

Vermillion City Hall Constructed Heritage Notes 10-1-13

Vermillion City Hall number one was constructed beginning in the fall of 1884 on the corner of Main and Church Streets following a public vote on in May 1884 carried by a margin of 141 to 70. Bonds in the amount of \$7,500 with interest at 7% were approved to finance the building.

The basement was completed early in 1885, but an injunction against the project, which had been filed on November 13, 1884 by A.E. Lee and A.H. Lathrop tried to legally stop the bonds for the new building. This action stopped construction after the basement was done and a new election was held March 26, 1885.

Judge Palmer finally ruled in favor of the City by sustaining the bonds on July 2, 1885 so the construction could continue. City Hall number was completed in June 1886 and dedicated on July 4, 1886.

The building was a rectangular brick structure with a clock tower, but no clock, that served to house numerous pigeons and sparrows. It contained the city clerk's office, the council room and two store rooms on the first floor. There was a jail in the basement.

On the second floor was the stage and auditorium, with a gallery in the back. The auditorium floor was level with wooden chairs in gangs of seats and was often used for dances. The university cadets used the floor for competitive drills in the late 1890's. The large room on the first floor served at different times as a grade school room, a printing office, and a club room for firemen.

City Hall number one served its purpose for 22 years (1886-1908), and during that time graduation exercises, musical comedies, minstrel shows, dramas, and other attractions were presented within its walls.