

Vermilion City Council
STREETS, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS MEETING MINUTES
of June 15, 2026

In Attendance: **Vermilion City Council:** *Jeff Lucas, Council President; Gary Howell, Council at Large; John Gabriel, Ward One; Greg Drew, Ward Two; Drew Werley, Ward Three; Homer Taft, Ward Four; Alec Bonawit, Ward Five; Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council.*

Administration: *Russ Owens, Mayor; Chad Angney, Finance Director; Chris Howard, City Engineer; Tony Pecora, Law Director; Scott Orille, Assistant Law Director.*

Call to Order: Homer Taft, Chairman, RESOLVED THAT this Streets, Buildings & Grounds Committee comprised of the committee of the whole has now come to order.

TOPIC ONE: **Highbridge Road Reconstruction Phase 3**

Chris Hoard reported that the City received three bids on May 28th for the Highbridge Road Reconstruction Phase 3 Project. The low bidder was Abraham Miller Excavating, LLC. of Vermilion for \$661,074.40. The Engineer's estimate was \$849,679 which included an \$80,000 contingency. Based on the bid tab, he recommended that Council award the contract to Abraham Miller Excavating, LLC for \$661,074.40 which is on tonight's agenda as Ordinance 2026-31. This project has OPWC funding with it – the City did receive \$275,000 in a grant and \$118,000 in a loan for this project and the grant would be spent first before the loan.

In addition, they have Ordinance 2026-33 which is for the construction observation and contract administration services for this project, and it is not 10% of the construction cost. He asked Council to pass this by emergency tonight and the reasoning is that this has a completion date of October 2nd and the contractor needs to order structures which they are hearing are 4-6 weeks out for storm sewer, so they have asked them to start preparing the shop drawings for their review to expedite the process.

H. Taft asked if this is the third of four Highbridge projects and they still have one that has been approved for the future. C. Howard answered yes, Phase 4 will go from the end to the midpoint on Highbridge Road and then there will be a Phase 5 which will take it all the way to Liberty. The cost was too much to try to ask to do it all in one phase, which is why they broke it into phases 4 and 5.

G. Howell asked with the grant money they received and the loan with this coming in \$200,000 under bid, does he think they will need to touch the loan money. C. Howard answered he is hoping not. When they make application to OPWC for payment, they break down what the OPWC portion is and what the City's portion is but obviously they go for the grant first. That includes an \$80,000 contingency so hopefully the contract is even less than \$661,000.

J. Lucas asked if Ordinance 2026-31 needed to be passed by emergency tonight or if that is a job for another year. C. Howard said that is the Abraham Miller contract so they would like that tonight.

Alec Bonawit asked if they gave an approximate start date. C. Howard answered once Council authorizes it, they will set a preconstruction meeting and they will get a schedule from them but

until then, he can't schedule a preconstruction meeting if the contract is not awarded. He told them depending on Council, they will try to schedule them to begin right away. They are eager to start.

TOPIC TWO: Jackson Street Storm Sewer Improvements

C. Howard reported on June 4th the City received three bids for the Jackson Street Storm Sewer Improvements. The low bidder was Dirt Dawg Excavating from Ashland, Ohio. Their base bid plus contingency was \$1,144,586.50. Their alternate number one which was the sanitary manhole relining similar to what they did in V.O.L. was \$22,936 for a total base bid and alternate with a contingency of \$1,168,522.50. The Engineer's estimate for the base build with the contingency was \$1,461,657 and the alternate one estimate was \$22,400 so a total base bid with alternate one and contingency the Engineer's estimate was \$1,484,057. The contingency was \$90,000 on this job and they would make the recommendation that Council would approve Dirt Dawg Excavating, LLC of Ashland for this contract. He has worked with this contractor before in another community and they do good work. That is Ordinance 2026-32 and once again, he asks for emergency passage by Council. The completion date for this is October 30th of this year. Once again, it is a tight schedule and they would have to get structures ordered and there are a lot of storm sewer structures to order and once they get authorization, they can set a preconstruction meeting.

H. Taft said in the bid breakdown that he had, he had various items that were broken out. Is that how it will be paid so there is a certain segment, for example that is storm sewer related that will come out of the storm water fund and other things will come out of other funds. C. Howard answered the way they do it is when the inspector tracks the funds and agrees with the contractor on what has been installed – they have a line item and that is when they get paid, when they get installed. They can break it out saying it is storm sewer related when they give the bill to the City.

G. Howell said there is no grant money for this one. C. Howard answered that is correct, this was coming out of storm water. G. Drew said they haven't spent a lot of money out of the storm water account in a long time, and he asked the Finance Director if he had an idea of what the balance is in the storm water account. C. Angney said off the top of his head, he doesn't know the balance. G. Drew said they have over \$1.7 million in there, correct? C. Howard said he is assuming and obviously the road needs to be repaired so whether that is paid out of the storm water or another fund because the road will get torn up with all the storm sewer work being done. G. Drew said he can't remember the last time they spent money out of the storm water fund.

H. Taft said they had a bond that they voted on and they spent some of that money and he is going on memory that there was \$1.2 or \$1.3 million presently. G. Drew asked if that would cover the whole cost and the paving of the street. C. Howard answered it should, he doesn't know what is available.

TOPIC ONE: 2026 Street Repair and Replacement

H. Taft said last year they had designed Pineveiw and Brownhelm Station and his memory is Mr. Howard said the designs would be good for at least two years. C. Howard said that is correct. H. Taft said they haven't heard anything about having a bid package or considering going out to bid, are they considering doing those this year or are they waiting on PMG or where are they in that process now? C. Howard answered both sets of plans are still being completed and once they have that done, they will have the estimate to Council. He doesn't want to share it publicly for

bidding purposes but then Council will make the decision if they want to proceed with them; one or the other, neither, or both which is Council's decision. That is how they left it last year, that the design would be done and then Council could decide if and when they wanted to do it. H. Taft asked if the design was still in process currently. C. Howard answered yes.

G. Howell asked if they have any time frame and how long it will take for PMG because that might give them better information to go off of to start making decisions. C. Howard answered they have all the information on all the roads and he thinks they have already recorded the roads and they are putting the data together; he believes they said they would have it at the end of the month, they are ahead of schedule.

TOPIC ONE: Municipal Court Renovations

H. Taft said he had an opportunity to meet with the Clerk of Court Danelle Supeck and the Judge on a few things, mainly just looking at the buildings for Streets, Buildings & Grounds and finding out what is going on. In the process he learned that they are planning over \$200,000 in renovations to this building including significant renovations in this chamber especially the ceiling and things above it and possibly some rewiring of things. Potentially there are some other things in here as well along with some safety and security things which are not yet part of the package but they are having an inspection from the Supreme Court including some other things. One of the significant items is trying to have handicapped accessible bathrooms for the public and some other plumbing issues for the staff. They have already bid this and he is not clear but he will alert the Law Director along the way that they have it broken down to a series of contracts and he is not sure what has to come before them but he did want to make sure Council is aware and he does have a copy of it that he can try to share with them. Since he asked that this come up, he thinks they have all seen the letter from the Judge to Mr. Angney and he doesn't know if they want to discuss that at any point and it may be something for executive session. He has some concerns and he would hope that they would have a little more information and perhaps more discussion between the court and the Administration and them.

C. Angney said he has not sent a formal response yet, but they did meet in March. The letter confirms exactly what he told them, this Administration is committed to doing things the right way. Let's get it right. That is what the letter demonstrates and when he and the Judge talked, they said they should start doing that this year. He didn't give much thought to the reasons or how it was determined or how those were spent and frankly, he is not going to because his focus is getting it right moving forward. He doesn't know what discussions were had previously and he is not going to lay blame or anything like that, he doesn't think it is productive, he thinks it is actually unproductive, so they are focused on moving forward with it. He hasn't drafted a formal response, but he will that will summarize those same points. He and the Judge are in agreement as far as restricted funds and the uses of them; they are defined in the code, and they expect it to be followed. To that end, it doesn't really change anything on their side, their function in approving and issuing purchase orders is administrative and the courts operate independently, they are an agency fund within the City's books. A lot of those restricted funds are expended at the direction of the court. If they notice anything that is clearly inconsistent with the purpose of the fund, then they will refer it back to the court and either obtain the documentation from them or work with them to get it to the proper fund. He can go into greater detail if they would like, but that summarizes where he stands with the letter and the activity.

H. Taft said he will leave it up to Council whether they take that up at any point but as long as Mr. Angney is happy, he is happy.

H. Taft adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

Next meeting: Next scheduled meeting is July 20, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m. at the Vermilion Municipal Court Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio.

Transcribed by: Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council (June 17, 2026)