

October 2025

Van Meter

tradition with a vision

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

2025 City/School Election - Tuesday, November 4, 2025



There will be **3 City Council** seats on the upcoming City/School Election ballot. Each vacancy will be for a 4 year term.
There will be **3 School Board** seats on the upcoming City/School Election ballot. Each vacancy will be for a 4 year term.

HOTEL/MOTEL TAX

WHAT IS IT?

A city may impose a hotel/motel tax at a rate not to exceed 7% after a successful election of a simple majority vote.

WHERE DOES IT APPLY?

The hotel/motel tax is imposed on the gross receipts from rented sleeping rooms, apartments, or sleeping quarters in any hotel, inn, public lodging house, rooming house, tourist court, bed and breakfast, short-term rental, or in any place where accommodations are furnished.



HOW IS THE REVENUE DISTRIBUTED?

While Van Meter does not have any hotels or motels; nor are there any future plans for either, there are a handful of shortterm rentals that exist within city limits. The actual amount collected is distributed to the city monthly by the Iowa Department of Revenue & at least **50%** of the revenue **must be utilized for Parks & Recreation improvements, programming, etc.**

The proposed hotel/motel tax DOES NOT impact property tax rates & will NOT impact tax rates for the residents of Van Meter.

 **THIS MEASURE WILL
APPEAR ON THE BALLOT
ON NOVEMBER 4.**



MEETING SCHEDULE

October 13, 2025 - City Council Meeting 7pm

October 27, 2025 - Workshop 6:15pm

- Comprehensive Plan Update

SEPT RECYCLING SCHEDULE



Elected Officials:

MAYOR

Joe Herman

MAYOR PRO TEM

Travis Brott

COUNCILMAN

Joel Akers

COUNCILMAN

Blake Grolmus

COUNCILMAN

Quin Pelz

COUNCILWOMAN

Penny Westfall

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

City Council Candidates on the November 4, 2025 Ballot

Jarin Young - Hello Van Meter!! My name is Jarin Young and I'm seeking election for a seat on city council. I have been a resident of Van Meter all of my life and my passion for this community started at a young age when my Dad served on the Park and Recreation board, and I was able to help with many of their activities. As I got older, I worked in the city Park and Recreation department and eventually the Public Works department for a short time. I got to know a lot about day to day city operations, along with the in's and out's of our infrastructure. As a lot of you may know, I'm currently employed at the school--driving the kids to and from school, field trips, mowing and custodial work. I also serve as a volunteer firefighter at the Van Meter Fire Department, Secretary/Treasurer of the Firefighters Association, a board member of the Van Meter Community Development Committee (Van Meter Life), and a member of the Board of Adjustment. I feel that the city council could be the perfect spot for me due to my immense involvement in the city and school! My goals for the next four years are updating our outdated infrastructure, growing our community responsibly in coordination with the school, continue progress on the municipal building at 601 Main Street, attract more commercial businesses to town, along with continuing friendly code enforcement and revitalizing the downtown.



Penny Westfall -I was appointed to the Van Meter City Council two years ago to complete Mayor Joe Herman's term. I applied for the City Council position to contribute to Van Meter's vision and future endeavors. My husband and I moved to Van Meter in November 1993 when I was working as an Assistant Iowa Attorney General. Van Meter has been home ever since. I am experienced in city, county and state government developing and being responsible for budgets, setting goals and completing commitments as Pottawattamie County Attorney, Assistant Iowa Attorney General and Director of two state departments. Upon retiring from state government, I became an adjunct professor at the University of Nebraska Omaha until covid. I am currently an online zoom course manager for a six-weekend Landmark Worldwide program that starts in July and ends in March each year. Landmark Worldwide is a personal and professional growth and development company. I am also currently serving on the Van Meter City Council.

I am seeking to retain my seat on the City Council to see continued progress in the projects undertaken in the last two years while remaining fiscally responsible. The specific projects are:

1. Continue to update city infrastructure – Including streets and the updating of Van Meter water system through three phases including updated water mains, new well and completion of new Water Treatment Plant.
2. Completion of the new Public Safety and Library Building at 601 Main Street.
3. Providing support for our Police and Fire Departments for adequate facilities, equipment, vehicles, and training.
4. Completion of the Microsoft Project and resulting public improvements

Your vote is important and appreciated on November 4, 2025.

Joe Lake has called Van Meter home for the past 13 years, where he lives with his wife, their three children, and four dogs. With over two decades of experience at Des Moines Water Works, Joe has developed a deep understanding of water systems and infrastructure. Now, he's stepping forward to serve his community by applying that expertise to address Van Meter's water system challenges. Joe is committed to bringing practical, informed solutions to ensure a reliable and sustainable water future for the city.



Hello! My name is Nathan Hansen. My wife, Emily, and I moved to Van Meter in the fall of 2023 after living just north of town for over five years. We chose to build our home here on Hudson Avenue because of the small-town feel, excellent schools, and strong sense of community that make Van Meter a wonderful place to live. Our daughter currently attends preschool at Inspired Kids Academy. We also have two dogs - Sophie, a German Shepherd, and Rusty, a Goldendoodle. Emily and I are both graduates of Iowa State University. My career background is in IT and software project management, and I now serve as an Internal Auditor at IMT Insurance in West Des Moines, with a focus on IT and business processes. I am running for City Council because I believe Van Meter deserves thoughtful, responsible leadership. My priorities are: Fiscal responsibility – I will work to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used wisely, transparently, and in ways that strengthen our city's financial future.



Responsible growth – I support smart, sustainable development that balances new opportunities with preserving the small-town character that makes Van Meter unique. Coordinating with the Van Meter Community School District is essential to making sure growth benefits both the city and our students.

Infrastructure and quality of life – I support important projects such as the new Public Safety building and Water Treatment Plant, as well as investments in parks, trails, and amenities that improve daily life for families.

Local government decisions directly affect our daily lives—property taxes, water rates, safety, and community services. In fact, for Van Meter residents, school and city government represent about 85% of your property tax bill. That's why your voice matters at the local level.

I would be honored to earn your support on November 4th. Please feel free to stop me around town or reach out at nhansenvm@outlook.com—I want to hear your ideas, concerns, and hopes for Van Meter's future.



Jason Barney – Jason is a seasoned professional with over 25 years of experience in landscaping, construction, irrigation, and project management. His deep knowledge of infrastructure and hands-on leadership make him uniquely equipped to help Van Meter plan and execute the updates our growing community needs.

Originally from Truro, Iowa, Jason has always believed in the strength and simplicity of small-town living. In 2017, he and his wife Kim chose Van Meter as their home, drawn by its excellent schools and welcoming, close-knit atmosphere.

Together, they're raising five boys—four of whom currently attend Van Meter schools—giving Jason a personal stake in the future of our town.

As Van Meter continues to grow, Jason is committed to preserving the values that make it special while ensuring our infrastructure keeps pace. He brings practical expertise and a collaborative mindset to the table, aiming to improve communication between city leadership and residents, and to make sure every voice is heard.

Jason's vision is clear: thoughtful planning, strong community ties, and smart growth that respects Van Meter's roots while preparing for its future.

City of Van Meter Beggars' Night

Visit the Van Meter Parks & Rec board on October 30th!
They will be handing out candy at Memorial Park from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Visit the Van Meter Public Library on October 30th!
They will be handing out candy and the library will be open from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Visit the Van Meter Police Department on October 30th!
They will be passing out candy at the United Methodist Church's Trunk or treat from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Visit the Van Meter Fire Department on October 30th!
They will be passing out candy at the Public Safety Building from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.



October 2025

Trick
or
Treat

City of Van Meter Trick or Treat
Thursday, October 30th, 2025
6:00PM - 8:00PM



OCTOBER

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



LIBRARY HOURS

MONDAY 10:00AM - 5:00PM
TUESDAY 10:00AM - 7:00PM
WEDNESDAY 10:00AM - 5:00PM
THURSDAY 10:00AM - 7:00PM
FRIDAY 10:00AM - 5:00PM
SATURDAY 8:00AM - 10:00PM

VMPL AMAZON WISH LIST



HALLOWEEN SCAVENGER HUNT SPOOKY STUFFY SLEEPOVER			1	2	3	4 SATURDAY STORYTIME 10:30AM
5	6 GETTIN' CRAFTY @ THE LIBRARY MUMMY CAT	7	8	9 POKEMON CARD SWAP 4PM	10	11
12	13 GETTIN' CRAFTY @ THE LIBRARY FRANKENSTEIN CANDY CORN CITY COUNCIL MEETING 7PM	14 PUZZLE IT OUT SPEED PUZZLE COMPETITION AMERICAN LEGION 6-9PM	15 LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING 6PM	16 UNIVERSITY KIDS OUTREACH 9:30AM STORIES SONGS & SNACKS 12:30PM	17 KIDS CARE OUTREACH 8:30AM INSPIRED KIDS OUTREACH 9:15AM	18
19	20 GETTIN' CRAFTY @ THE LIBRARY HALLOWEEN COLORING	21 STORIES SONGS & SNACKS 10AM CREEPY CRAWLIES 4PM	22	23	24	25
26	27 GETTIN' CRAFTY @ THE LIBRARY SKELETON CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP 6:15PM	28 AUTHOR TALK WITH MICHELLE MURRAY 6PM BOOKS & BANTER 7PM	29	30 STORIES SONGS & SNACKS 12:30PM GHOST PAINTING/SPOOKY HALLOWEEN TREE 4PM	31 SPOOKY STUFFY SLEEPOVER	

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.

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 OCTOBER 28TH AT 7PM REGISTRATION CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE!

AUTHOR TALK WITH MICHELLE MURRAY—MICHELLE MURRAY, AUTHOR OF AMAZING IOWA WILL BE DISCUSSING HER BOOK ON OCTOBER 28TH! STOP BY TO HEAR HER STORIES INCLUDING ONE ABOUT THE VAN METER VISITOR!

CREEPY CRAWLIES—LET'S MAKE CANDY INSECTS! WE WILL USE MARSHMALLOWS, LICORICE AND OTHER CANDIES TO MAKE AND DISCUSS THE PARTS OF INSECTS! REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED! 15 SLOTS AVAILABLE!

GHOST PAINTING/SPOOKY HALLOWEEN TREE—WE ARE PAINTING GHOSTS AND MAKING SPOOKY TREES FOR HALLOWEEN! REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED! THERE ARE 15 SLOTS AVAILABLE!

SPOOKY STUFFY SLEEPOVER—DROP OFF YOUR FAVORITE STUFFY ANY TIME ON OCTOBER 31ST FOR A STUFFY SLEEPOVER! KEEP AN EYE ON THE LIBRARY FACEBOOK PAGE TO SEE WHAT THE STUFFIES GET UP TO ON HALLOWEEN NIGHT IN THE LIBRARY. STUFFIES CAN BE COLLECTED SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST, DURING REGULAR LIBRARY HOURS.

POKEMON CARD SWAP—STOP BY THE LIBRARY TO SWAP POKEMON CARDS WITH YOUR FRIENDS! CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN DURING THIS EVENT. NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED!

HALLOWEEN SCAVENGER HUNT—THERE ARE TEN SPOOKY ITEMS HIDDEN IN THE LIBRARY. CAN YOU FIND THEM ALL? BRING COMPLETED SCAVENGER HUNT SHEETS TO THE CIRCULATION DESK AND PICK A PRIZE!

PUZZLE IT OUT SPEED PUZZLE COMPETITION @ THE AMERICAN LEGION—10 TEAMS WILL COMPETE TO SEE WHO CAN FINISH THE PUZZLE IN THE FASTEST TIME! REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED AND SLOTS WILL GO QUICKLY! PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED. REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED. WE WILL ALSO HAVE A BOOK SWAP ON SITE SO THAT YOU CAN TRADE YOUR FAVORITE READS!



October 2025



Saturday
October 18, 2025
Dinner at 5:30
Nachos
Suggested Donation: \$8
BINGO at 7:00



Thursday Night Meal

October 16, 2025

910 Main St



**AMERICAN
LEGION**

Cavatelli, Garlic bread,
and salad

Suggested donation: \$12



MEET OUR NEW CITY CLERK: TRAVIS COOKE

WE'RE EXCITED TO INTRODUCE TRAVIS COOKE, OUR NEW CITY CLERK, WHO BRINGS A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE AND A PASSION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY. WITH A BACKGROUND IN MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION AND A COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENCY, TRAVIS IS POISED TO ENHANCE THE OPERATIONS OF OUR CITY CLERK'S OFFICE. KNOWN FOR HIS ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND PROACTIVE APPROACH, HE AIMS TO STREAMLINE PROCESSES AND IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL RESIDENTS. TRAVIS LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO ENSURE OUR CITY'S OPERATIONS RUN SMOOTHLY AND EFFECTIVELY. PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING TRAVIS COOKE TO HIS NEW ROLE, WHERE HE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON OUR CITY'S FUTURE.

Free Meal for Veterans

Breaded Tenderloins

November 7

Food served 5 to 8 pm

Post 403 Lounge open

until 10 pm

**AMERICAN
LEGION**
AUXILIARY

Yard Waste

As the leaves start to fall this autumn, and your raking journey begins, please remember to place your leaves in biodegradable compost/yard waste bags. Plastic bags for yard waste pick up is not allowed. Yard waste pick up is every **Thursday morning** until November 28th.

If you own an outside irrigation meter, it's crucial to bring it indoors before the onset of freezing temperatures. Cold weather poses a significant risk to these devices, as the water inside can freeze, expand, and cause damage to the meter itself. This can lead to costly repairs or replacements and potential disruptions in your irrigation system. To prevent such issues, it's advisable to disconnect the meter, drain any remaining water, and store it in a warm, dry place until the threat of freezing has passed.

Van Meter
Community
Development
Presents

THE HOLIDAYS ARE SWEETER IN VAN METER

9AM - 8PM Saturday December 6th, 2025

Downtown Van Meter

Planning is underway- go to
www.vanmeterlife.com
to see updates as they
become available.

Save the
Date

Online Bill Pay

The City's original online portal was disabled in late 2024 and was replaced with a new utility account portal. The user access information did not carry over from portal to portal.

If you previously had online access or you would like to set up online access, the steps below detail how to create a user account in the new portal. Account holders are NOT required to set up online access. Please contact info@vanmeteria.gov with questions.

How to Create a Public User Account in the new Utility Portal

Step 1: Go to <https://vanmeteria.frontdeskworks.com/> and click "Create New"

Step 2: Select **YES** to "Are you already receiving utility bills from us?"

Step 3: Enter your account number & utility service address

Step 4: Confirm your account number & utility service address

Step 5: Enter your name, email address, cell phone & set password

You must check ☒ the acknowledgement box to proceed.

Step 6: Select "Create Account"

Step 7: After clicking "Create Account", you will receive an email from FrontDesk to confirm your email. Upon confirmation, you can log in.

The confirmation email does time out within 30 minutes.

Log In: FrontDesk

Email Address

Password

☐ Remember Me [Forgot Password?](#)

Login

Don't have an account? [Create Now](#)

Account Status Account Info Finish Sign-up

Are you already receiving utility bills from us?
☒ Yes ☐ No

Enter your Account Number from your most recent Utility Bill
Account Number Re-type Account Number

Current Physical Address where Service is located
Address 1

☒ Have more than one utility account with us? That's ok. You can add the rest of them after signing up for your FrontDesk Account

Next

Account Status Account Info Finish Sign-up

Account Type
Citizen

Name
First Name Middle Name Last Name

Email
Email Address Confirm Email Address

Phone
Cell Phone Number

Password
Password Confirm Password

☐ By clicking here, you acknowledge you will be receiving electronic bills with your Frontdesk account. By default, you will no longer receive paper bills from the Vincent Clortho Public Utilities. You may opt in to receiving paper bills in addition to electronic bills by updating your Notification Preferences on the My Account tab.

☒ Click "Create Account" to finish this step!

Create Account

FrontDesk Confirm Email

frontdesk-1630@frontdeskworks.com

to me

Hi

You're almost there! To complete your g|Works FrontDesk account verification, please confirm your email by pressing the button below.

Verify Email Address

If you did not create an account using this address, please ignore this email.

Best Regards,
g|Works Product Team

If you are experiencing problems with the button, please copy and paste this link into your browser

<https://vanmeteria.frontdeskworks.com/confirm-email.html?token=205000MocvissLEmGSc8BktmbdQdVucOABLvuGut>

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