

Village of Minerva Park

Council Work Session – September 4, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance: Council President Camara called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Councilpersons Pinter, Martin, Koss and Grant. Mayor Southard, Village Planner Fischer, Fiscal Officer Wilcheck (for part of the meeting), and Attorneys Shamp Batchelor were also in attendance.

1. Sidewalk and Pathway Planning – Minerva Lake Road Corridor

- **Task Orders:** Planner Fischer recommended officially closing **Jacobs Engineering Task Orders 36 (Minerva Lake Road Master Plan)** and **37 (Village Pathway Master Plan)**. These studies were largely completed and have been overtaken by LinkUS/COTA corridor planning. About **\$70,000 in appropriated but unspent funds** would revert to the capital line.
 - **New Task Order Proposal:** He introduced **Task Order 41**, estimated at **\$100,000**, to do a comprehensive feasibility, right-of-way, and topographic survey for a **five-foot sidewalk/path** along Minerva Lake Road from Cleveland Avenue to Farview Road. This would focus strictly on the pedestrian facility without road widening. Actual costs could rise or fall depending on how much survey and design work Council authorizes.
 - **Council Discussion:**
 - Koss asked why the estimate was so high compared with past engineering fees.
 - Pinter suggested the Village issue a **Request for Qualifications (RFQ)** to multiple firms instead of defaulting to Jacobs, to ensure competitive pricing.
 - Martin and Grant said they want “shovel-ready” plans so the Village can apply for reimbursement and future rounds of LinkUS funding.
 - **Funding Deadlines:** Staff emphasized that LinkUS sales-tax dollars and some state funds are **reimbursable only after Village expenditures** and must be spent by **mid-2026**. Deviating from the approved Minerva Lake Road corridor could weaken the project’s high regional-connectivity score and jeopardize eligibility.
 - **Technical Issues:** Members examined right-of-way widths, noting the **north side** generally offers more space but widths vary. They talked about potential **mid-block crosswalks**, tie-ins to **Jordan Road** and the **Greenline**, and impacts on mature trees. There was also discussion of **AEP utility poles**; Fischer explained burying them would cost several million dollars and would fall on the Village, making it infeasible at this time.
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2. Using the State Grant & Master Planning Strategy

- **Grant Overview:** The Village currently has a **\$250,000 state grant** earmarked for engineering and pathway planning. Council generally agreed to pivot from concrete sidewalks to **asphalt shared-use paths** because they are cheaper, easier to maintain, and less disruptive to residents.
 - **Comprehensive Design Approach:** Rather than designing one segment at a time, Council wants to **engineer the entire system up front**—Minerva Lake Road, Jordan Road, and connectors to the pool and the MI section—so costs, tree impacts, and easements are fully known.
 - **Procurement Strategy:** Council decided to split work between Jacobs and other firms or to issue an RFQ/RFP to maximize competition. They will **keep the total budget undisclosed** during bidding to encourage lower prices.
 - **Public Engagement:** Members called for **maps, flip charts, and public open houses** to show proposed phases and get resident feedback. They want a **phased master plan** clearly identifying which segments would be built first, to reduce surprises and encourage community buy-in.
 - **Other Funding:** Safe Routes to School and other grants could be layered on top of LinkUS to stretch dollars. Final determination of which side of Minerva Lake Road the path will occupy will be based on engineering results, not assumptions.
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3. Scheduling and Other Business

- **Meeting Schedule:** The next full Council meeting will be **Sept. 18**. The **Sept. 25** date conflicts with conditional-use hearings, so Council will decide later whether to hold a work session that evening.
- **Pool/Bathhouse Project:**
 - Staff presented a new **state grant opportunity of up to \$500,000** with a November deadline. It is a **1:1 matching grant** and can only be used for an **outdoor bathhouse**.
 - The pool rebuild is estimated at about **\$2 million**. Council discussed **phasing** construction and designing the bathhouse so it could later be **expanded or roughed-in for an event pavilion** without jeopardizing grant eligibility.
 - **RFP Responses:** Seven firms submitted proposals for bathhouse design. Several were eliminated for late or incomplete bids or unaffordable fees. Staff recommended **Branstetter Carroll, Inc.** because of its deep experience in municipal pool projects and ability to handle design, bid documents, and construction oversight.
 - Council plans to review all proposals, may hold **interviews on Sept. 16**, and expects to vote on selection at the **Sept. 18 meeting**. President Camara

reminded members not to contact bidders directly to preserve the procurement's integrity.

- **Community Concerns:**

- Residents sent mixed feedback on the Village's new speed controls; Police Chief Delp will follow up after bereavement leave.
 - Ongoing **water/sewer line breaks** and **driveway damage complaints** are awaiting responses from the Village engineer and contractor.
 - **Events:** Minerva Lake Road project remains on schedule. **Halloween trick-or-treat** is expected on **Oct. 30**, with formal approval at the Sept. 18 meeting.
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4. Overall Outcome

Council reached consensus to:

- Close out obsolete Jacobs task orders and redirect remaining funds.
- Use the \$250,000 state grant to create a full asphalt pathway engineering plan for Minerva Lake Road, Jordan Road, and key connectors.
- Prepare a public-friendly phased master plan to support future grants.
- Advance the pool/bathhouse project by evaluating RFP responses and applying for a new \$500,000 grant.
- Adjust the meeting schedule and confirm community event dates.