

Regular City Council Committee Meeting
City Of Virden
City Council Chambers
Thursday October 6th, 2025

Regular City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Murphy at 7:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Council Members present: Carter, Bertolino, Neighbors, Donley, Karrick, Boster, Matrisch and Calloway

Absent: None

Also in attendance: Mayor George Murphy, City Clerk Jon Myint, City Office Manager Karen Burgess, Bookkeeper/Treasure Barry Liss, Chief of Police Steven Snodgrass, Director of Public Works Gary Etter, and Attorneys Joe and Don Craven (who arrived at 7:07)

Audience: Todd and Shannon Morenz, Rick Maguire, Pastor Mark Doane, Angela Stevens, Nathan Williams, Gary Marsaglia, Patty McClain, Miranda Jones, and Ken Williams

Topics:

Approval of Agenda (10-06-25)

Mayor Murphy requested the following be added to the agenda.

1. Under use of Public Property, #5 Virden United Methodist Church would like to have a barbecue fundraiser on the island, the 17th of October from 11:00 to 1:30 pm.
2. VACC Country Christmas Parade request from 5-7pm the 5th of December a live nativity be allowed on the square.

Bertolino requested the following be added to the agenda.

1. Under Administrative, #7 Policy changes

Motion Made by Bertolino seconded by Boster to approve the agenda as amended.

Motion Passed with all in favor

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Approval of Meeting Minutes (Regular 09-02-25 & Special 09-11-25)

Approval of Bills Payable: Mayor Murphy request removal of Consider pay application #3, MB Construction.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Approval of Water Report (September 2025) and Gallons Report (August 2025)

Request for Use of Public Property

1. Virden United Methodist Church would like to have a barbecue fundraiser on the island, the 17th of October from 11:00 to 1:30 pm.

2. VACC Country Christmas Parade request from 5-7pm the 5th of December a live nativity be allowed on the square.

Motion Made by Bertolino seconded by Karrick to approve the Consent Agenda, with the exception of the MB Construction payment.

Motion Passed with all in favor

Comments from the Audience:

Shannon Morenz (co-owner of Jo's Place) voiced her displeasure with the doubling of the liquor license fees. Later stating that gaming would take money away from her restaurant and bar.

Ken Williams (owner of K&K) also voiced his displeasure with the new liquor license fee, stating that he hasn't raised his beer prices in 15 years.

Miranda Jones said she felt duped because she did not realize that Gaming licenses was going to be included in the discussion about raising Liquor Licenses. She stated that if beer and wine were sold for \$1 or \$2, everyone in the town would be going into gamble. She talked about the Girard business and her recent email. She then focused on her addiction to gambling and that putting machines in the bars (where she worked) caused her to relapse. She stated that Virden has a very good police force, however

she does not feel safe, and poverty/theft would increase. She said that with Virden not having a Newspaper the word is not getting out. She stated that if 3 gaming places were allowed then the other businesses would lose money.

Nathan Williams (Pastor at Grace Baptist Church and a five year resident of Virden) added his voice to Miranda Jones. He talked about his work with the Homeless Ministries in Fort Worth TX and said the vast majority of the homelessness was due to substance abuse, and how this is a reality. He said that bringing this into the town preys upon the weak and this is a poverty stricken area and bringing gaming is just taking advantage of the people. It is just not worth the little revenue that it would bring in. Gaming would further break the town and would only cause more problems and make the people feel unsafe and break their souls. He talked about the homeless children in Thailand and how they were left behind by addicted parents that loved them, and this is what we are bringing into the town.

Mark Doane (Pastor of the Virden Methodist Church) he echoed Natham Williams. He said there is an ample amount of establishments here that people go to and spend their money drinking liquor and gambling, the things that destroy families. He stated that with an issue this important, it should be on a ballot and let the people of the city decide, not be decided by the few people on the council.

Patty McClain talked about negative things she has seen in Alton and North St. Louis County. She has seen heroin addicts, and this could happen to Virden. She said there are ample gambling machines already because she has never had to stand in line to use one. She said that she did not want Virden to become like one of the other cities that she has lived in.

Rick Maguire inquired about reestablishing the Park Board or Committee.

Reports of Supervisors

City Engineer:

1. Absent

Director of Operations:

1. Nothing Currently

Chief of Police:

1. Nothing Currently

City Office Manager:

1. Will be out of the office the last week of October.
2. Will get the November Agenda ready to go out and Jessica will finish it up.

City Attorney:

1. Mayor Murphy spoke about the 14 year old IDOT/MFT \$15,000 bills for the years 2011 and 2012.

City Manager could not find anything on them, as records are only kept for eight years.

The Attorney recommended possible send in a FOIA requesting all the state records on the matter.

2. Mayor Murphy stated that he would send the tally of the legal fees for the last three demolished properties to the Attorneys, so they can file liens for what the grant does not cover.

Reports of City Officials

City Clerk:

1. Nothing Currently

City Treasurer:

1. Nothing Currently

Mayor:

1. Mayor Murphy spoke on the Solar on Earth and Ameren agreement.

There seems to be some confusion in the percentage the city could get (10 or 20%).

This program has nothing to do with the local Solar fields.

Motion made by Boster seconded by Carter to allow the Mayor to sign the agreement with Solar on Earth/Arcadia to receive an Ameren discount if it is listed at 20%.

Discussion 20% is the highest discount available.

Motion passed with all in favor

2. Trick or Treating Mayor Murphy stated this is one of his favorite things (sarcasm) of the year is to declare **Halloween Trick or Treating** to go on for two days.

Motion made by Carter seconded by Matrisch to declare/allow trick or treating officially on 10/30/25 and 10/31/25 from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Motion passed with all in favor.

Reports of Standing Committees

Finance:

1. MFT CD at CNB 12 months 3.96%

Motion made by Donley seconded by Boster to renew the MFT CD at CNB for 12 months at their rate of 3.96%.

Motion passed with all in favor

2. Water CD at PSB 7 months 4.10%

Motion made by Donley seconded by Karrick to renew the Water CD at Prairie State Bank for 7 months at their rate of 3.96%.

Motion passed with all in favor

3. Close Sewer Fund Account

Bank auditors requested closing the Sewer Fund account that has not been used in 2025 due to no activity.

Motion made by Donley seconded by Bertolino to close the Sewer Fund account

Discussion If any outstanding Sewer payments come in, a line item could possibly be made.

Motion passed with all in favor

Police:

1. Sergeant Promotion

Motion made by Boster seconded by Donley to promote Officer Harold Gist to the rank of Sergeant effective immediately (10-6-25) which includes a \$1 an hour pay raise according to the union contract.

Discussion: Bertolino ask if the shift for the Sergeant (M-F 7:00 am to 3:00 pm will be the same as the Chief's shift.

The issue was discussed in committee about having 2 supervisors on the same shift. Boster answered Yes at this time. The officer's schedules are up to the Chief of Police and the Mayor.

Ayes: Calloway, Boster, Karrick, Donley, Neighbors, Matrisch, Carter

Nayes: Bertolino

Absent: None

Motion passed

Public Works:

1. Streets and Alleys

a. Update on Dean Street: The project (to widen the streets and improve the sidewalks) will be starting on the 13th of October 2025 and is scheduled to be completed on the 14th of November 2025.

b. Take action on Northwest Pipeline Construction: bid issue tabled to Executive Session

2. Building and Grounds

a. Approve tree and stump bid

Motion made by Bertolino seconded by Karrick to approve the bid from Whalen and Sons LLC to remove 15 trees and 19 stumps at a sum not to exceed \$15,000. Work to be completed during city hours and trees are to be cut up to a length that will be easy for the city to haul away.

Discussion: No start date or completion date is available at this time.

Motion passed with all in favor

3. Parks: Nothing currently

4. Water

a. Approve change request #2, from MB Construction:

Motion made by Bertolino seconded by Boster to approve the contract change order #2 with MB construction for water meter replacement in the amount of \$4,651.

Discussion: This motion is not to pay them, only to approve the change order to the work that was done. The Director of Public Works has verified and approves the change order.

Motion passed with all in favor

b. Consider pay application #3, MB Construction: The Director of Public Works has verified that everything is working, in regard to the water meter replacement project.

Motion made by Boster seconded by Matrisch to approve pay application #3 to MB Construction for \$26,848.05.

Discussion: This is their final payment.

Motion passed with all in favor

5. Miscellaneous

a. Approve line item transfer in Public Works This is to help pay for the stump and tree removal.

Motion made by Boster seconded by Karrick to approve line item transfer requests from line item 01-02-4002S for \$4000 and from 01-02-4007 for \$3000 to 01-02-4004 for the total amount of \$7000.

Motion passed with all in favor

Administrative:

1. 2026 Employee Paid Holiday Schedule

2. 2026 Payday Schedule

3. 2026 City Council and Committee Schedule

Motion made by Neighbors seconded by Donley to approve the 2026 Employee Paid Holiday Schedule, 2026 Payday Schedule and the 2026 City Council and Committee Schedule as presented.

Motion passed with all in favor

4. 2026 Holiday Extended Bar Hours

Motion made by Neighbors seconded by Bertolino to approve the 2026 Holiday Extended Bar Hours of Operation, as presented.

Motion passed with all in favor

5. Approve increase on liquor license fees

Motion made by Neighbors seconded by Boster to approve the liquor license increase fees for 2026

Motion passed with all in favor

Ayes: Boster, Bertolino, Karrick, Donley, Neighbors, Matrisch, Carter

Nayes: Calloway

Absent: None

Motion passed

6. Approve 3 Class G liquor licenses

Motion made by Neighbors seconded by Karrick to add 3 Class G liquor

licenses and have the Attorneys write that up for the City code.

Ayes: Boster, Bertolino, Karrick, Donley, Neighbors, Matrisch, and Calloway

Nayes: Carter

Absent: None

Motion passed

NOTE Mayor Murphy said that he will be vetoing the vote in writing within the next 5 days and it cannot be voted on until the next regular scheduled City Council meeting. It will take 2/3 (6 Alderpersons) to override the Mayor's veto.

7. Policy changes Bertolino asked if anything special needs to be done if the city adds Training Requirements in the manuals for its employees. The attorneys responded, "just let the unions know in writing". An email should be ok.

8. Utility Easements (sinkhole ordinance) The city has developed an hourly rate for the use of city equipment and will submit it to the Attorneys who will write up an ordinance.

Executive Session:

Motion Made by Mayor Murphy seconded by Carter to enter into Executive Session at 8:24 pm to discuss pending litigation in dealing with the Northend Pipeline construction.

Motion passed unanimously

Motion Made by Bertolino seconded by Neighbors to approve the 8-04-25 City Council Executive Session Meeting Minutes.

Motion passed with all in favor

Adjournment:

Motion made by Karrick seconded by Carter to adjourn at 8:53 pm.

Motion passed with all in favor

Jonathan J. Myint
City Clerk

Date Approved: