

THE BLUE LETTER

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



333 James E. Bohanan Drive • Vandalia, OH 45377 • (937) 898-5891

April 16, 2021

Honorable Mayor & Esteemed City Councilmembers:

I am pleased to report to you that it is official – the Wendts are homeowners in Vandalia!

Staff is working on all cylinders, we are mounting big projects to address public problems, and the future is bright. We have two jam-packed Council meetings ahead of us and our goal setting retreat is less than a month away. As a team, let's set out to be transformative. As I reflect on these two and a half months on-the-job and I am most impressed by our staff's team-approach to public service. As a group, we must continue to look not just at our own roles in the organization, but where we seek to take our beautiful community as part of a larger movement.

Please consider reviewing the updates below. I am really excited to share all of our major developments next week. Please call me over the weekend if you have questions or comments.

- 1. Commercial Truck Traffic:** Chief Althouse and Public Service Director Cron are working together to strategically place signs throughout the City to advise semi-trucks that they are required to remain in the right lane in town. This regulation is enforceable under Vandalia Codified Ordinance 440.12 on *Use of Right-Hand Lane*, which stipulates:

Unless route direction signs indicate otherwise, all commercial vehicles of the tractor-trailer type shall be operated in the right-hand lane of all streets and highways within the City, except when such lane is obstructed. No commercial vehicle operator shall pass another vehicle moving in the same direction.



Pictured is what the signs will look like in accordance with the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. As a team, we will continue to work on alleviating safety, congestion, and wear and tear problems that are being caused by warehousing and logistics developments outside of town.

- 2. Income Tax Assistance – Extended Hours:** Tax office staff will be available to assist taxpayers in the preparation of city income tax returns Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The deadline for filing is Monday, May 17. Income tax returns for Vandalia and Brookville can be completed electronically using the City Tax Online

Preparation Tool. The Online Tool is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, includes easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions, and can be accessed through the city's website, www.vandaliaohio.org. If a taxpayer does not have access to the Internet, they are instructed to contact or come into the tax office to receive a form.

3. **Golf Course Well Field Emergency Repairs:** Earlier in the week, I advised Council that I directed Parks & Recreation Director Clark to make emergency repairs to the Cassel Hills Golf Course Wellfield System. This emergency repair will cost \$12,688. The repair is necessary in order to be able to irrigate the golf course and failure to perform this repair could result in damage to the grounds for the rest of the season. No action is needed on the part of City Council as funds are available in the current appropriation.

April 19, 2021 Study Session Items

1. **Action Item - Liquor Permit for Chipotle Mexican Grill/275 E. National Road - Ohio** Department of Liquor Control has notified the city of an application for a liquor permit at Chipotle Mexican Grill, 275 E. National Road.
2. **Emergency Ordinance 21-08 Assessments:** This emergency ordinance assesses properties for delinquent accounts related to storm water fees, trash collection, and delinquent sewer and water.
3. **Emergency Ordinance 21-09 Supplemental Appropriations - Finance** is requesting the approval of the following supplemental appropriation Ordinance for an increase in the General Fund in the amount of \$59,050. All of these increases relate to increasing the budget of the City Manager's Office in order to accomplish the following:
 - **Agenda Management Software Upgrade: \$11,630** – Increase of 2021 budget appropriations to account for expenses related to an upgrade to the current agenda management software. This upgrade is necessary in order to improve the efficiency of operations and the City's efforts to remain transparent and accountable to the public. The increase in cost will include hardware, software and online training.
 - **Performance Management Software: \$15,300** – Increase of 2021 budget appropriations to account for expenses related to an upgrade to the current human resources personnel management software. The increase in cost will include additional modules, which will improve efficiencies relating to employee performance evaluations across the organization and implementation of pay-for-performance strategies.
 - **Advisory and Lobbying Services: \$14,000** – Increase of 2021 budget appropriations to account for expenses related to consulting for advisory and lobbying services.

- **Compensation and Benefits Study: \$18,120** – Increase of 2021 budget appropriations to account for expenses related to a comprehensive compensation and benefits study.

May 3, 2021 Items

- 1. Resolution - Concrete Repair Bids:** Bids were opened this Tuesday for the 2021 Curb & Sidewalk Program. Three bids were received for this project. Bids ranged from \$246,081.00 to \$257,625.50. Coate Construction was the low bidder at \$246,081.00. Our engineer's estimate for the project was \$265,000. This project includes the installation of a median on West National Road just west of Joseph Hyundai.
- 2. Variance (Wheel Stop Devices) – 1090 W. National Road:** Van Con General Contractor, is requesting a variance to allow the construction of a new 16,000 SF vehicle sales office and service facility without installing wheel stop devices for 54 existing parking spaces. The Code requires that wheel stops be installed to prevent any part of a parked vehicle from extending beyond the edge of the parking area. The Applicant is providing a 6" raised concrete curb for all new vehicular use areas. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-0 to recommend approval of this request.
- 3. Variance (Perimeter Landscaping) – 1090 W. National Road:** Van Con General Contractor, is requesting a variance to allow the construction of a 16,000 SF vehicle sales office and service facility without installing landscaping around the perimeter of the vehicle use area in the rear yard. The Code requires landscaping to be installed adjacent to vehicular use areas to soften the edges. The Applicant is proposing to install perimeter landscaping along the front and side parking areas as required, however is requesting the variance to eliminate the requirement for 159 shrubs to be planted in the rear yard. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-0 to recommend approval of this request.
- 4. Variance (Screening) – 1090 W. National Road:** Van Con General Contractor, is requesting a variance to allow a 5.5-foot wide setback, with no landscape screening, between the public right-of-way and an adjacent vehicular use area. The Code requires a 10-foot-wide landscape buffer area with a 3-foot continuous evergreen hedge. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-0 to recommend approval of the request.
- 5. Variance (Curb Opening) – 1090 W. National Road:** Van Con General Contractor, is requesting a variance to allow two curb openings on an interior lot. The Code limits each interior lot to one curb opening. The Applicant is proposing to construct two 30-foot wide curb cuts with a separation of approximately 90-feet. The property has an existing curb opening that would be removed as part of this development. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-0 to recommend approval of this request.
- 6. Variance (Architectural Standards) – 1090 W. National Road:** Van Con General Contractor, is requesting a variance to allow the construction of a 16,000 SF vehicle sales

office and service facility without providing a parapet wall on the east, west, and south facing building facades of the proposed flat roof building. The Code requires that all sides of a building that are visible from the public street or an adjacent residential district incorporate architectural detailing on all facades in a manner consistent with the front facing façade. Additionally, the Code requires that flat roofs be concealed by a three dimensional cornice. The Applicant is proposing to construct a parapet wall only on the north facing façade and without the necessary three-dimensional cornice treatment. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-0 to recommend approval with one condition.

7. **Variance (Windows) – 1090 W. National Road:** Van Con General Contractor, is requesting a variance to allow the construction of a 16,000 SF vehicle sales office and service facility without installing windows on the east and west building facades that occupy at least 25% of the total wall area. The Code requires that building elevations which are visible from a public street contain windows occupying at least 25% of the wall area, however the Applicant is proposing to install windows that comprise 4.5% of the east and west facing facades. The Applicant will comply with the 25% window requirement on the front facing façade. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-0 to recommend approval subject to one condition.
8. **Variance (Screening) – 1090 W. National Road:** Van Con General Contractor, is requesting a variance to allow an outdoor display, storage, and sales facility without providing full screening of the facility from an adjacent residential district. The Code requires that all outdoor display, storage, and sales facilities be screened to their full height from view when adjacent to residential districts. The Applicant is proposing a 60-foot-wide green space buffer and maintains a 6-foot-tall privacy fence between the vehicular use area and the rear property line, however the outdoor display will still be visible to the adjacent residential district. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-0 to recommend approval of this request with one condition.

Discussion

1. **MARCS Radio User Fees – under \$25,000:** Montgomery County is the sole provider for public safety communications. In 2016, Vandalia Division of Police transitioned radio communications to the state's Multi-Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS). However, Montgomery County Communications is currently maintaining local radio towers and servicing public safety two-way radios at a monthly user fee rate of \$20.00 per radio, billed in quarterly increments. The estimated 2021 radio user fees will be \$14,880.00. Montgomery County is the sole provider for public safety communications.
2. **Fire Apparatus Presentation:** Chief Follick will deliver a presentation on whether the City of Vandalia should rehabilitate, replace, or take no action relating to the E-One Hurricane 110 ft. ladder truck. Chief Follick has conducted extensive research with regard to run volumes, cost-benefit analyses, and right-sizing the fleet.

3. **Agile Performance Management:** The Human Resources Division is recommending the approval of the 2021 Prism/Agile Performance and Employee Management system implementation to conduct employee performance evaluations, along with a forthcoming Performance Evaluation policy that will be proposed as an amendment to the personnel policy manual. The City's current performance evaluation processes are outdated and inefficient. The proposed system be used to track and compile evaluations for approximately 140 full-time and 200 part-time employees. In addition to the new Performance Management process, a new policy would be created to outline the purpose of the policy and explain how employees will be evaluated. The total purchase of the Performance and Employee Management modules is \$15,300. This includes a one-time \$1,000 implementation fee. An ordinance for supplemental appropriations is included on tonight's Council Meeting agenda to cover the cost of the project.
4. **Compensation & Benefits Study:** The City received four responses to the RFP/RFQ. ACM Holloway, Finance Director Leiter, and Human Resources Manager Dewberry, and I evaluated the submissions. I am continuing to update job descriptions and organizational charts for each department. In order to ensure that this study is productive, and it is maintained, I plan to propose an updated personnel and staffing policy to City Council in the coming months. An ordinance for supplemental appropriations is included on tonight's Council Meeting agenda to cover the cost of the project.
5. **Retention of Advisory and Lobbyist Services:** An ordinance for supplemental appropriations is included on tonight's Council Meeting agenda to cover the cost of the project.
6. **American Rescue Plan:** To date, the United States Department of Treasury has provided limited guidance with regard to how the City will be able to deploy resources under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The City of Vandalia anticipates it will receive \$2.9 million under the ARPA. On Monday, I will present high-level proposals for your consideration and feedback. Over the last few weeks, I have directed our team to think critically about how this one-time windfall can be leveraged to serve our community members in need, address lost revenues, and maximize beneficence to the greatest number of people. These proposals will cover economic development, fire apparatus, goals in the Vision Vandalia Comprehensive Plan, improvements to the Senior Center and our lovely park system. I am truly excited to share some of these draft ideas with you next week.
7. **March 2021 (1st QTR 2021) financial report:** Finance Director Leiter will provide a monthly financial report on Monday.

April 19, 2021 Council Meeting

1. **Proclamation** - Mayor Herbst will present a proclamation on behalf of the Bicycle Advisory Committee in support of Ohio House Bill 111, making operating a motor vehicle on a public roadway while using a hand-held device a “primary” offense – allowing public safety officials to initiate a traffic stop and take enforcement actions.
2. **Oath of Office** – Our Police Officers and Firefighters are highly visible public officials. Moving forward, I plan to administer the Oath of Office to sworn personnel at City Council meetings. On Monday, I will have the pleasure of swearing in Police Officer Nelson Clymer.

Resolutions

1. **Resolution 21-R-23: Agenda Management Upgrade** – Since 2013 the City of Vandalia has utilized Granicus as the primary method to process and disseminate paperless agendas and The Blue Letter. The pre-meeting packet assembly process is woefully outdated and inefficient. I am recommending a software upgrade to streamline cross-departmental workflows, boost post-meeting productivity, and incorporate an indexed video feature. Granicus provides excellent customer service and I anticipate quick implementation of the software platform. As such I am requesting Council approve a three-year agreement as well as a one-time cost for a hardware and software upgrade. I am pleased to announce that Deputy Clerk of Council Pruszynski aggressively negotiated with Granicus to reduce the price of the upgrade. The new subscription fee is \$11,480.00 for the first year and a one-time fee of \$6,750.00 for various hardware and online trainings. The 2021 Budget includes \$6,600.53 for the current subscription, and therefore exceeds the appropriated amount by \$11,629.47. I respectfully request Council approve a supplemental appropriation to cover the \$11,629.47 for the upgrade (e.g., hardware, software, and online training). The City's guaranteed pricing for year two is \$12,283.60 and year three pricing is guaranteed at \$13,143.45.
2. **Resolution 21-R-24: Police Cruiser Bids:** The Vandalia Police Division posted bids in the Daily Court Reporter and on the City website for three new patrol utility vehicles to replace marked patrol vehicles in the fleet. VPD also delivered and/or mailed bid packets to 14 auto vendors who sell police vehicles. VPD received bids from two vendors, Whiteside Chevy of St. Clairsville, Ohio, and Beau Townsend Ford. Whiteside offered the 2021 Chevy Tahoe 4WD with the police package for a unit price of \$44,402.00 per vehicle for a total purchase price of \$133,206.00 for three vehicles. Beau Townsend Ford offered the 2021 Ford Police Interceptor Utility AWD patrol vehicle as a unit price of \$39,949.00 per vehicle for a total purchase price of \$119,847.00. The state bid price for the Ford Police Interceptor Utility AWD patrol vehicle is \$32,089.00 per vehicle. However, after adding the options in the bid specifications and paint to match the current fleet, the state bid price is \$44,029.00. Council approved \$129,000.00 for this 2021 capital purchase.

VPD's current fleet consists of Ford Police Interceptor Utility vehicles and certain vehicle equipment is transferable from the older patrol vehicles into the new patrol vehicles based on model design. Council will be asked to authorize and approve the purchase of three 2021 Ford Police Interceptor Utility AWD patrol vehicles from Beau Townsend Ford for the unit price of \$39,949.00 per vehicle for a total purchase price of \$119,847.00.

3. **Resolution 21-R-25: Police Riot Gear Purchase** - The Police Division's current riot gear, including helmets, shields and gas masks, is in poor condition due to being over 20 years old. The VPD has a limited quantity of gear and is not sufficient for all sworn personnel in the event of a large-scale protest or riot. Based on incidents that occurred over the past year where VPD officers assisted other communities with disturbances and riots, it is important to have adequate safety gear and equipment to protect officers who may respond to these types of situations. The VPD posted a bid for police riot gear in the Daily Court Recorder and on the City website as well as mailed bid packets to five different vendors who specialize in police gear. VPD received bids from two vendors, Pro Tech and Kiesler Police Supply, which included the required documents. Pro Tech offers all the equipment included in the bid specification for a total purchase price of \$26,438.00, which is below the capital budget amount of \$28,300.00. Kiesler Police Supply's bid was incomplete because it did not include all the equipment specified in the bid packet. Council will be asked to authorize and approve the purchase of police riot gear from Pro Tech for the total purchase price of \$26,438.00.
4. **Resolution 21-R-26: Public Works Utility Van** - The Public Works Department seeks to replace the 2009 Utility Van, which is used for our water operations. The current Van has over 108,000 miles on it and is used every work day. The 2009 Utility Van will be replaced with a new 2021 Utility Cargo Van from Beau Townsend Ford. Quotes were obtained from the State of Ohio Cooperative Bidding contracts as well as the Sourcewell Cooperative bidding program. Beau Townsend Ford submitted the lowest and best bid totaling \$41,895.
5. **Resolution 21-R-27: Firewall Upgrade** - The IT Department is recommending the approval of the 2021 Firewall Upgrade Project, which calls for the upgrade of the City's firewall devices and related monitoring equipment and software. An upgrade is being recommended in order to replace aging equipment, to increase capabilities, and to support changes being implemented by the IT Department that will increase security and account for future network growth. Due to the complexity of the devices and the familiarity with the current manufacturer, the IT Department is recommending that City Council waive formal bidding and purchase an upgraded model from the same manufacturer. The purchase of the firewall equipment and supporting software and hardware will be sourced from a total of four vendors: Cadre, SHI, Discount Low Voltage, and Amazon. The total cost of the project will not exceed \$36,949.16. Cadre will be

handing the installation and migration of the firewall and the IT Department will be handing the installation of all supporting hardware and software.

6. **Resolution 21-R-28: Vandalia Development Corp. Donation** - This resolution would authorize a donation of \$25,000 to the Vandalia Development Corp.
7. **Resolution 21-R-29: Replat – 110 Imperial Court:** VSF Investments 4 LTD, is requesting the replat of 0.4122 acres of land at 110 Imperial Court. The requested replat would result in the vacation of a shared property line and an existing 10-foot wide utility easement. The existing apartment building at 110 Imperial Court projects over both the shared property line and the 10-foot wide utility easement. There are no utilities within the existing utility easement. Planning Commission voted 5-0 to recommend approval.

Emergency Ordinance

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The April 19 Study Session and City Council Meeting will be a hybrid (in-person & remote) meeting in Council Chambers. The meeting is open to Council, staff, and the public to attend in-person. The City will meet all department of health directives relating to COVID-19. **The study session will begin at 5:30 pm followed by the City Council Meeting at 7:00 pm.**

Please contact me directly with comments and questions.

Very Respectfully,



Dan Wendt
City Manager

CC:

Board and Commission Members
All City Employees