

OCTOBER 2026



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

Hello, I'm Van Meter-Here's What My Staff Does

You probably know me as the place you call home, but have you ever wondered what it takes to keep me running?

I have a relatively small staff responsible for a surprisingly long list of services. They prepare my budgets, process utility payments, maintain financial records, prepare council agendas and minutes, manage public records, issue permits, administer grants, coordinate development projects, and respond to questions from my residents. They also make sure I comply with an ever-growing collection of state and federal requirements.

My Public Works staff takes care of my streets, water and wastewater systems, parks, equipment, signs, and public property. They respond to water leaks, sewer problems, snowstorms, severe weather, and other issues that rarely have the courtesy to occur during regular business hours.

My Police Department keeps watch over the community through patrol, traffic enforcement, investigations, community outreach, and emergency response.

My Parks and Recreation staff coordinate programs, facilities, fields, events, and activities that help make me a great place to live and raise a family.

My staff also spends a great deal of time planning for my future. They work on infrastructure improvements, economic development, emergency planning, major construction projects, technology upgrades, and funding opportunities that can help reduce the burden on my taxpayers.

Because I am a small community, my staff members wear several hats. Some days, they manage to wear all of them before lunch. "Other duties as assigned" is less of a sentence in their job descriptions and more of a way of life.

I also contract with outside professionals for certain specialized services, including building inspections, code enforcement, engineering, legal services, and other technical work. Even when a service is contracted, my staff still coordinates the work, answers questions, maintains the records, and follows up to make sure everything is handled properly.

You may not see everything my staff does, but nearly every service touches the community in some way. Whether they are repairing a water main, preparing for an audit, answering a resident's question, reviewing a development proposal, or making sure the park is ready for the weekend, their goal is the same: to provide dependable service and keep me moving forward.

So, if you ever hear someone ask, "What does the city staff actually do?"-now you know!

Sincerely, Your City of Van Meter

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

Annette Ekhoft

CITY CLERK

Travis Cooke

DEPUTY CLERK

Madeline Lavallee

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Drew McCombs

PUBLIC WORKS

Shane Luvaas

PUBLIC WORKS

Spencer Leonard

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Jonatha Basye

LIBRARY ASSISTANT

Annie Atkins

PARKS & REC DIRECTOR

Grace Wilder

POLICE CHIEF

Mike Brown

FIRE CHIEF

Mark Schmitt

DALLAS COUNTY DISPATCH

(non emergency) 515-993-4567

EMERGENCY

911

CITY MEETING SCHEDULE

October 12th @ 6:00pm Council Meeting

October 26th @ 6:00pm Workshop

CITY OF VAN METER

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

As the leaves change color and the temperatures begin to cool, Halloween season is upon us! The City of Van Meter would like to wish everyone a fun, safe, and happy Halloween.



**WE ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO
DECORATE THEIR HOMES**
and help make Van Meter festive for the season!

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

FOR CHILDREN



- Wear reflective clothing or carry glow sticks.
- Stay on sidewalks and use designated crosswalks.
- Travel in groups whenever possible.
- Never enter a stranger's home or vehicle.

FOR DRIVERS



- Watch carefully for children crossing streets.
- Slow down in residential neighborhoods.
- Avoid distractions while driving.
- Use extra caution near intersections and driveways.

PUMPKIN CARVING TIPS



- Use battery-powered candles instead of open flames.
- Carve pumpkins on a stable surface.
- Young children should draw designs while adults do the carving.
- Compost pumpkins after Halloween or dispose of them properly.

THE VAN METER VISITOR

— Did You Know? —

In 1903, residents reported sightings of the legendary Van Meter Visitor, a mysterious winged creature that has become one of Iowa's most famous local legends.



**What better time than
Halloween to celebrate
Van Meter's very own
spooky hometown mystery?**

FALL PUBLIC WORKS REMINDERS



Keep leaves out of storm drains.



Remove seasonal decorations from sidewalks and public right-of-way areas.



Begin winterizing outdoor water lines and irrigation systems before freezing temperatures arrive.



Report damaged street signs, potholes, or streetlight outages to City Hall.



A MESSAGE FROM CITY HALL

We are grateful to call Van Meter home and appreciate all the residents who help make our community such a wonderful place to live.

*We hope you enjoy this festive season
with family, friends, and neighbors.*

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

FROM THE CITY OF VAN METER!



Peddler Solicitor and Transient Merchant Ordinance Updated

The city recently adopted Ordinance No. 2026-06, which repeals and replaces Chapter 122 of the Van Meter Code of Ordinances. The updated ordinance establishes new permit requirements, fees, and operating hours for peddlers, solicitors, and transient merchants working within Van Meter.

The ordinance will become effective on we will fill in once we have a publication date from Travis, following its official publication.

Permit and License Fees

Before conducting business, each person or organization must obtain a permit from the city. A \$1,000 registration and administrative fee must be paid at the time of registration. This fee is in addition to the applicable license fee listed below.

Solicitors and peddlers:

One day: \$250

More than one day but fewer than seven days: \$500

Up to six months: \$2,000

More than six months but fewer than 12 consecutive months: \$4,000

Transient merchants:

Each period of one to seven days: \$250

Each additional period of one to seven days: \$500

Up to six consecutive months: \$2,000

More than six months but fewer than 12 consecutive months: \$4,000

Permit days accumulate during the calendar year beginning January 1. Fees are based on the total number of previously used permit days plus the additional days requested.

Permitted Hours and Days

Peddling and solicitation may only take place:

Monday through Friday

Between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Peddling and solicitation are not permitted on Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays.

Nonprofit Fundraising Organizations

Nonprofit civic, charitable, religious, and educational groups conducting fundraising activities are exempt from the permit fees.

However, the organization must still submit a permit application to the city. This is at no cost.

Only one application is required in the organization's name. Individual members or volunteers participating on behalf of the approved organization do not need to submit separate applications. Examples include school booster clubs, scouting organizations, service clubs, churches, and similar nonprofit groups.

Additional Requirements

Applications must include the information required under Section 122.04, including the applicant's name and address, the organization or business represented, the proposed sales activity, the requested permit period, relevant vehicle information, and required background information.

Permits are not transferable and must be carried by solicitors and peddlers while conducting business. Transient merchants must display their permits publicly at their place of business. Solicitors and peddlers must also comply with applicable state consumer-protection laws.

The updated ordinance allows the city to properly review applicants, protect residents and businesses, and ensure that anyone going door to door or temporarily selling goods in Van Meter follows consistent rules.

Questions or permit applications may be directed to Van Meter City Hall at 515-996-2644 or info@vanmeteria.gov.

A Reminder About Campaign Signs

As election season approaches, please make sure campaign signs are placed on private property and outside the public street right-of-way. The right-of-way often extends beyond the curb or edge of the road, so a sign can be in the right-of-way even when it looks like it is in someone's front yard.

Iowa Code § 68A.406 does not allow campaign signs in the public right-of-way. Signs on private property need the permission of the property owner or lessee.
The City would also appreciate it if campaign signs were taken down within 30 days after the election.

If you're unsure where the right-of-way ends, please contact City Hall before putting up your sign.

OCTOBER 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Hiding Monster Scavenger Hunt! STEM Sun Dial Take and Make!				1 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library (Windy Leaves)	2 8:30 AM Kids Care Outreach 9:15 AM Inspired Kids Outreach 10 AM University Kids Mascot Naming Fundraiser! 24th - 3rd!	3 Storytime 10 AM Library Hours Monday 10am - 5pm Tuesday 10am - 7pm Wednesday 10am - 5pm Thursday 10am - 7pm Friday 10am - 5pm Saturday 8am - 1pm Sunday Closed
4	5 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library (Cat Popsicle Stick Puppet)	6 Winning Mascot Name Announcement!	7	8	9	10
11 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library (Monster Bookmarks)	12 Spooky Stories with The Dulcimer Guy 6PM <u>City Council</u> 6PM	13 Storytime 9:30 AM <u>Library Board</u> 6PM	14	15 Ghost Craft 4PM	16	17
18	19 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library (Rocking UFO)	20 Books & Banter 7PM	21	22 Storytime 2:30 PM <u>Silent Book Club 7 PM</u>	23 Ricochet 2PM	24
25	26 Gettin' Crafty @ the Library (Roll a Monster) <u>City Council Workshop 6 PM</u>	27 A Visitor in Van Meter with Natalie Veater 4PM	28	29	30 Adopt-A- Library-Ghost <u>Spooky Stuff Sleepover</u>	31 Storytime 10 AM HAPPY Halloween!




OCTOBER 2026

Event Details

- **Mascot Naming Fundraiser! September 24th - October 3rd** - The library is wrapping up its Mascot Naming Fundraiser! All proceeds go to the Friends of the Van Meter Public Library. Stay aware of our social media posts to get in on the action! Make sure to stop by the library and donate towards the name you want to win! We'll announce our winning name on October 6th via our social media!
- **Monster Scavenger Hunt** - Can you find all of the monsters hiding in this month's scavenger hunt? Turn in your completed sheet at the circulation desk and choose a prize!
- **STEM Sun Dial Take and Make!** - Grab a take-home kit and assemble your own sun dial! While supplies last!
- **Gettin' Crafty @ the Library** - Each week, the library will debut a brand-new craft for everyone to enjoy! Materials will be available all week, and no registration is required.
- **Storytime** - Stop by for Storytime with Ms. J! Join us for stories, songs, and snacks!
- **Spooky Stories with The Dulcimer Guy (Mike Anderson)** - Join us for Spooky Stories and learning about the dulcimer during Mike Anderson's presentation! Suitable for all ages!
- **Ghost Craft!** - Register to make a cute and spooky ghost craft at 4PM! We have 24 slots available!
- **Books and Banter** - Join us for Books and Banter to discuss Over My Dead Body: Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries by Greg Melville on October 20th at 7:00 PM!
- **Silent Book Club at the Buffalo** - Join us at the Great White Buffalo Public House for Silent Book Club at 7 PM on October 22nd!
- **A Visitor in Van Meter with Natalie Veater** - Join us as Natalie leads us in an interactive author presentation about her new book, The Midnight Cryptid Club: A Visitor in Van Meter! Suitable for all ages!
- **Adopt-A-Library-Ghost** - Stop by the library to adopt your very own library ghost! While supplies last!
- **Spooky Stuff Sleepover** - Stuffedies must be dropped off by 5PM! The stuffedies are going to have a sleepover the night before Halloween! Drop off your favorite stuffy any time before 5PM on October 30th, for the stuffy sleepover. Keep an eye on the library Facebook page to see what the stuffies get up to during the night! Stuffedies can be collected Saturday, October 31st, during regular library hours.




Library Hours

Monday
10am - 5pm

Tuesday
10am - 7pm

Wednesday
10am - 5pm

Thursday
10am - 7pm

Friday
10am - 5pm

Saturday
8am - 1pm

Sunday
Closed



BINGO!

OCTOBER 17TH

JACKPOT: \$300

MEAL: NACHOS

GOOD GAMES ★ GOOD FOOD ★ GREAT COMPANY!

Join us for **Fall Fest!**

Sunday, October 4th
3pm-7pm

Memorial Park
Corner of West & Grant St.

Pumpkin Painting! Mum Sales! Games! Food Truck

Enjoy live music by **Matthew Garcia**
5pm-7pm

Sponsored by VM Park & Rec

Trunk or Treat

Bounce houses
Homemade treats
Decorated trunks full of candy
Games & Crafts

6pm-7:30pm

October 25
All Are Welcome

Van Meter United Methodist Church

SAVE THE DATE

Kids Shopping Day

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5TH

Van Meter United Methodist Church

Donations can be dropped off beginning on **Thursday, November 19th**



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.

BANK NAME _____

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

ROUTING # _____ **ACCOUNT #** _____

TransitABA(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.