

Regular Public Works Committee Meeting

City Of Virden

City Council Chambers

Thursday December 18th, 2025

Meeting called to order by Alderman Bertolino at 7:04 PM

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

Absent: Alderman Karrick

Also in attendance: Mayor George Murphy, City Clerk Jon Myint, Bookkeeper/Treasure Barry Liss, Director of Operations Gary Etter, and Ryan Calloway

Audience: None

Topics:

1. Approval of Minutes of 11/13/25

Motion: made by Boster seconded by Carter to approve the Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes of 11/13/25

Motion: passed with all in favor

2. Surface tablet for Water to use in the field will need a cellular plan to be able to use it around town.

Discussion: On procuring a Surface tablet for field use, enabling the water department employees to access essential apps and metering tasks.

The need for cellular plans (First Net program) to facilitate remote access. AT&T offers a \$40 a month per device plan for government entities with potential state reimbursement \$5 a month. Consideration on buying robust tablets or recondition units, price ranging from \$900 to 1200+ dollars.

Discussion: On weighing the cost of city employees having a city issued cell phone instead of stipends.

Emphasis on compliance with new JULIE reporting requirements starting January 1st, 2026; missed entries could incur fines (\$250 per incident).

There was a consensus to allow Public Works to begin a First Net application process (may take up to 6 weeks to process) and to invite providers representatives to present options to the committee before a final recommendation to the Council for purchase is approved.

3. Lien for Hardee's property

Discussion: Gary Etter believes the lien for \$155 to reimburse the city for the work Public Works completed has been paid by one of the three brokers.

A request to turn the water on was put on hold by Public Works until, a representative of the property is there to ensure no major leaks and to verify that no one is living in the building.

There was a report of ongoing vandalism. The police responded and apprehended the driver of the getaway vehicle. Owners of the building were contacted, and they have filed charges.

4. Water main replacements for South Emmett and N Henderson streets.

Discussion: On the ongoing issues with water mains on South Emmett St. and North Henderson St. specifically leaks and line material quality.

The need to compile plans, material lists, and EPA permits (valid for four years, only one permit is needed for both streets and no extensions will be permitted) to proceed with replacements; potentially to handle much of the work in-house.

Discussion: Of specific problematic areas-tight alleys, repeated breaks, and resident complaints.

Plan to consult with engineers to finalized the scope of work for new service lines and connections.

The present plan is to prioritize Henderson St. first then Emmett St.

With Water now showing a profit it looks like funds to do both projects will be in the Water budget.

5. EPA water main permit

Discussed in topic 4

6. Virden Sanitary District (VSD) and Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)

Discussion: on the 24 page response from the VSD regarding legal disputes over shutoff procedures and the significant legal expenses incurred.

Mayor Murphy has discussed three main issues he would like the Attorneys to address: The disestablishment of the law requiring municipalities to do water shutoff, appointments to the VSD board should not come from their lawyers, and Board members should be elected by the citizens of Virden.

A response to a FOIA request revealed that the VSD has spent approximately \$128,000 of citizens money in the last two years on Attorney fees.

The last FOIA request from the VSD took over 30 hours to fulfill causing a backup of the City Managers duties.

7. Status of contract for North End drainage project

All the required papers have been sent to the contractor, and we are awaiting their final signature. Sleeman thought a Prebid meeting was possible before Christmas (2025). Mayor Murphy to do a follow up with Sleeman.

8. Spot for permanent dumpster on public property

Chris Hatalla requested to be able to put a permanent dumpster on city property by the old Heinz building. Logistical and precedents concerns were discussed. The committee is recommending Hatalla seek alternative or private arrangements first.

Additional: None

Executive Session: None

Motion: made by Boster seconded by Carter to adjourn at 7:50 pm.

Motion: passed with all in favor.

Jonathan J. Myint

City Clerk

Date Approved: