

**Regular Public Works Committee Meeting
City Of Virden
City Council Chambers
Thursday July 16th, 2026**

Meeting called to order by Alderman Bertolino at 7:00 PM

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

Absent: Calloway and Carter

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

Audience: Craig Carlile

Comments from Audience:

Craig Carlile from SC Handy Drones gave a presentation on the services his company (SC Handy Drones) could provide to the city. He handed out a very well written pamphlet listing services/benefits to the city. He explained the three different levels of services and the costs associated with each level.

Topics:

1. Approval of Minutes

Motion: made by Karrick seconded by Boster to approve the Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes of 06-18-26 **Motion:** passed with all in favor.

2. Photo booth on square

Gary Etter met with Nita Hamilton and picked a tentative location for her 4 X 8 foot photo booth sign. It will go on the center sidewalk, which comes thru the square and on the north side. The sign may be put up temporarily to insure no problems arise then it may be permanently mounted. Additional sign details have not been provided yet. Gary Etter informed her to get her details together and then go see the council again.

3. Culvert drop box

This is on Cemetery Rd, the city agreed to put it in for the Township, contractor bid \$5,000. Gary Etter says the city can do it for \$650 to \$700. Andy Miller Virden Township Road Commissioner will be on site to help if needed.

4. Shut off procedure

A copy of Virden's policy was sent to the Sanitation District through Craven. The Sanitation District is complaining about Virden not wanting to do shut offs during extremely cold weather, also disagree with the \$25 shut off fee (which is the same fee that Virden charges water customers who are delinquent and have to have their water shut off). VSD is not dismissing its lawsuit against the city. The committees consensus is to have Craven file a motion to dismiss.

5. Progress of demolition properties

Mayor Murphy reported on the asbestos testing on all four properties. Parkland environmental quoted \$7,600 for all four properties. AAA Asbestos Service offered \$2,300 for three structures plus a letter to the EPA stating due to severe fire damaged the house on Springfield St. could not be surveyed. The fire damaged house must be treated as if it contains asbestos and a wet demolition is to be done. Two other properties West Jackson and South Springfield have asbestos in the window glazing requiring abatement before demolition. The Emmett St. property has asbestos in the ductwork under the decaying floors necessitating a full asbestos abatement. Abatement bids are pending, demolition bid sheets will specify contractors responsibility for asbestos compliance including having an asbestos competent person on site during demolition.

Note on tree removal, are all trees being removed (for ease of mowing by Public Works), are only trees within 5 feet of foundation get removed, if there is a decent looking tree and not in the way can it be left? No final decision on what to do with the trees was made.

6. 15 minute parking sign in front of water department

Gary Etter talked to the residents that routinely park in front of the Water Office and explained the situation with the handicap and the seniors needing to park. The residents were very responsive and will park elsewhere Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Parking will continue to be monitored and this issue will be revisited if needed.

7. Barricades for BIG Train day

Gary Etter has coordinated with Nita Hamilton and the barricades will be ready.

8. Status on backboard replacement payment

Gary Etter reported the backboard has been paid for by the party responsible for the damage.

9. Flagpole in City Park/concrete on corner of Dye and Dean

The new flagpole is in, a new pad for pole will be poured. Pad at the corner of Dye and Dean will be for an Ameren light pole.

10. Spraying schedule

Bertolino inquired into how the new spraying schedule is going, Gary Etter reported, to date no issues have been noted, Facebook and social media has been quiet on this issue also.

11. 832 N Springfield St. property

The question arose with the time and money the city has put into getting the resident to clean the property up, what's next. Issue tabled to a later date.

12. August 1st, 2026, Fireman to use West Park for kids activity

The Committee approved Brent Britenstine's request for the use of the West Park, August 1st from 10:00 am to 2:00pm for a Fire Hose Hot Dog Cook-Out for the kids.

13. June 19th, 2027, City Park square downtown Fred Britenstine car show

Committee approved Boster's recommendation of moving this issue to the next Regular City Council Meeting (under use of Public Property) with a recommendation for approval.

Additional

- a. Bertolino reported, the house on 222 W Hill St. has been demolished and removed by Triple Crown. The homeowner/insurance company paid for all cost.
- b. Alderman Karrick express the City's gratitude to Gary Etter for all the work he has done in the resent months coordinating with contractors and Utility companies in getting projects completed.
- c. Gary Etter spoke about the challenges in 8 properties being mowed by Public Works every week. The bills are being sent to the Attorney in hopes the City can one day get reimbursed.
- d. Air conditioning in shed
Gary Etter said it was brought to his attention, that workers have to have a cooling area per state law. The Public Works shed does not have a cooling area. There was discussion on several different ways and locations to install an A/C. Gary will do more research on the issue and get back to the Committee.
- e. **Public Works is in need of additional mosquito spray and weed killer**

Gary Etter informed the Committee that he will be getting prices and presenting them to the Council as soon as a prices are available.
Discussion on spraying and notifying the public per law.

f. Tax sales

Mayor Murphy reported the procedures for tax sale properties may have changed. The city can still bid for them but may have to bid with everyone else. If someone bids higher than us, then we won't get it. The city needs to get these properties that have houses on them and demolish the houses. We don't know if we need to get court order or just send a notice to the owner that the house needs to be demolished. So if there are any other potential bidders for these properties we can make it known the house needs to be demolished.

Executive Session: None

Motion: made by Karrick seconded by Bertolino to adjourn at 8:21 pm.

Motion: passed with all in favor

Jonathan J. Myint
City Clerk

Date Approved: