

City Council
Regular Meeting
August 17, 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, and Lewey were present. Hubler, Hobler and Bowen were absent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CONCERNS:

None.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Lee Beckman reported once the current project is done with Korte and Luitjohan (project located East of Kennedy Blvd), the City will have identified all of the service lines from the main to the homes, and that will complete the lead service line project. Beckman will make sure all of the trenches are knocked down before the contractor leaves, with seeding and mulching to begin next Spring. Beckman will be having a construction meeting with the contractor to discuss cleanup in the next two weeks. Raw Water Main project is substantially complete. Construction of the new water plant is progressing very well. Beckman will be meeting with the City to discuss upgrades at the pump station at the Lake in the next couple of weeks. The ITEP Sidewalk project has mobilized with excavating and pouring concrete to begin this week. The NOFO will be out in August/September for the Unsewered

IEPA grant. We are waiting on Federal funding for the Randolph Street Watermain Replacement Project. Beckman said he is hoping to advertise for the Regional Site Readiness #1 project in the next few days. Easements are ready to be signed. Public hearing was held prior to the meeting for the DCEO CDBG grant application for the Shelley/Thistle/Morning Glory area. Application deadline is August 27. The City will obtain letters from affected residents. Sidewalk replacement project is complete. Regional Site Readiness Grant #2 was awarded to the City. Construction will begin next year. This includes gas and electric upgrades. Final plans for Lake siltation have been sent to the City. Once those are reviewed, he will advertise and possibly have bid opening at the September 21 Council meeting. Beckman said they will be doing some surveying for drainage concerns on Mattes Avenue. In regard to ditch cleaning, Beckman recommended using a sewer laser. Barker said Streets will have a plan for ditch cleaning.

RESOLUTION 2026-8-17-A: A
COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF
SUPPORT:

Motion was made by Stunkel and seconded by Barker to approve Resolution 2026-8-17-A: A Council Resolution of Support for a CDBG project (Morning Glory Drive south to West Jefferson Street and east along N. Locust Street and Keefer Drive).

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

STRATEGIC PLAN
PRESENTATION (ARNDT
MUNICIPAL SUPPORT):

Jim Arndt of Arndt Municipal Support presented the final copy of the City's Strategic Plan. He said the

vision, mission and values of the City were targeted during the planning sessions with Council, Department Heads, and the community. He reminded the Council that every action taken is leading towards the accomplishment of priorities that have been outlined in the strategic plan.

APPROVE PURCHASE OF NEW
TURNOUT GEAR AND HELMETS
FOR VANDALIA FIRE
DEPARTMENT (USING HAZEL
KELLY FUNDS):

Zac Stombaugh, Fire Chief, reported that the current turnout gear and helmets are close to 9 years old. These are required to be replaced every 10 years.

Motion was made by Barker and seconded by Lewey to approve purchase of new turnout gear and helmets for Vandalia Fire Department (using Hazel Kelly funds) in the amount of \$125,160.00. Motion carried.

APPROVE OR REJECT
DEMOLITION BIDS (329 W.
RANDOLPH STREET AND 524
N. SECOND STREET):
(DEMOLITION OF 329 W.
RANDOLPH STREET TABLED)

Motion was made by Lewey and seconded by Stunkel to approve the demolition bids submitted by Robert Simmons, LLC, in the amount of \$3,800.00 for the demolition of the property at 524 N. Second Street and \$14,500.00 for the demolition of the property at 329 W. Randolph Street.

Barker requested that the demolition of 329 W. Randolph Street be tabled, stating there is an interested party who would like to purchase the property, renovate the house and return it to the tax rolls rather than having the property become a vacant lot.

Kopp said that the City of Vandalia currently owns the property and has completed the required environmental studies.

Knebel asked Connor to research whether this is something the City can legally pursue and whether it is the direction the Council wishes to take.

Barker noted that most of the houses Kopp recommends for demolition legitimately need to be demolished; however, if an interested party is willing and able to save a property, renovate it, and keep it as a livable home, he believes the City should consider that option rather than creating another vacant lot that could remain empty for years. He also noted that preserving the home could save the City the cost of demolition. Barker agreed there should be conditions requiring the property to be made safe and presentable within a reasonable period of time.

Kopp asked whether the property would need to be advertised for bid. Connor will research the City's statutory authority and determine the requirements for disposing of the property if Council chooses to pursue this option. Connor stated that publication requirements would apply and that the City could not select a specific individual to receive that property and sell it directly to that person without providing the opportunity to proceed through the required sale process. Barker agreed that the property should be bid out.

Knebel stated that the house had previously been on the market for a significant period of time without generating much interest. He said he would be comfortable tabling the matter for one week so the issue

could be resolved sooner rather than later.

Motion was made by Barker and seconded by Lester to table the demolition of 329 W. Randolph Street pending additional discussion.

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

The matter will be discussed at a Special Meeting on Monday, August 24, allowing further research by Connor and re-evaluation of the property.

**APPROVE OR REJECT BIDS
FOR A SEWER CAMERA:**

Motion was made by Barker and seconded by Stunkel to approve bid submitted by Woody's Municipal Supply Company in the amount of \$111,810.00 for a sewer camera. Motion carried.

**APPROVE OR REJECT BIDS
FOR NEW HVAC AND
ELECTRICAL UPDATE FOR
LAKE PUMP BUILDING:**

Motion was made by Stunkel and seconded by Lester to approve bid submitted by Stombaugh's Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc., in the amount of \$6,726.00 for new HVAC system and ADS Electric in the amount of \$7,553.47 for electrical update at Lake pump building. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 2026-8-17-B: AN
ORDINANCE AMENDING
CHAPTER 11.18.020 CAMPING
FEES (FREEZE 2027 RATES):**

Motion was made by Stunkel and seconded by Barker to approve AMENDED Ordinance 2026-8-17-B: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 11.18.020 Camping Fees (Freeze 2027 rates).

Stunkel recommended freezing the rates for one year for residents within the corporate limits of Vandalia, Illinois at \$600.00 and residents within Fayette County, Illinois at \$650.00. He recommended

raising non-residents of Fayette County, Illinois to \$950.00 for one year.

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

Paslay stated she would like to add 1 regular bill for ambulance service for the boat races in the amount of \$3,000.00 (2 ambulances for 3 days).

Motion was made by Lewey and seconded by Stunkel to approve the Consent Agenda with the addition of the 1 regular bill for the ambulance service for the boat races as follows: Council Meeting minutes dated August 3, 2026; Lake Committee Meeting minutes dated August 3, 2026; Tourism Commission Meeting minutes dated May 13, 2026; Regular Bills; Special Bills as follows: Sandberg-Phoenix in the amount of \$2,400.00 for legal fees; Civic Plus, LLC in the amount of \$1,792.00 for Municode; Vandalia Civic Advancement in the amount of \$25,000.00 for membership fee; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$4,489.54 for electric utility bill; First Due in the amount of \$6,650.00 for online training; US Title Series in the amount of \$3,000.00 for boat races; Alan Owen in the amount of \$3,000.00 for boat races; Mid-Illinois Concrete, Inc., in the amount of \$8,108.60 for supplies; South Central FS in the amount of \$10,233.10 for gasoline; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$14,766.13 for electric bill at Lake; ADS Electric Corp in the amount of \$2,165.00 for pole replacement at Lake; WJK, LLC in the amount of \$100,000.00 for TIF reimbursement;

South Central FS in the amount of \$9,853.68 for gasoline; Vandalia City Garage in the amount of \$3,706.00 for equipment maintenance; Grunloh Building, Inc., in the amount of \$726,345.90 for new water treatment plant; R.E. Pedrotti Company, Inc., in the amount of \$1,785.00 for equipment maintenance; Brenntag Mid-South, Inc., in the amount of \$16,373.65 for supplies; Ameren Illinois in the amount of \$8,754.22 for electric bill at water plant; C and C Pumps & Supply in the amount of \$36,684.27 for equipment maintenance; CedarChem, LLC in the amount of \$22,381.48 for supplies. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Paslay reported the specifications are prepared for repairs to City buildings that sustained hail damage. She will review the specifications with Lester before moving forward. Paslay and Workman conducted a drive-through inspection of the northside of the Lake to identify maintenance needs, including overhanging tree limbs, mowing, and other related issues. She will begin developing specifications to address the identified maintenance work.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Knebel reported he spoke with Jason Carpenter of ADS Electric today about downtown lighting. Carpenter was able to confirm the cost of \$17,100.00 to replace all of the downtown lighting. Quote will be presented in writing at next meeting. Knebel made contact with CSX Railroad and was told that the 6th Street rail crossing is on their plans to be repaired in October.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

Connor reported that he is finishing up easements and property transfers.

He also discussed concerns regarding products containing kratom, which he described as a synthetic opiate. He noted that the City has the authority to regulate or prohibit the sale of such products within the community and expressed a desire to have an Ordinance drafted and implemented in the near future.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT:

Huhn reminded Council that Candidate packets will be available in her office beginning August 25. Petition filing is November 16 through November 23 with the lottery being held on November 30.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Paslay reported the ITEP sidewalk project began staging today with an estimated potential end date of October 2027. This project started in 2020 when the City received the grant. Planning and Zoning will meet on Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the potential RaceTrac development. City website and mobile app is still moving forward.

SAFETY CODE OFFICIAL:

Report provided in packet.

STANDING COMMITTEES REPORT:

Jackson reported the Streets Department has been busy mowing. They are beginning preparation for oiling of roads and alleys from September 8 until approximately September 15. Signage will be placed. They plan on oiling streets north of Randolph Street from 8th Street to Kennedy Boulevard. Knebel stated that Kennedy Boulevard will be resurfaced in June 2027. Veterans Avenue will be resurfaced from Kennedy to Sunset Drive in June 2028. The City will be financially responsible for side street approaches. Simpson reported repairs of the Thrill Hill Road water tower have been completed. The Intake

Underwater Inspection Report provided by WtrWrX Services was reviewed. Simpson noted that everything under the water (all of the intakes and screens) are in great shape. Mike Anderson stated that the lift station at Altec Fenex has been repaired. Chief Ray reported that the storm siren on St. Louis Avenue is not working. A new control board has been ordered. He reported that a Part-Time Dispatcher has left, so he is considering filling that position. He reported that Officer Tanner Swain will graduate from the Police Academy on September 4. Paslay will discuss with Lester the Senior Citizens building. Workman stated the City of Ramsey is willing to donate their repeater antenna to the Lake. He said he added a speed bump on Eel Street on the northside. Boat races are scheduled for August 28 through August 30. He said a portion of the northside boat ramp needs repaired.

Deb Koelker addressed the issue of Lake siltation and asked whether the City had officially approved funding for the project or if funding would depend on the dollar amount of the bids received. Knebel stated that the only action officially approved at this time was for Beckman to prepare specifications and advertise the project for bids. He said all other funding discussions were speculative until the City has an understanding of the project costs. He noted there may be several alternatives for addressing portions of the siltation issue. The bids are expected to be available for review at the September 21 Council meeting.

Lester stated many Aldermen believe the City has a responsibility to

protect its water source and slow the siltation process. He acknowledged that Lake residents use the Lake as a recreational resource and stated that, in a sense, everyone is a partner in addressing the siltation in the cove. Lester said the City should remove enough silt to slow the siltation process. However, if property owners want the City to dredge an additional 100 or 200 feet beyond the plan, there should be further discussion regarding who would be responsible for that additional expense. He also noted that other coves need attention and that the City's approach to addressing siltation could establish a precedent for future projects.

Stunkel stated that the issue has been delayed for a long time and that the City needs to complete what it has started. He said that in previous discussions regarding the issue, it was never indicated that Lake property owners would be responsible for sharing the cost of the siltation project.

Brosman said he views the matter as two separate issues. He stated that slowing or preventing future siltation is the City's responsibility, while affected property owners should potentially be responsible for some portion of the cost of dredging a cove that has already become silted.

Koelker stated that the City should have taken steps to prevent the siltation over the past 50 to 60 years. She questioned why the City would be responsible for paying to prevent future siltation but not for addressing siltation that

accumulated because it was not prevented in the past. She noted that while Lake residents may benefit from the recreational use of the Lake, many of those residents do not use City water, and she questioned why their benefit should be considered less important.

Lester stated that he agreed with Koelker's comments but said the City must address the situation as it exists today. He stated that what did or did not occur years ago does not affect how he views the City's current responsibility.

Kevin Schroeder stated that if action had been taken approximately 10 years ago when the issue first became apparent, the cost to correct the problem would likely not be as high. He said the property owners did not create the problem.

Knebel stated that the City is moving forward with addressing the issue and will work to slow the siltation. He said the City will not know the scope of the project until the bids are received. If additional work beyond the current plan is desired, that is when a potential cost-sharing arrangement could be discussed. He said it is difficult to make a final determination until the City has actual project costs available for review.

Koelker stated that she and her family have been coming to the Lake since 1976 and recalled when the river was the City's primary water source and the Lake intake was not yet in place. She said she disagreed with the perception that the Lake was constructed primarily as a water

source with recreation being secondary.

Workman stated that regardless of the work completed, some future responsibility will fall to Lake property owners. He gave the example that if all of the silt is removed but a property owner does not install a retaining wall, future issues could become the responsibility of that property owner.

Knebel stated that the City has a watershed plan currently at the IEPA for finalization. He said the plan will allow the City to have discussions with Lake property owners and farmers regarding a long-term plan for addressing watershed issues. He added that the plan could also position the City to apply for significant grant funding to address issues that cannot be funded through the City's current budget.

Knebel also stated that obtaining a second water source is a high priority in the City's strategic plan. The City will re-engage with its engineer to investigate what went wrong with the river water intake.

Emily Clark stated that if the City receives EPA funding for the Lake and is treating the water, the City has an obligation to its water consumers to provide safe water and ensure the water remains safe for everyone. She said that, in her opinion, if grants are being guaranteed by the City, the responsibility ultimately falls on the City. She further stated that if the City is taking out loans, the responsibility would also fall on

the City. Knebel stated that any grants or loans ultimately become the City's responsibility to repay.

Koelker expressed concern that the depth of the Lake is decreasing at a significant rate. She questioned whether the process of evaluating and addressing the siltation issue is taking so long that the City may eventually lose the Lake.

Daulbaugh stated on August 7 she hosted a Business Succession Workshop with 7 business owners participating. She created the first campaign through See My Legacy for vendors who are able to register for the OTC craft fair. She said there is a DCEO Road Show on Tuesday at Kaskaskia College beginning at 9 a.m. Paslay stated she will have a draft of an updated Personnel Policy handbook at the next meeting. She will also advertise the open Laborer position at the Garage.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Barker and seconded by Stunkel to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. Motion carried.



City Clerk