

Bertram City Council
Wednesday, April 8, 2026

The regular meeting of the City of Bertram was held on the above date at 7:00 pm at City Hall. Mayor Laura Merchan presided over the meeting. Council members present Stephanie Vislisle, Benjamin Boelter, Craig Jones and Louise Hall. City Treasurer Lisa Berry Present. City attorney Kevin Shea present

Hall made a motion to approve the agenda MSB Vislisle. Aye Hall, Boelter, Vislisle and Jones Opposed: None. Agenda approved.

Vislisle made motion to approve the Consent Agenda. MSB Hall. Aye Hall, Boelter, Jones and Vislisle. Opposed: None. Motion approved.

· Sheriff's Report: 5 calls for service, required hours met.

· Minutes from 3/4/26 meeting

· March bills (details below consent agenda items).

Unpaid Bills \$ 4947.17

Payroll \$1226.57

Payroll Claims \$1422.11

Total \$7595.85

Update on Nuisance Properties: Brad Hess state that there are dogs barking in skylark all night long. Council recommended going and talking to them about it. If it is not corrected Shea can then proceed with it.

March Bills:

Payee – Unpaid Bills Purpose Amount

Alliant Energy/IPL High Point Electricity 22.69

Alliant Energy/IPL WATER: Pumphouse Electricity 337.29

Alliant Energy/IPL City Hall Electricity 64.18

Alliant Energy/IPL City Park Electricity 23.20

Alliant Energy/IPL Streetlights 503.29

IAMU 700.00

Jared Vogeler Operations and Meter readings WATER 480.00

Laura Merchan Leadership academy 220.00

Linn County Auditor 25 City/School Elections 708.14

Microbac Laboratories, Inc WATER: Water Testing 19.50

Office of Auditor of State Periodic Exam Fee 800.00

Orkin Pest Control 68.13

SolutionWorks Inc Cloud Server Charges 200.00

Stephanie Vislisle Leadership academy 220.00

Student Publications Inc Publication Fees 305.83

Verizon Wireless Phone/Internet 92.54

VISA (Public Works) Fuel for both trucks 182.38

Total Unpaid Bills 4947.17

Payroll Amount 1226.57

Public Works 228.91

Clerk/Treasurer 997.66

Payee – Payroll Claims Purpose Amount

IPERS Retirement benefits 217.66

IA Dept of Revenue State taxes 45.33

US Treasury Federal taxes 1159.12

Total Payroll Claims 1422.11

Grand Total 7598.85

Approve FY27 Tax Levy-8.1% highest we can go council has option to go lower. Right now, the rate is at 7%. 145,221 without gas and electricity. Vislisle stated that raising the taxes is not something we want to do but we went over what it costs the city yearly and we just cannot afford to not increase them.

Hall said if we do not raise the taxes how does the city sustain. Berry stated that this is the highest we can go. Hall made a motion to increase the FY 27

Property Tax Levy rate to 8% Craig Jones MSB Vislisle Aye, Boelter Aye, Craig Jones Aye, Louise Hall Aye. R-4-2026

Set date for FY27 Budget Public Hearing-April 20th 6:30pm

New truck-Vislisle stated that several people are looking for a new truck. We need to nail down our limit on what we want to spend. Found one that was lower cost with a lot of miles. Do we want to spend more and get a newer one with less miles. Should we trade in the red truck? Hall asked Tony to explain the trucks to the new council members. Blue Truck 1990 Dodge 3500 V Plow in box sander. Low mileage but it has worked hard. We have lost 2 cylinders on it. Truck not worth fixing. Red has air brakes but require a CDL. Not very great at getting around on the roads. Only one public works person can drive it because it requires CDL. And that one public works employee also works for the city of Marion so cannot help when we do have snow. His opinion is to get rid of the red truck. Blue could be a backup if something went wrong with the new one we get. Public Works would like to see it stored somewhere else because the garage is not big enough for two trucks. Vislisle stated we would like a V Plow. Both currently have VPLOWS. Mulholland asked if our plow could be used on another truck. Tony does not believe it would be worth the labor to put on a new truck. Merchan asked what happens when we do find a truck. From past meetings it sounded like Merchan and a council member should approve it. Merchan as mayor and Benjamin Boelter as a council member can approve of a new truck with the guidance of Tony. Currently we have a budget of 100K for a new truck. What amount would the council like to approve? Hall asked if we could say anything up to 100K. Vislisle asked if we wanted brand new or used? The red and blue trucks were both used when we got them. Council agreed with used and low mileage. We would like to see the blue truck stay and trade the red one.

Comparable trucks are going for \$12000. Probably get 8-9K for the red truck. Boelter asked if we are looking for one with a plow already installed. The red truck requires chains on the tires. Then it can't go into town or haul. Labor with putting the chains on. Vislisle stated that the trucks need to be cleaned off after every snow event. Brad Hess asked if we are looking at auctions or online. Vislisle stated that we are looking everywhere. Hall made a motion to approve purchasing a truck for the city of Bertram not to exceed 100k Craig Jones MSB Aye Vislisle, Hall, Boelter and Jones.

PCC Patching Project by the Iowa DOT Merchan explained the DOT will be working on the roads on 151 from HWY 30 to HWY 13.

Street Cleaning-Hall stated that we normally have the streets cleaned once a year. Rustic Ridge, Timberlake Court, Black Berry Lane, Skylark, Bertram St and Woodland Ct. seem to be the worst streets. Pate Asphalt declined, Kluesner's bid is for \$3212 and LL Pelling Co's bis is \$1800. LL Pelling charges by the hour and thought it would only take 8 hours at a rate of \$225 an hour and Kluesner charges per mileage. Mulholland asked if we really need to have them cleaned. Hall said yes, the roads are dangerous. Merchan asked if we had cleaned streets before and Hall stated yes, we do it every year. Benjamin Boelter made a motion to approve LL Pelling at \$1800 Craig Jones MSB AYE Boelter, Hall, Vislisle and Jones.

Restroom Cleaning at the Park-Hall stated that we normally have the restrooms cleaned once a year before we start renting the park out. James Santee gave a bid of \$350, Affordable Pressure Washing did not respond. Penny Kula asked if we only clean the bathrooms once a year. Hall said yes. This is just power washing inside and outside and then should be pumped. Been cleaned once a year and has not been pumped in a long time. Hall said she

will call Roto Rooter to get the restrooms pumped at the park. Table to next month and get more bids. James Santee is a conflict of interest since he is a Public Works employee.

Vislisel made a motion for Roto Rooter to pump the restrooms at the park Benjamin Boelter MSB AYE Hall, Vislisel, Jones and Boelter.

Quote for Spigot at Park-Hall stated that the water fountain issue is not under warranty. They came out and looked and said it was a cracked water line not a spigot issue. Pirc-Tobin's bid \$1384, Rick Freese Well Drilling's bid \$2040 and Brown Well Pump Service's bid \$1800. Hall said the line is currently leaking and spring needs to be replaced. Water is leaking and that is why the Alliant bill keeps going up. Hall stated that the water spigot was 33K. Bad pressure value. Jim Womack contacted the mayor a year ago to have this fixed. Said that it has been leaking for a year and told the council and the mayor a year ago. The 33K to install this was a grant the City of Bertram received. Berry stated that the initial intent was to add water to the park. Womack asked if the hydrants work and Hall said no. The \$1300 bid is from the company that originally put it in. Brown Well we have used before and they are both good. Brad Hess asked when this was shut off. Hall said that it was shut off today. Hess recommends we shut this water off at a certain time of each year to prevent problems like this happening. Vislisel made a motion to accept Brown Well Pump Service bid at \$1800 Louise Hall MSB AYE Vislisel, Hall, Boelter and Jones.

West First Street-Hall stated that she had some inquiries for ROW Ordinance that show the rules. Hall stated that she is interested but so is Cole Carter. Cole asked what the process was. Hall explained that she already requested it and is waiting on the city clerk. Per the ordinance that was passed Kim Morahan-clerk explained that we are still waiting for the \$600 check to start the process. Hall said she was not aware of that. She stated that she would like to see a copy of the ordinance for this. Morahan stated that she would get a copy for Hall and Shea the city attorney.

Fixing articulating mower for tractor-Vislisel stated that the tractor will soon need to be fixed because it is bent. We can take it somewhere, but it would have to go on the tractor. Or we could have someone come to us with a welder. Zac had brought it to the council for \$1000. Now it is spring and we need to do something. Dennis Hartl that lives in Cedar Crest, could fix it for around \$1000. Boelter asked if it only needs welded. Tony Vislisel stated that it needs to be straightened and welded. Berry explained that no one should ever do work for the city without insurance and a W-9. Council has decided to get 3 bids to get the mower fixed. Boelter asked if he could have a look at it. Merchan stated that we need to cover ourselves. Jones asked Dennis Hartl could buy a policy to cover him doing work on our equipment. PK will have to come out, and it will cost us a lot more. There is also no electricity at high point to power a welder if someone does come out. Tony stated that he was not sure how you would even get in on a flat bed. Tony will show Boelter and Jones the mower so they can help with this.

Appointments P & Z-Hall stated that at the meeting we said Mefferd & Kaut but also Mulholland was interested. The council agreed it was Bill Mefferd and John Kaut for P & Z. Hall made a motion to appoint Bill Mefferd and John Kaut on the P & Z committee Vislisel MSB AYE Vislisel, Hall, Boelter and Jones.

Correspondence-Hall stated that Bill Mullholland was still interested in being on the council. Council agreed that we will appoint Bill Mullholland as a council person at the April 20th meeting. Hall stated that in the minutes it states she was paid on May 12, 2025, for a mailbox but she wasn't. I would like to make note that the citizens were actually paid for the mailbox.

Open to Floor-Brad Hess on Nuisance property-stated above.

Hall made a motion to adjourn meeting at 8:26 pm Benjamin Boelter MSB AYE Vislisel, Boelter, Jones and Hall.

Lisa Berry - Treasurer and Acting Clerk