

CITY OF VAN BUREN MUNICIPAL UTILITIES COMMISSION AGENDA

Tuesday, April 21, 2026
12:00 Noon

City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities Conference Room
2806 Bryan Road, Van Buren, Arkansas

1. Call to Order
2. Minutes of March 17, 2026, Commission Meeting
3. Financial Reports
4. Commission Engineer and Capital Improvements Report
 - a) Terry & Todd/Rickey Sewer Interceptor
 - b) Rena Road Tank Recoating & Mixing:
 - c) Lee Creek and I-40 Crossing Water Line Emergency Replacement
 - d) Lovers Lane Emergency Water Line Relocation
 - e) Water Tank Recoating and Mixing: Lovers Lane, Crestview, Dora pending receipt of Arkansas Natural Resource Division concurrence.
 - f) Downtown Water Line Improvements
 - g) Parkview Drive/Woodrow Street Gravity Sewer Improvements
 - h) South 28th Street Interceptor Sewer (I-540 Crossing)
 - i) Arkansas Department of Transportation (ArDOT) Job 040872 Highway 59
5. Capital Improvement Plan Discussion:
 - a) Capital Improvement Plan - Equipment Replacement Item 6. Lawn Mower Requesting the Commission's authorization to purchase new mower and dispose of the old one by public auction.
 - b) Fir Drive Water Line Relocation Water Capital Improvement Item No. 9: This project includes the installation of approximately 160-feet of 8-inch water line near the intersection of Fir Drive and Lovers Lane. This will allow an existing 8-inch water line, installed in 1893, located in a backyard to be abandoned. This project will be constructed under the on-call contract with Goodwin & Goodwin, Inc.
6. General Information and Open Discussion:
 - a) Van Buren – Fort Smith Water Purchase Agreement History and Information
 - b) Fort Smith Water News Media Articles

VBMU COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 17, 2026

The regular meeting of the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities (VBMU) Commission was held on March 17, 2026, at 12:00 P.M. in the VBMU Conference Room. Those in attendance were, Chairman: Todd Young, Commissioners: Jim Williamson, and Tracy Burba, Keith Hefner, Blaine Bell. Commission Attorney: Sean Brister. Commission Engineer: Larry Weir. VBMU Staff: Director of Utilities: Steve Dufresne, Administrative Assistant: Kathy Geppert, Assistant Director of Utilities: Chris Coombes, Chief Water & Wastewater Plant Operator: James Dunn, Meter Services Supervisor: Brett Painter, Line Maintenance Supervisor: Rick Davis. Office Manager: Tonya Griffiths Visitors: Barry McCormick, Brett Peters, Wes Lemonier, Hawkins-Weir Engineers, Inc.

1. Chairman Todd Young called the meeting to order.
2. Minutes of February 17, 2026, Commission Meeting: A Motion to approve made by Commissioner Williamson and Seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion Carried.
3. Financial Reports: After review and discussion, a Motion to accept made by Commissioner Burba and seconded by Commissioner Williamson. Motion Carried.
4. Commission Engineer and Capital Improvements Report (Report attached):
 - a) Terry & Todd/Rickey Sewer Pump Station Interceptor.
 - b) Rena Road Tank Recoating & Mixing
 - c) Lee Creek and I-40 Crossing Water Line Emergency Replacement
 - d) Lovers Lane Emergency Water Line Relocation
 - e) Water Tank Recoating and Mixing: Lovers Lane, Crestview, Dora
 - f) Downtown Water Line Improvements:
 1. Bid tabulation and Resolution 03-01-2026 Conditionally approving low bid from Harris United LLC in the amount of \$3,432,548.75. After discussion, Motion to approve made by Commissioner Hefner and seconded by Commissioner Burba, Motion Carried.
 2. Project Expansion Discussion – adding 1200 linear feet of water line on Main Street to replace two existing lines that were installed underneath the sidewalks in 1955 and associated funding. After discussion, Motion to approve was made by Commissioner Burba and seconded by Commissioner Williamson. Motion Carried.
 - g) Parkview Drive/Woodrow Street Gravity Sewer Improvements:
 1. Bid tabulation and Resolution 03-02-2026 Conditionally approving low bid from Harris United LLC in the amount of \$2,464,252.50. After discussion, Motion to approve made by Commissioner Williamson and seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion Carried.
 - h) South 28th Street Interceptor Sewer (I-540 Crossing):
 1. Bid tabulation and Resolution 03-03-2026 Conditionally approving low bid from Crawford Construction in the amount of \$1,426,100.00. After discussion, Motion to approve made by Commissioner Hefner and seconded by Commissioner Burba. Motion Carried.

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- i) Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) Job 040872 HWY 59.
 - 1. Proposed Agreement for Engineering Services with Hawkins-Weir Engineers in the amount of \$595,000.00. Pending ArDOT Professional Engineering Agreement. After review and discussion, Motion to approve made by Commissioner Bell and seconded by Commissioner Williamson. Motion Carried
 - j) ARDOT Projects: I-40 HWY 59 Interchange & North HWY 59 Realignment. Reimbursement for the North HWY 59 Realignment has been received in the amount of \$335,694.12. Reimbursement for the I-40 HWY 59 Interchange is expected in the near future.
5. Capital Improvement Plan Discussion:
- a) South 3rd Street Emergency Sewer Line Replacement. Director of Utilities Dufresne reported that a clay tile sewer line between 207 South 3rd and 212 South 4th Streets collapsed and is likely installed in the late 1950's or early 1960's, has collapsed. Approximately 130 liner-feet of the line is being replaced through the On-Call Repair Contract with Goodwin & Goodwin. The line runs through a dedicated City Alley from the Municipal Complex to South 3rd Street. During the investigation it was discovered that the building located at 210 South 4th Street was constructed on top of the sewer line in the early 1960's. A title search found documents where the Van Buren City Council had vacated the alley to facilitate the building's construction.
 - b) River Valley Slack water Harbor Project: Director of Utilities Dufresne reported that a review of a recent news media article regarding the proposed Slackwater Harbor to be constructed near the Van Buren South Waste Water Treatment Plant indicates that the site could be in conflict with the South WWTP Sludge Force Main. Dufresne will contact the Developer to review and discuss.
 - c) Water Master Plan Update. Director of Utilities Dufresne reported that VBMU will meet with Hawkins-Weir Engineers to review and discuss updating the 2018 Water Master Plan. Arkansas Department of Health requires the plan to be updated every five years. VBMU will request that Hawkins-Weir prepare an Agreement for Professional Services for the Commission's review and approval.
6. General Information to Commission and Open Discussion:
- a) City of Fort Smith Water: Director of Utilities Dufresne discussed several recent news media articles regarding the City of Fort Smith proposed Water Transmission Line from Mountainburg to the Fort Smith Chaffee Crossing area. Dufresne also presented and discussed data related to Van Buren and Fort Smith water purchased from 2011-2025 and the misconception that Fort Smith residents pay less for water than Van Buren residents. Currently,

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the average Van Buren residential water user of 4,000 gallons pays \$31.64 for water only and the average Fort Smith residential water user pays \$17.04 for the same amount of water.

b VBMU Team Outreach Participation: Director of Utilities Dufresne reported that VBMU Team members James Dunn, Nathon Gregory, Terry Edwards, and Joshdon Robins hosted a group of students and teachers for a tour at the Van Buren North Waste Water Treatment Plant.

There being no further business, a Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Williamson and seconded by Commissioner Burba. Motion Carried.

Todd Young, Chairman

Respectfully Submitted:

Kathy D. Geppert, Secretary