

**City Council**  
Regular Meeting  
June 15, 2026  
6:30 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was given by all that were present.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Knebel called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Vandalia City Council to order at 6:30 pm.

**ROLL CALL:**

Aldermen Brosman, Lester, Stunkel, Barker, Hobler, Hubler and Lewey were present. Bowen was absent.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

A moment of silence was held for Greg Riggins, a former Lake employee.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CONCERNS:**

Stunkel said he has talked to several citizens who said they felt the City was headed in the right direction. Lewey praised the Lake employees for their hard work. Lester said the new sidewalks on Veterans Avenue are a good addition to that area.

Peggy Tippitt expressed concern regarding the amount of squirrels and racoons around town. She has talked to Fayette County Animal Control who picks up only dogs and cats. She would like Animal Control to relocate the squirrels and racoons. Paslay will check with DNR to see who the contact person is for our district and relay that information to Tippitt.

**ENGINEER' S REPORT:**

Mitch Hardiek from Milano & Grunloh presented the Engineer's report. He said a minimal amount of lead service lines have been found. He said the next step would be to

replace those lines. Paslay said once Korte & Luitjohan finish this project, the lead service line list will be finalized and submitted to the State. A plan would then be put in place to replace the lines. Next application for Safe Routes to School will be available next Fall. Raw water main and pressure reducing station and the City Hall water main replacement work have been substantially completed. Construction of the new water plant continues to progress. Letting for the ITEP sidewalk project was held on Friday. Low bid was submitted by McCarthy Improvement Company in the amount of \$1,645,985.25. The cost to the City will be approximately \$147,000.00. Construction could begin early Fall. Hardiek stated that most of the pipe has been installed for the CDBG project. Congress will be voting this Fall on Congresswoman Mary Miller's grant that will be used on the Randolph Street water main replacement project. The City is waiting on 1 easement to be signed for the Regional Site Readiness #1 project. Paslay said the City also needs a preservation covenant. She is waiting on the State for guidance. Anticipating a late Summer/early Fall bid. Hardiek said photos and complaint letters are needed for the Shelley/Thistle/Morning Glory project. Paslay is working with Milano and Grunloh on this. Veterans Avenue sidewalk work is substantially complete. The City has not heard back on funding for the Regional Site Readiness Grant #2. Construction of a downtown parking lot located next to the former Abe Clymer building was discussed. The engineering firm put together an estimate of approximately \$63,000.00

for this project. Knebel reported 6 of the 8 landowners have been contacted regarding Lake siltation. He anticipates finalization by the end of this week. Once the easements are obtained, Milano and Grunloh will finalize plans and then put the project out for bid. Hardiek suggested selecting an area of flooding to begin addressing the City's drainage concerns. Barker said 90% of the culverts around the City are blocked, and he said a maintenance plan needs to be put in place.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Paslay stated she would like to add Pay Estimate #10 for Grunloh Building, Inc., in the amount of \$1,734,279.88 for the water treatment plant.

Motion was made by Stunkel and seconded by Lester to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: City Council meeting minutes dated June 1, 2026; Regular Bills; Special Bills as follows: Caselle, LLC in the amount of \$15,210.63 for semi-annual fees; Amazon Capital Services in the amount of \$1,999.99 for desktop computer for server; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$2,157.92 for electric bill at City Hall; Peckham Guyton Albers in the amount of \$4,368.00 for consulting services; See My Legacy, LLC in the amount of \$1,999.00 for annual subscription; Southwestern Illinois College in the amount of \$7,407.10 for tuition fees; Midwest Truck Accessories in the amount of \$2,330.00 for truck bed; ADS Electric Corp. in the amount of \$12,072.08 for traffic sign maintenance; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$2,652.64 for electric bill; Discover Downstate Illinois in

the amount of \$6,420.00 for marketing and advertising; Rex Vault Service of Vandalia in the amount of \$3,535.00 for portable toilets for Summerfest; Rural Med in the amount of \$2,450.00 for emergency medical services for Summerfest; Harrison Sound in the amount of \$2,350.00 for sound system and stage for Summerfest; Elite Event Services in the amount of \$2,450.00 for Summerfest; K & S Southern Midway in the amount of \$15,000.00 for carnival for Summerfest; Mike Wilcott in the amount of \$2,800.00 for music at Summerfest; Richard Schroeder in the amount of \$2,000.00 for music at Summerfest; Hairbangers Ball in the amount of \$6,500.00 for music at Summerfest; Historical Vandalia, Inc., in the amount of \$5,477.23 for reimbursement; Effingham Fence and Railing in the amount of \$23,550.00 for electric gates at Lake; ADS Electric Corp. in the amount of \$1,958.13 for maintenance to buildings at Lake; South Central FS in the amount of \$4,614.28 for gasoline at Lake; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$3,948.17 for electric bill at Lake; South Central FS in the amount of \$10,484.81 for gasoline; Hawkins, Inc., in the amount of \$1,633.00 for supplies; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$11,237.51 for electric bill at water plant; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$27,568.00 for electric bill at sewer plant; Vandevanter Engineer, Inc., in the amount of \$16,827.00 for annual maintenance at the sewer plant; Treasurer's Report; Lake Committee meeting minutes dated June 1, 2026; Building and Grounds Committee meeting minutes dated June 10, 2026; Pay Estimate No. 5 for Korte & Luitjohan Contractors, LLC, for the

CDBG watermain project (\$355,900.52); change order No. 1 for Precision Concrete Construction for Veterans Sidewalk Project (increase \$3,614.00); Pay Estimate No. 10 from Grunloh Building, LLC, for water plant project (\$1,734,279.88). Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 2026-6-15-A: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF COMBINED WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM REVENUE BONDS, SERIES A AND SERIES B OF THE CITY OF VANDALIA, FAYETTE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AND AUTHORIZING CERTAIN ACTIONS AND DOCUMENTS AND PRESCRIBING OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO:

Knebel stated this Ordinance would authorize the City to borrow \$14,100,000.00 for the new water plant. Paslay said this has been the plan since the City received the funding in 2019. This is a formality of being able to close on that loan on June 24, 2026.

Motion was made by Stunkel and seconded by Barker to approve Ordinance 2026-6-15-A: An Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance of Combined Waterworks and Sewerage System Revenue Bonds, Series A and Series B of the City of Vandalia, Fayette County, Illinois, and Authorizing Certain Actions and Documents and Prescribing Other Matters Related Thereto.

Roll call: Barker, yea; Hubler, yea; Lewey, yea; Stunkel, yea; Brosman, yea; Lester, yea; Hobler, yea. Bowen was absent. Motion carried.

AUTHORIZATION FOR CITY TO PAY OFF THE INTERIM FINANCING LOAN AT PEOPLE STATE BANK UPON CLOSING OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT LOAN FOR WATER TREATMENT PLANT - \$6,041,139.16:

Motion was made by Barker and seconded by Stunkel to authorize the City to pay off the interim financial loan at People State Bank upon closing of Rural Development Loan for Water Treatment Plan in the amount of \$6,041,139.16.

Roll call: Barker, yea; Hubler, yea; Lewey, yea; Stunkel, yea; Brosman, yea; Lester, yea; Hobler, yea. Bowen was absent. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2026-6-15-B: A  
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING  
ROAD CLOSURE FOR THE 2026  
THIS-N-THAT PRIDE EVENT  
ON AUGUST 22, 2026:  
(TABLED)

Motion was made by Hobler and seconded by Stunkel to approve Resolution 2026-6-15-B: A Resolution Authorizing Road Closure for the 2026 This-N-That Pride Event on August 22, 2026.

Hubler stated that at last year's Pride event there was a drag show which he felt was not child-friendly. He said he would appreciate it if event organizers did not include a drag show at this year's event. Lester stated that he was also uncomfortable with a drag show.

Brosman noted that when Fifth Street was closed for a previous Pride event, organizers had contacted neighboring businesses to notify them of the event and its schedule. He questioned whether the same courtesy had been extended to businesses since the Pride event is scheduled to be held on Gallatin Street this year. He noted the request was to close Gallatin Street at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday while businesses are still open.

Barker stated he had received several calls and emails from constituents over the past couple of days who said they were not in favor of the event.

Connor stated that the matter before the Council was a street closure request. He said he was not aware of any instances where the City had denied such a request. He explained that the street would be considered a public forum and, as such, the City could not regulate the type of speech occurring within that public forum. He further stated that the City's Code of Ordinances contains

no process for granting or denying street closure requests. Connor expressed concern that denying the request could subject the City to costly litigation. He emphasized that approving a street closure does not constitute endorsement of any speech or activity associated with the event and that the City must remain neutral regarding content. He said the primary consideration is whether the closure interferes with the normal operations of the City.

Barker asked about the potential loss of business resulting from people avoiding downtown shopping during the event. Connor responded that the issue would be whether the City was treating this request differently from previous requests. He reiterated that streets are considered the highest order of public forum and that regulations affecting speech in such forums are subject to strict scrutiny. He reiterated that there is currently no framework governing when the City does or does not approve street closures. He added that if businesses could demonstrate a loss of business resulting from the closure, limitations on the timing of the event might be considered. Although access to businesses would remain available, he acknowledged that access could be more difficult.

Event organizers were not present at the meeting to answer questions.

Lester asked whether the City had the authority to change the beginning and ending times of the event. Connor replied that adjustments to the timing could be considered and that such changes would be based on logistical

considerations rather than the content of the event.

Brosman suggested tabling the matter until the next meeting and requesting that event organizers consider revising the event hours.

Connor recommended approving the Resolution with revised event hours of 12:00 noon to 10:00 p.m. and voting on the matter this evening. He stated that additional meetings would likely result in further content-based arguments from both sides.

Barker asked Hubler and Stunkel to withdraw the motion and second. Hubler and Stunkel withdrew the motion and second. There were no objections.

Motion was then made by Hubler and seconded by Barker to table the matter until the next Council meeting.

Roll call: Brosman, yea; Hubler, yea; Barker, yea; Stunkel, yea; Lester, yea; Lewey, yea; Hobler, yea. Bowen was absent. Motion carried. Resolution was tabled.

Connor will provide an overview of some of the constitutional limitations prior to the next meeting so the Council is working from the same framework that he is working from to have that basis in front of them in terms of what to consider.

**ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS FOR  
ITEP SIDEWALK PROJECT -  
IDOT STATE LETTING:**

Motion was made by Barker and seconded by Stunkel to accept bid submitted by McCarthy Improvement Company in the amount of \$1,645,985.25 for ITEP Sidewalk

project - IDOT State Letting. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 2026-6-15-B: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE DONATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY BY THE CITY OF VANDALIA - WATER PLANT PROPERTY:**

Knebel said this donation agreement is an agreement that was entered into with Walt Barenfanger. The City needed the extra land for the new water plant property.

Motion was made by Stunkel and seconded by Barker to approve Ordinance 2026-6-15-B: An Ordinance Authorizing the Acceptance of the Donation of Certain Real Property by the City of Vandalia - Water Plant Property.

Roll call: Hubler, yea; Brosman, yea; Stunkel, yea; Barker, yea; Lewey, yea; Lester, yea; Hobler, yea. Bowen was absent. Motion carried.

**BUCKEYE PIPELINE - EASEMENT REQUEST:**

Paslay reported that she met with a representative from Buckeye Pipeline regarding access to a pipeline right-of-way. The representative explained that a path needs to be cleared to reach the right-of-way for pipeline work. He stated that no trees would be removed and that the clearing would primarily consist of brush. Buckeye Pipeline requested the City's permission to proceed with the work.

Motion was made by Stunkel and seconded by Barker to grant Buckeye Pipeline their easement request. Motion carried.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Knebel reported the final strategic plan meeting was held this afternoon. Formal review and approval of the strategic plan will be done at the July 20 meeting. Knebel said he and Paslay are reaching out to Donato once again to

discuss overgrowth of vegetation at the solar farm. Paslay and Lester will meet to determine the scope of the work and begin addressing those areas that were damaged by the hailstorm. Connor will have the amended liquor Ordinance - post COVID at the next Council meeting.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Knebel reported he, Paslay and Daulbaugh met with the Deputy Governor of Illinois and 6 other members of the Governor's staff. Representatives from Vandalia Civic Advancement, the YMCA, County, Chamber, Park District and hospital also participated. Knebel said it was an opportunity to tell our community story. He said the Deputy Governor shared with the group some of the new programs included in the new budget that might be of interest. Paslay said she learned of some potential grants that have not been available before.

**CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT:**

Connor said he plans to dismiss action against Austin Holdings as a new roof has been installed on Central High Apartments. There were no objections.

**CITY CLERK'S REPORT:**

Huhn reported there was a schedule change for training on the new payment portal. Training will take place on Thursday, June 18 with the launch date scheduled for June 22.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Paslay reported there is a Community Geothermal meeting on Tuesday at 6 p.m. at Kaskaskia College. She urged all Aldermen to attend. She noted that an inspector from IDPH was at the Lake today and did not find any deficits. She announced that IML registration is open. Those who are interested in going need to let Paslay know as soon as possible. She

will schedule a budget meeting for next week with Appropriations being passed at the July 6 meeting.

SAFETY CODE OFFICIAL:

Report provided in packet.

STANDING COMMITTEE  
REPORTS:

Barker said the Streets Department has been busy mowing due to the rain. He did note that Streets is understaffed. He said there have been a couple of watermain breaks over the weekend also. Ray stated he advertised for part-time Dispatchers. He received 16 applicants. Interviews are set up for this week. He said the Sheriff's office is changing their radio frequency to go to a scrambled radio frequency which will require new mobile radios for the City Police Officers. He said they had a hearing-impaired gentleman who picked up the phone at the new E911 center to communicate with Dispatch. He was unable to hear Dispatch. Ray said they are going to need to come up with a work around for situations such as this. Lewey reported the Cemetery looks great, and the Cemetery crew has been extremely busy mowing. Lester said the Building and Grounds Committee gave their blessing on how to proceed with City-owned buildings that suffered hail damage. He contacted a rental company about renting equipment to clean the tar off the concrete and prep some of the joints at the Dam. He hopes to have a game plan by the next Council meeting. Paslay reported the City is owed \$450,000.00 from the OSLAD grant. They are now requesting more pictures of the work that was done. Workman said he has contacted a company to spray for mosquitoes at the Lake. He is going to put the Lake on the spraying schedule.

Workman said from the south end of the beach to the point, the Streets crew shaved off the beach so that boats can park there. Concession stand is busy and doing well. Workman reported the beach has been extremely busy. Workman said the Lake will be getting a credit card machine. He said some of the electric has not been upgraded at the campground. He said most of the boxes are 30 amp and campers are 50 amp. A schedule of events for the Grand Levee was distributed. A Farmer's Market will be held in conjunction with the Grand Levee. Daulbaugh reported that the last Farmer's Market was very well attended. She has received very positive feedback from the vendors. Labor wage survey will be sent to area businesses soon so the City can identify different factors regarding their needs for employees. It will give the City a great amount of information which will be given back to all industries so they know how they stack up competitively both locally and regionally. She asked for City employees and Aldermen to volunteer time to help with driving the shuttle buses during Summerfest. Deadline to enter the Residence and Business Decorating contest to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday of America is June 26. Huhn stated a Community Reading of the Declaration of Independence will be held on July 8 at 5:00 p.m. at the Statehouse. Daulbaugh will provide a Placer AI report at the next Council meeting. Paslay reported she will be filling the job vacancies at the Water Plant and Street Department. The Custodian position will not be filled at this time.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Hubler and seconded by Lewey to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

*Caia Huhn*

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City Clerk