

**Town of Vernon
Vernon Gym
Regular Meeting (6:30 PM)
December 11, 2025**

Regular Meeting: The Town of Vernon Council meeting at the Vernon Gym, 29 Washington Street, Vernon, Indiana 47282, was called to order by Mayor Brad Bender at 6:30 PM.

Town Officials and employees present: All members present except for Brad Kage.

I. Call to Order Brad Kage absent

II. Approval of minutes

Mayor Bender asked if there were any comments or corrections to the 2025 Council minutes and recommended approval.

John Post made a motion to approve the 2025 minutes. Amber Fields seconded.

3 Yes votes, 0 No votes

III. Petitions or comments by the members of the public present: No one present.

IV. Reports from Committees and Officers

A. Mayor Bender - Items already discussed.

B. John Post- Council Ward 1- Metronet (now T-Mobile) is still promising they will be coming to Vernon, but not sure when. Also, still working on the houses on Jackson Street and estate is being ironed out. Tarp house is supposed to be making progress or will go to show cause.

C. Jeff Walker- Council Ward 2 - No items.

D. Amber Fields – Council Ward 3 - asked about an ordinance restricting animals tied for longer than 24 hours. This may already be in the county ordinance but if not will definitely look into creating one and then enforce it with a fine. Amber reported on the Rusty Bladen fundraiser that it raised over \$3000.

E. Mary Jo Bender – Clerk Treasurer - Nothing to report.

F. Brad Kage - Attorney - Not present

G. Town Marshall - Not anyone at the present time.

I. Steven Pennycuff - Fire Chief - Fundraiser on March 14, 2026 and on December 19th of this year of Cookies with Santa. He asked about help with getting a generator online if they get one from the city. Money could possibly come from LOIT. Reported on the damage from a motorist who drove through the ditch beside the department. John was asking about Fire Districts and fallout from the property tax changes.

V. Unfinished Business

- a. Sewer Rate ordinance discussion ensued, most of the concern was whether we implement a surcharge for grinder pumps or turn them all over to the homeowner. Study suggested that a 40 charge should be presented, Amber motioned that we advertise for rate increase to be as presented in study from Reedy. Mayor Bender suggested also raising the water rates as called out in the last rate study, council would prefer to do it all at the same time.
- b. The contract came back on SS4A. RFP sent out to 7 firms, 2 responses and one was a denial. He will look into why other firms haven't responded. This needs more interest.
- c. Marshall truck value from \$17,500 - \$21,500? What will be our next step as to Marshall duties and how we go about protecting ourselves and others when they are possibly not trained for actual Marshall duties. Do we make it ceremonial in nature? There is not enough money to hire a full time, licensed officer.
- d. Park Board did not meet, Mayor Bender discussed a formal agreement with Madison Railroad.
- e. Still waiting on an insurance claim but if no answer is forthcoming, we will have Brad Kage approach the subject.
- f. IDEM - Town is in violation of not telling IDEM that we sent letters to our customers about the lead testing. We will now send a yearly letter to our customers and then a letter to IDEM that we have sent this letter and also an admission letter of not notifying them last year.
- g. Sewer Project - online soon, questions about how much rock was actually removed on the last change order, will possibly be recalculated. Much discussion about where to pull matching funds.
- h. Trail Project - A very few punch list items still to occur. Need to have final by 12/31.

VI. New Business

- a. Marie Shepherd from APC to have property rezoned from commercial to residential @ 23 E Brown Street on behalf of Jeremy Ochs with Vida Investment. Fields made a motion to approve this proposal, Jeff seconded. 3 Yes votes, 0 No votes
- b. Fire at property that was intentionally set, Mayor asks for water usage to be charged and the fire department will also charge for their time. Post motioned to charge for the water used, Walker seconded. 3 Yes votes, 0 No Votes. Chief Pennycuff was on hand to talk about the charges incurred for his department as outlined by the State. They will charge \$9,000. Discussion ensued about state guidelines regarding burning.
- c. A burn ordinance was discussed so we have the ability to fine when fires are intentionally set.
- d. Commons Lift Station, repaired on Wednesday, hope it doesn't happen again. Discussed why the alarms haven't gone off.
- e. Discussed a homeowner who broke a meter by getting in the pit and also discussed finding a contractor who could take care of the problems.

VII. Claims

- a. Jeff made a motion to approve the claims, Amber seconded the motion.

3 Yes votes, 0 No votes

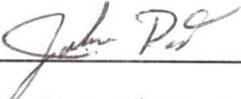
VIII. Miscellaneous Business

- ## **IX. Adjournment** - John Post motioned to adjourn @7:51 pm, Amber Fields seconded.

3 Yes votes, 0 No votes

a. **Next Regular Meeting:** The next Regular Vernon Town Council Meeting will be Thursday, January 8, 2026, at the Vernon Gym, 29 Washington Street, Vernon, Indiana 47282. The Regular meeting will begin at 6:30 PM. Public hearing on sewer rate ordinance is at 7:00 P.M.

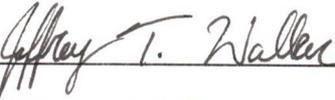
Vernon Town Council



John Post, 1st Ward



Bradley Bender, Mayor



Jeff Walker, 2nd Ward



Attest: Mary Jo Bender, Clerk



Amber Fields, 3rd Ward