainage Bypass Project

Bill Sleeman reporter the project is 56% completed with no major issues.

Motion: made by Mayor Murphy seconded by Carter to send pay application #2 to Council for approval with line numbers 23 and 26 to be subtracted from the requested amount if the change order does not pass.

Yeas: Bertolino, Boster Carter, Donley, Matrisch, and Neighbors **Nayes:** 0,
Absent: Calloway, Karrick , **Abstain:** 0, **Motion:** passed with all in favor

4. Rock & Oil for FY26/27 (\$36,231)

Recommendation: made by Boster seconded by Carter to take a motion to the council, to approve not more than \$36,500 for FY26/27 Rock and Oil.

Motion: passed with all in favor

5. Garage Door

Garry Etter reported that the issue with the door turned out to be a minor one and no further action or funding is needed.

6. Mulch for parks

Gary Etter requested that a motion be taken to Council for the approval of \$2,400 for Mulch for the city parks. Mulch to be purchased from Foster Brothers. Funding will come from the landscaping budget.

Motion: made by Bertolino seconded by Matrisch to take a recommendation to the council, for approval, for Public Works to buy \$2,400 of playground approved mulch for the city parks. **Motion:** passed with all in favor.

7. Air Conditioner for the Community Center

Tabled to Executive Session

8. Tornado Siren on Linder

Gary Etter reported that the siren on Linder Street is not working. With crane rental, total electrical investigation, and possible repair (if parts are available due to age and voltage) cost could reach \$3,000. Gary's recommendation is to have the city look into replacing the old outdated siren with a new more efficient siren. The cost estimated is \$36,000, but it would cover half the town (southside). As the smaller ones go out they would not have to be replaced and when the ones on the north side of town go out the city can look into putting in an updated siren then.

Motion: made by Boster seconded by Neighbors to take to the council a vote of spending not to exceed \$36,000 for one (1) new tornado siren to be installed on the southwest end of Virden.

Yeas: Boster, Carter, Donley, Matrisch, and Neighbors, **Nayes:** Bertolino,
Absent: Calloway, Karrick , **Abstain:** 0, **Motion:** passed

9. Virden Sanitation District/Intergovernmental Agreement (VSD/IGA)

Rick McGuire provided public comment on the long standing dispute with the VSD and the IGA. He expressed frustration over the years of legal battles which have cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars in attorney fees. Stating the VSD has moved to a flat rate billing system, abandoning the city's water usage data and VSD is expressing a desire to no longer negotiate.

Rick criticized the ongoing conflict stating it has divided the community and enriched the attorneys on both sides. He volunteered to mediate between the City Council and the VSD suggesting a meeting with a council member and Bruce Lair whom he viewed as more direct. He urges moving forward noting the city faces a potential \$50,000 budget deficit and funds saved on attorney fees could possibly be better used for employee raises.

10. Rimini Drive Rd.

Recommendation from Gary Etter Director of Public Works was not to accept the Rimini Drive. He stated he reviewed the contract and discussed the road with the Fire Chief who is also concerned with the road, both questioning if the city accepts the road, and emergency vehicles cannot have true access can the city be held liable.

Additionally, the issues that were brought up at the 04-16-26 Public Works Committee meeting have gone unanswered by the Macoupin County Housing Authority (MCHA)

The consensus from the council was not to accept Rimini Drive until MCHA has answered all concerned issues.

11. Spray schedule for 2026

Spraying will start in June and go thru October. Spraying will be done on Tuesdays starting with Wards 1&2, Wards 3&4 will be done the following Week. Thursdays will be used as a rain or wind day if Tuesday spraying is not possible. All spraying will be weather permitting. To reduce employee burden spraying will be split into 2 Two hour shifts instead of 1 four hour shift. Spraying will be posted on the internet 24 hours in advance.

12. 3 unsafe vehicles in PW

Gary Etter brought to the Council's attention the condition of 3 of the Public Works trucks:

- a. 1995 truck: used as a spray truck; floorboards are rusted through, and the front end is failing.
- b. 2001 truck (1 ton): front shocks are failing; This truck is used only for light brush pickup.
- c. 2004 truck (176,000 miles): While old, it is still functional and used for trips to Springfield.

For safety concerns the Director of Public Works has told the employees the 1995 and the 2001 trucks are not permitted to leave the city limits.

13. Possible cleaning of the bandstand roof

Bertolino inquired as to whether the Public Works Department could power wash the possible black mold off the bandstand roof. Gary Etter proposed cleaning it before summer events like the 4th of July. He recommended using Lewis's bucket truck for safety.

Additionally:

Shutoff Agreement Proposal

Gary Etter passed out a draft of a shut off agreement for review.

The document was prepared by Gary Etter and Jessica; it outlines procedures for utility shutoffs and is intended as only a starting point for discussion at the next Public Works Committee Meeting.

Fire Department Rail Safety Training

An invitation was extended for city officials and public works staff to attend a free hazardous material training on July 23rd, which is related to trains passing through Virden. The training led by the fire department would prepare responders for incidences involving petroleum or toxic substances. Garry Etter will be accepting names of those interested to provide to the organizers.

Union Pacific Big boy Steam Locomotive

On July 18th, the Union Pacific Big Boy Steam Locomotive will pass through on its way to Girard. Girard declined to host events, Virden was asked for some possible minimal involvement. Issue to be discussed at the June meeting.

Data Center Water Supply Concerns

Terry Davis representing Otter Lake Water Commission had contacted Mayor Murphy previously expressing strong opposition to providing water to the proposed data center in the southwest Sangamon County. He feared it could jeopardize water availability for rural residents during times of shortages. Mayor Murphy indicated that the council would likely share this concern and would support Davis in voting no on any such proposal.

Executive Session:

Motion: made by Bertolino seconded by Boster to enter into Executive session at 8:47. **Motion:** passed with all in favor

Motion: made by Carter seconded by Boster to approve the Public Works Executive Session Meeting Minutes of 04-16-26. **Motion:** passed with all in favor.

Motion: made by Boster seconded by Carter to adjourn at 9:10 pm. **Motion:**
Passed with all in favor

Jonathan J. Myint
City Clerk

Date Approved: