CITY OF VAN BUREN
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
August 11, 2026
Van Buren City Hall – 1401 Main Street

The City Council of the City of Van Buren met in regular session on Tuesday August 11, 2026, at the City Hall. Alderman/Mayor Pro-Tem Bobby Barnes presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Roll call by the City Clerk, with the following members present: Aldermen Bobby Barnes, Heath Grassham, Vince Holt, and Jonathan Hughes. Mayor John Bailiff not present

Others present: City Clerk Cori Pogue, City Supervisor Randall Jenkins.

Visitors present: Ricki Maples, Virginia McKeel, Ashley Newson

Ricki Maples
Ricki gave a festival update:

- Dirt piles need smoothing to make the area mowable and reduce weeding.
- Dead trees in the park have been cut down and removed, and stump holes were filled and seeded.
- Anticipating more vendors than last year.
- The car show aims for 200 cars this year, up from 180 last year.
- Previous Issue: Slow entry for cars, especially when 30 arrived simultaneously, causing lines to Business 60.
- Proposed Traffic Management Solutions
  - Shut down more of the road leading to the park
  - Implement a double-lane entry downhill to speed up car flow.
  - Increase the number of registration personnel.
  - Separate pedestrian and non-car show traffic from the car line by shutting down the road.
  - Motorcycles could park by the old G&W.

Virginia McKeel
Ms. McKeel addressed the council concerning the removal of a tree that has fallen into the creek. The Tree is too big to be moved whole. She has a quote from Robert Schmidt to get it cut into pieces for removal. Clerk will provide a written response from the City showing the City has no issues/concerns with the tree being removed from her property.

Ashley Newson- Ozark Trails Coalition
Ashley updated the council on the Trails Coalition project of getting a Kiosk at the old courthouse.

- Purpose: Welcome people to the area and provide information.
- Location: Southwest corner of the old courthouse, across from the Mexican restaurant, in the concrete area by the side entrance.
- Design: No roof, stone will match the existing courthouse, dimensions 10ft by 11ft, display area 3ft by 6.5ft. Will resemble the kiosk at the Park Service headquarters building.

- Funding/Labor: The County is providing the concrete pad. A stone mason is lined up. Jack Griffin is providing the timber. The trails coalition is paying for the signs.
- Timeline: Kiosk to be installed and signs purchased in the next few months.

1. MOTION by Holt, seconded by Grassham TO APPROVE THE COUNCIL MINUTES OF JULY 13,2026 as presented.

All in favor, motion passed.

2. MOTION by Holt, seconded by Hughes, TO APPROVE THE BILLS PAYABLE AS FOLLOWS: GENERAL FUND 1-10, POLICE DEPT. 1-7, CAP IMP 1-2, FIRE DEPT. 1-3, METER DEPOSIT 1-3, AND W/S FUND 1-16 AS PRESENTED.

All in favor, motion passed.

3. MOTION by Holt, seconded by Hughes, TO APPROVE THE July 2026 MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

All in favor, motion passed.

City Supervisor Randall Jenkins's Report:

- **Ryan's Ridge Meters**

Meters are currently shut and locked. Residents requested meters to be turned on, then refused to pay the subsequent bill. The city stands by the policy of not turning on meters without payment plus $50 reconnect fee on each meter.

- **Code Book on Website**
  - E code, working with General Code, is ready to proceed with putting the city's code book online.
  - The premium option costs $1320 per year, allowing users to download and print the code book as a PDF. The entire code book would be sectioned out online, and new ordinances would be added under "new laws" to keep it up to date, making it accessible to lawyers and the public.

-E-Code Tabled until Next meeting when John is present for voting.

- **Bulk Water Rates:**
  - Research: Other towns use various methods: Ellington sends city staff with a meter, one town uses a quarter machine for "five minutes worth of water," and Piedmont uses an "honor system" with a "$3 a gallon rate."
  - Current City Method: A meter attaches to a fire hydrant, which city staff can read, considered "not really" convenient but "better than" nothing.
  - Randall is researching a "site" (drive-up station) with Midwest Meter that would allow credit/debit card payment for specific quantities of water (e.g., 100, 200 gallons, or per gallon/10 gallon/100 gallon). This would provide convenience for

campers/trailers. Randall will continue research, calling places like car washes or companies that install bulk water stations.

- **Earl Street Connection:** Waiting on a connection at the end of Earl Street where it goes under the creek. This needs to be reconnected and dug up. Work was done today.

- **Nursing Home Line:**
  - Monies are left over for this project so the engineers are adding in additional work. The line will run from the nursing home back down Walnut Street to Alexander, tying in front of John's with a new line.
  - This addresses previous problems with that line and provides a 6-inch line for new parts.

4. MOTION by Holt, seconded by Hughes, TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION @ 6:23 P.M

All in favor, motion passed.

5. MOTION by Grassham, seconded by Holt, TO GO BACK INTO OPEN SESSION @6:29 P.M

All in favor, motion passed.

6. MOTION by Holt, seconded by Grassham, TO ADJORN MEETING @6:30 P.M

All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

John Bailiff, Mayor

Vince Holt

Bobby Barnes

Jonathan Hughes

Heath Grassham

Cori Pogue, City Clerk