

Regular Public Works Committee Meeting
City Of Virden
City Council Chambers
Thursday August 20th, 2026

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

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

Absent: Carter

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

Audience: Craig Carlile (Handy Drones), Jon Fechtman and Debbie Kershaw (Virden Parks Initiative) and Andrew Jarmer (VSD Attorney)

Comments from Audience:

Jon Fechtman and Debbie Kershaw represented the Virden Parks Initiative (VPI) and presented a master plan for the Urban Parks seeking city endorsement to pursue grants.

Discussion on: Noise, sandbox becoming a large feral cat box, a second Pickle ball court, location of two Bottle Cap benches at town square, and if the city would help, if the grant and VPI came up short on the ADA playground cover. The decision was deferred to the September Public Works Committee and possibly the October City Council Meeting.

Topics:

1. Approval of Minutes 07-16-26

Motion: made by Karrick seconded by Boster to approve the Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes of 07-16-26. **Motion:** passed with all in favor.

2. City cleanup

Gary Etter would like to schedule the city cleanup for Wards 1&2 on Saturday, October 3rd, and Wards 3&4 on Saturday, October 10th, hours being 8:00 am to 11:45 am. He still needs to get the ok from Republic to use the transfer station, and should have a final schedule ready for a vote at the September Council Meeting. **Motion:** made by Bertolino seconded by Matrisch to take the city clean up schedule to Council for a vote. **Motion:** passed with all in favor.

3. Core Sampling on County Line Rd.

Discussion: County line road is deteriorating and continued patching and band-aid fixes are proven to be costly. Gary Etter recommends doing a core sample through Benton Engineering, at a cost of \$1,500 to \$2,000.

Motion: made by Boster seconded by Matrisch to take to the council a motion to allow Public Works to do core sampling on County Line Rd. for an amount not to exceed \$2,000. **Motion:** passed with all in favor.

4. Drainage Project Punch List

Issue #1 Fence at Drainage Box: Fence was constructed per contract, however, several members expressed, for additional safety and protection of the city, fencing modification is warranted. Concerns on if the fencing height and construction only met the minimum standards and could have been better engineered. Benton Engineering estimates the modification of the fence to meet the city's request would be \$7,835 (\$3,635 in materials and \$4,200 in labor).

Issue #2 Cap in the bottom of the drainage box has cracks: Committee agreed not to make the final payment to the contractor until this issue is resolved.

Issue #3 The Township Representative has been trying to contact the contractor, however, the contractor is not returning his phone calls. Mayor Murphy will contact Benton engineering on this issue.

5. Shut off Procedure Sanitary District: Discussion on the process on doing water shutoffs in support of VSD billing. VSD's big concern in the proposed agreement was the city's use of the word "discretion" in delaying shutoffs. VSD's Attorney Andrew Jarmer argued that discretion contradicts the Revenue Bond Act (70 ILCS 3010). The committee revised the language to clarify "discretion" to basically mean only in cases of staffing shortages, emergencies or dangerous conditions (weather).

Discussion on unresolved issues of whether VSD should pay for damages caused by a customer who destroyed meters when VSD required the water to be shut off, operational challenges in handling over 100 shutoffs where shutoffs could potentially fall into the next workday, coordinating communication (reconnection notices) VSD's office opens at 9:00 and Public Works starts working at 7:00, billing discrepancies due date on the 28th but shutoffs have been historically done on the 27th. The city insisted on compliance with the state law and insists, VSD's lack of engagement hampers a resolution with only Attorney Jarmer attending the meeting. It was strongly recommended that a meeting be set up with Mayor Murphy, Gary Etter, Alderman Bertolino, and the VSD staff especially Josh Kiel to align procedures despite the strained relationship.

- 6. Money from Insurance Claim:** East Park camera remains offline since the last big storm, in which the pole and wire was broken. Concerns about the unusual activity going on at the park. **Motion:** made by Karrick seconded by Bertolino to put on the City Council agenda, to allow the Public Works Director to install cameras at the East Park, replacing the ones that were damaged due to the storm. **Motion:** passed with all in favor
- 7. Power wash the monument and sidewalks at the square:** **Discussion** on cleaning the monument at the city square. Alderman Bertolino volunteered donating one gallon of cleaner for Public Works to use as a test sample. After cleaning, the monument limestone must be resealed. Alderman Karrick volunteered donating the sealer. The soldier is only to be sprayed with cleaner. The cleaner is designed to be washed off when it rains.
- 8. Status of soliciting bids for houses to demo:** Mayor Murphy has the bids ready to go for the demolitions. Triple A will be doing the asbestos abatement on 433 South Springfield St. and 233 South Jackson. The dates for the abatement has not been scheduled yet. After the asbestos abatement is completed and the bid for demolition is awarded, the contractor will have 30 days to begin the project demolition and must be completed within 15 days of the start date.
The 337 house was found to have asbestos but cannot be abated due to the structures being unsafe. The 332 South Springfield St. house could not be tested due to safety and must be demoed as if it contained asbestos. The contractors will be responsible for disposal of all materials in a proper and legal manner including the asbestos and asbestos containing materials. Bids for demolition will close on Friday September 11th at 5:00 pm and will be opened at the Public Works Meeting on the 17th of September, award date to be determined.
Discussion: on removing all the trees at 233 W Jackson when house is demoed. Possibility of getting separate contract to demo trees, asking contractor for two bids one on house only demo, and one on house and tree removal.
- 9. Bicycles to be liquidated:** **Motion:** made by Karrick seconded by Matrisch to donate the 37 bike cycles to Rick Meiseheimer upon approval of the City Council. **Motion:** passed with all in favor
- 10. New flagpole:** Bertolino reported the New Flagpole has been installed. He complimented the Public Works Department on the excellent job that was done installing the pole, the sidewalk that leads to it and the circular pad around the pole.
- 11. Status of pole replacement E park from storm damage months ago:** Covered under topic #6

Additional: Bertolino #1 911 North Noble property. The person interested in purchasing the property inquired if the city would consider reducing or forgiving the \$2,500 lien. Consensus of the committee was to reduce the lien by 50% if possible.

Bertolino #2 Hank & Blank Car Cruise. Tony Enrietta from Hank & Blank Car Cruise request to use the City square/park on October 17th from 3:00 to 7:00 pm. They anticipate having 100 cars, 500 people visiting, food vender and live music on the stage. **Recommendation:** made by Boster seconded by Bertolino to take the Hank and Blank Car Cruise request to the City Council for approval. **Recommendation:** passed with all in favor. To be added to the Consent Agenda under “use of Public Property”

Mayor #1 Route 66 signs. Two Route 66, 100 year anniversary signs were given to Mayor Murphy. The city needs to get permission from IDOT to put them up on each side of town. Gary Etter will investigate on how this can be done.

Mayor #2 Tree RFP. The 62 tree acquisition, planting and maintenance RFP went out and has been approved by Morton Arboretum. The RFP was also sent to Paul Tree Farms and Green View Nursery.

Executive Session:

Motion: made by Bertolino seconded by Boster to enter into Executive Session to discuss possible Discipline of an Employee at 9:06 pm. **Motion:** passed with all in favor

Motion: made by Boster seconded by Karrick to approve Executive Session meeting minutes of June 18th, 2026. **Motion:** passed with all in favor

Motion: made by Boster seconded by Karrick to adjourn at 9:29 pm. **Motion:** passed with all in favor.

Jonathan J. Myint
City Clerk

Date Approved: