

January 2026



City Hall - 310 Mill Street, PO BOX 160, Van Meter, IA 50261
515-996-2644 info@vanmeteria.gov www.vanmeteria.gov

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK



Dear Van Meter Residents,

As we reflect on the achievements of 2025, I am proud of the progress our community has made. This year has been nothing short of transformative, and I am thrilled to share some of the milestones that have set the stage for an even brighter future for our small town.

Celebrating Our Successes

We've seen the completion of several key projects that have significantly improved our city. The Arlington Street Project, adding much needed storm sewer, paving, sidewalks and lighting. Additionally, the Water Main Replacement Project - Phase 1 is now complete, this is the start of updating our complete water system ensuring we have a reliable water system for years to come. And, if you haven't already noticed, our newly improved Van Meter Welcome Sign serves as a proud symbol of our community's pride.

A Special Thank You

I would also like to thank our outgoing council members: Penny Westfall, Quinn Pelz, and Blake Grolmus. Their hard work and thoughtful votes have been instrumental in making these past few years successful. Their dedication has helped us lay the foundation for future improvements. I am excited to welcome our new council members: Jason Barney, Jarin Young, and Joe Lake. I look forward to working with each of them as we continue to move our city forward, building on the success of the past and pushing for even more progress in the years to come.

Looking Forward to 2026

As we look ahead to 2026, there are new and exciting projects already underway. The Phase 1 Trail Project will soon begin construction, connecting the school to F-90 and Grand Ridge Estates, providing residents with better access to outdoor recreation, and another step in making our city more walkable. We will also break ground on our new municipal building, which will house the library, police, and fire departments in a modern, centralized location. These are just the first steps in a new era for Van Meter, marked by growth, energy, and pride.

Thank You to Our Volunteers

I'd like to extend a special thank you to the Van Meter Community Development Corporation (VMCDC) for all of their volunteer efforts. Through their events and initiatives make more neighboring opportunities and enhance the unique charm of our small town.

Special thanks to our city staff. Your commitment to this city is what makes Van Meter such a special place. Together, we will continue to build a city that reflects the values of unity, progress, and community pride. Here's to a bright and exciting 2026!

Sincerely,
Mayor Joe Herman

Elected Officials:

MAYOR

Joe Herman

MAYOR PRO TEM

Travis Brott

COUNCILMAN

Joel Akers

COUNCILMAN

Jarin Young

COUNCILMAN

Joe Lake

COUNCILMAN

Jason Barney

City Staff:

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Liz Faust

CITY CLERK

Travis Cooke

ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK

Larain Climer

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Drew McCombs

PUBLIC WORKS

Shane Luvaas

PUBLIC WORKS

Spencer Leonard

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Jonatha Basye

LIBRARY ASSISTANT

Joan Von Ruden Kruger

PARKS & REC DIRECTOR

Sam Chia

POLICE CHIEF

Mike Brown

FIRE CHIEF

Mark Schmitt

DALLAS COUNTY DISPATCH

(non emergency) 515-993-4567

EMERGENCY

911

MEETING SCHEDULE

January 12, 2026 - City Council Meeting 7pm

January 26, 2025 - Workshop 6:15pm

JAN RECYCLING SCHEDULE



Support Your Community – Join the Parks & Rec 2026 Banner Sponsorship Program!

The Van Meter Parks and Recreation Department is excited to invite local businesses and organizations to participate in our 2026 Banner Sponsorship Program. This is your chance to promote your business while helping us enhance parks, programs, and events for the entire community.

Program Highlights

- Cost: \$500 per banner
- Size: 4 ft x 6 ft (full color)
- Display: March – November 2026
- Location: Van Meter Recreation Complex (Soccer, Baseball & Softball fields)
- Design: Submit print-ready artwork; we'll handle printing and installation for a professional look.



Why Sponsor?

- Reach hundreds of families and visitors throughout the season.
- Support youth and adult programs, community events, and facility improvements.
- Show your commitment to local quality of life and community engagement.

How to Get Started

Complete the Sponsorship Commitment Form (using the below link or scan the QR code shown to the right):

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSct7dSw6gcpGMuZJZEBjg6RqwF_wJ3E5r5W_kY7cKPj5thdFQA/viewform?usp=publish-editor



Submit \$500 payment to the City of Van Meter (memo: Parks & Rec Banner Sponsorship). Email high-resolution artwork (PDF, PNG, or EPS) to schia@vanmeteria.gov by **February 28, 2026**.

We'll take care of printing and installation!

Questions? Contact us at schia@vanmeteria.gov. Let's work together to make 2026 an amazing year for Van Meter Parks and Recreation!

**VAN METER
PARKS &
REC DAY**

WITH THE IOWA WOLVES

01/18 + 3:00 PM

JOIN US FOR ALPHA'S BIRTHDAY, THE BIGGEST PARTY IN TOWN!!

Link to tickets here:
<https://www.gofevo.com/event/Vanmeter81>

THE HOLIDAYS ARE SWEETER IN VM

On a cold, Hallmark-perfect day, Shannon Payne Photography captured the magic of Holidays Are Sweeter in Van Meter beautifully. From the smiles to the sparkle, every photo reflects the heart of our community and the joy of the season.

UGLY SWEATER 5K FUN RUN

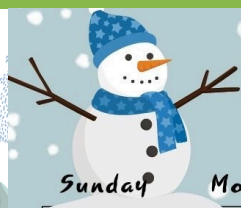
THANK YOU, VAN METER! Our 2025 Ugly Sweater 5K & 1 Mile was a cold one, but WOW did you all bring the heat! 38 runners Ugly sweaters galore Community vibes \$887.53 raised for sidewalks & trails! Huge love to: Paul & Tasha Booth – equipment Shannon Payne – photos Nick Harrison – course setup Public Safety – keeping us safe Public Works – cleared route Coach Wes – warm-up Bulldog Babes Elizabeth & Braelee – check-in

SIPS AND SNACK

Our First Star Light Star Bright Under our Downtown Lights! Thank you to the participating businesses SALON TEC VM BY RO, THE HUB, EBANK, THE GOOSE, THE LAW SHOP, REVIVIFY BY JEN, The AM Brew, 5TH QUARTER, THE CITY OF VAN METER & Van Meter Community Development. Special thanks to the Van Meter Singers, The Thirsty Pig, Jarin Young, Paul Latrare, Julia Rhoades and Matt Heckman.

MERRY AND BRIGHT NIGHT

Huge thanks to everyone who bundled up and came out to kick off the holidays with us! A little snow definitely couldn't stop this town from celebrating in style! To our amazing VMCD volunteers, vendors, and local businesses – you're the magic that makes events like this happen. We're so grateful for your energy, smiles, and support! Because honestly... the Holidays really are sweeter in Van Meter!



JANUARY



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

New Year's Scavenger Hunt				1 CLOSED	2	3 Saturday StoryTime 10:30AM
4 	5 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library Snowman	6 Crafternoon with Ms. J (Button Snowman) 4PM	7	8 University Kids 9:30AM Stories, Songs & Snacks 12:30PM	9 Kids Care 8:30AM Inspired Kids 9:15AM Ricochet Academy 2PM	10
11	12 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library Winter Coloring CITY COUNCIL 7PM	13 Stories, Songs & Snacks 10AM	14 LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES 6PM	15	16 Graphic Novel Book Club 2PM	17
18 Silent Book Club Dallas County Barista's Bouquet 3-5PM	19 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library Snow Bear	20	21 	22 Stories, Songs & Snacks 12:30PM STEM HOUR (Pattern Block Snowflakes) 4PM	23	24
25	26 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library Penguin	27 Stories, Songs & Snacks 10AM Books & Banter 7PM	28	29	30	31



Library Hours
 Monday 10-5PM
 Tuesday 10-7PM
 Wednesday 10-5PM
 Thursday 10-7PM
 Friday 10-5PM
 Saturday 8-1PM
 Sunday Closed

VMPL Amazon Wish List



Gettin' Crafty @ the Library--every week, the library will debut a new craft for everyone to enjoy! Materials will be available all week and registration will not be required.

Stories, Songs & Snacks--story time for ages 0-7. We will have two sessions, Tuesdays at 10:00am and Thursdays at 12:30pm

Saturday Storytime--Saturday Storytime will take place on the 1st Saturday of the month. Stop by for stories, songs & snacks with Ms. J.

Crafternoon with Ms. J--It's Crafternoon time with Ms. J! Sign up to create your own button snowman! We have 15 slots available! Suitable for all ages with assistance!

Graphic Novel Book Club--Join us for our first Graphic Novel Book Club! We will be discussing *The New Kid* by Jerry Craft. The library has copies for check out at the circulation desk. It is first come, first serve. This book club is suitable for students in grades 5-9. Registration opens December 12th! This book club is sponsored by The Van Meter Public & School libraries.

Silent Book Club at Barista's Bouquet (WDM)--Join us for silent reading at Barista's Bouquet in West Des Moines on January 18th from 3 to 5PM. There is no reading requirement; just bring yourself, a friend, and whatever you are currently reading! Registration is required for this event and can be found on the Van Meter Public Library website!

STEM Hour--Join Ms. J for STEM Hour and create a pattern block snowflake! Which patterns will you use to make your own snowflake? 15 slots are available for this program! Suitable for kids in grades K and up!

Books & Banter--Library Grown-Ups, this book club is for you! Join us for food, drinks, and book discussion! We will meet at the library on January 27th at 7PM. Registration can be found on our website!

New Year's Scavenger Hunt--Can you find all of the New Year's themed items for this month's scavenger hunt? Turn in completed scavenger hunt sheets to the circulation desk and pick a prize!



HOLIDAY CLOSURES

City Hall and Public Works will be closed Wednesday, December 31 and Thursday, January 1, 2026 in observance of the New Year.

The Van Meter Public Library will be closed Wednesday, December 31 and Thursday, January 1, 2026 in observance of the New Year.

Happy
New Year

2026

Snow Reminders

Let It Snow



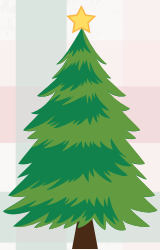
SNOW REMOVAL: No person shall park or allow a vehicle to remain parked on a public street in the City from the time it begins to snow until such time as the streets have been cleared of accumulated snow from curb to curb (or from all of the traveled portion of the roadway for those streets which do not have curbs) or 48 hours, whichever time is shorter. Vehicles shall be removed immediately once it begins to snow. The Director of Public Works and Utilities is also empowered to end the prohibition on parking prior to the expiration of the 48-hour period if the Director determines that the streets have been cleared. The Director of Public Works and Utilities shall notify the Police Chief when the parking prohibition has ended.

DUMPING OF SNOW: It is unlawful for any person to throw, push, place, or cause to be thrown, pushed or placed, any ice or snow from private property, sidewalks, or driveways onto the traveled way of a street or alley so as to obstruct gutters, or impeded the passage of vehicles upon the street or alley or to create a hazardous condition therein; except where, in the cleaning of large commercial drives in the business district it is absolutely necessary to move the snow onto the street or alley temporarily, such accumulation shall be removed promptly by the property owner or agent. Arrangements for the prompt removal of such accumulations shall be made prior to moving the snow.



REMOVAL OF SNOW, ICE AND ACCUMULATIONS: It is the responsibility of the abutting property owners to remove snow, ice and accumulations promptly from sidewalks. If a property owner does not remove snow, ice or accumulations within 48-hours after such accumulations, the City may do so and assess the costs against the property owner for collection in the same manner as a property tax.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK UP



Ornaments, Lights and other Decorations need to be removed from the tree prior to setting your tree on the curb for pick up. Pick up is for **LIVE** trees only.

No special sticker or tag is needed.

January 8, 2026



Master Trails Update

The City and Parks & Rec are excited to be able to share some updates on the Master Trails Project! This is a phased project so the updates only pertain to Phase 1. Phase 1 will be a 10' wide concrete multipurpose trail from 360th Street (F90) in the western City Right of Way North to where the School walking trail currently exists. The Iowa DOT were accepting bids in December, 2025. The tentative date for this project to begin construction in Spring 2026. The bid was awarded to Elder Corporation.

We will continue to share updates, timelines, and more as they become available to us. The Iowa DOT is managing the construction process.



Real People. Real Solutions.



January 2026

BINGO

Saturday

January 17, 2025

Dinner at 5:30

Taco Bar

BINGO at 7:00

Suggested Donation: \$8

JACKPOT

\$800

**AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY**



Van Meter Community, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your incredible generosity during Kids Shopping Day 2025!

Because of you, more than 240 kids shopped with joy, and over 55 families—more than 200 people—received support through the \$7,000 you donated. The items not purchased were utilized by Linden, Perry, and Stuart for their charity events, so your gifts kept on giving.

We are especially thankful for everyone who helped prepare, volunteered during the event, and helped with the clean-up. And to the older kids who served as elves—you are the heart of this day, and we appreciate you more than you know. Parents, you should be very proud of your elves!

We warmly welcome you to join us at the VM United Methodist Church. You can learn more about our activities at <https://www.vmumc.org>

Thank you again for your generosity, your time, and your caring hearts. Your kindness made a meaningful difference for so many.



VAN METER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



KINDERGARTEN PLANNING

for the **2026-27**
Kindergarten & Transitional Kindergarten
school year has started!

Please contact **Bree Ary** at
bree.ary@vmbulldogs.com to get the link to
sign up your child for this fall.

You can also find the link on the Van Meter School
Facebook page or our website!

520 1st Avenue, Van Meter | www.vmbulldogs.com | bree.ary@vmbulldogs.com

VAN METER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

- ✓ Available to children 4 years old by **September 15, 2026**
- ✓ Tuition-free program
- ✓ Maximum of 20 students per section
- ✓ Openings filled by resident students first
- ✓ AM or PM sessions available on a first come first serve basis
- ✓ Breakfast and hallway supervision begins at 7:50 AM
- ✓ Registration information can be found on our website at www.vmbulldogs.com or email **Bree Ary** at bree.ary@vmbulldogs.com

Class Schedule:

Monday - Thursday

AM Class: 8:10 - 11:15 AM

PM Class: 12:15 - 3:30 PM

No school on Fridays.

- ✶ Non-resident students enrolled in preschool at Van Meter are not guaranteed a spot in Van Meter's TK or Kindergarten the following school year. The school's open enrollment policy will be followed.
- ✶ Bussing is available for arrival to AM session and dismissal from PM session only. No mid-day bussing.
- ✶ No before or after school care is available.

520 1st Avenue, Van Meter | www.vmbulldogs.com | bree.ary@vmbulldogs.com

AGREEMENT FOR PREAUTHORIZED PAYMENTS

To sign up for AUTOMATIC WITHDRAWAL, please complete the form below and attach a copy of a **VOIDED CHECK** from your financial institution. Please mail or bring the completed form to City Hall, 310 Mill Street, PO BOX 160, Van Meter, IA 50261.

- ☐ I (we) hereby authorize the CITY OF VAN METER to initiate debit entries to my (our) checking account indicated below and the depository name below, hereinafter called DEPOSITORY, to debit the same to such account.

DEPOSITORY NAME _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP CODE** _____

TRANSIT ABA # _____ **ACCOUNT #** _____

Transit ABA (Routing) Number is the first set of nine (9) numbers from the left bottom of your check.

This authority is to remain in full force and effect until the City of Van Meter and Depository have received written notification from me (us) of its termination in such time and in such a manner as to afford the City of Van Meter and Depository a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

- ☐ I (we) hereby authorize the CITY OF VAN METER to provide billing statements electronically via email.

PREFERRED EMAIL _____

SERVICE ADDRESS _____

NAME(S) (PRINT) _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

You will receive your water bill on or near the first of the month. If you choose AutoPay, the amount due will be deducted from the above assigned account on the 15th of each month.