

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
February 20, 2023
5:30 p.m.

Called to order by Mayor Peter Schwartzman at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call #1: Present: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Bradley Hix (via telephone), Wayne Dennis, Kevin Wallace, Dwight White, Jaclyn Smith-Esters, Sarah Davis, and Larry Cox, 8. Also Present: City Manager Gerald C. Smith, Interim City Attorney Paul Mangieri, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Semenya McCord gave the invocation.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from February 6, 2023.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA #2023-04

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion.

23-2009

Approve a supplemental funding MFT Resolution for Monmouth Boulevard in the amount of \$32,914.75.

23-2010

Approve Resolution 23-08 accepting a grant in the amount of \$400,000 from the Illinois Housing Development Authority Home Repair and Accessibility Program

23-2011

Approve Resolution 23-2011 to the Illinois Housing Development Authority regarding the Trust Fund Housing Repair Assistance Program Insurance Verification Requirement verifying the City's self-insurance status and ability to remedy claims in lieu of a third-party insurance provider.

23-3003

Approve the bid from Alta Equipment in the amount of \$192,327 for the purchase of a wheel loader for use by the Airport.

23-3004

Approve the bid from Tenco, Inc., with trade, in the amount of \$140,950 for the purchase of a loader mounted snowblower for use by the Airport.

23-3005

Approve the bid from Alta Equipment, with trade, in the amount of \$180,822 for the purchase of a wheel loader for use by the Park Department.

23-5000

Receive updated rate schedules for towing and storage services from Bolin's Towing & Repair, Berg's Towing, Bob's Towing, Inc., Winkler's Towing & Repair, A to Z Towing & Transport, and Galesburg Towing, LLC.

23-8003

Approve bills in the amount of \$936,836.97 and advance checks in the amount of \$310,263.75.

Council Member Wallace moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Consent Agenda 2023-04.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

23-1002

Ordinance on first reading authorizing the issuance of General Obligation Bonds, Series 2023 of the City of Galesburg, in the amount of \$5 million for the use of a community center.

Council Member Cox clarified that the legal opinion would be officially signed once the bonds are sold, as well as the fact that the bond proceeds can only be used for a community center. City Manager Smith noted that these were true statements and that if needed, the project could be expanded in order to spend the entirety of the \$5 million. He also noted that the scope of the project hasn't yet been determined in terms of the rehabilitation of specific rooms.

23-1003

Ordinance on first reading amending Section 113.043 (A) of Chapter 113 of the Galesburg Municipal Code regarding the limitation on the number of Class A-1 liquor licenses from twenty-six to twenty-seven.

23-1004

Ordinance on first reading amending Section 110.070 of Chapter 110 of the Galesburg Municipal Code regarding amending the billing cycle for false alarms to the calendar year.

23-2012

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Resolution 23-09 approving the donation of 372 Day Street for demolition.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-2013

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Resolution 23-10 celebrating Black History Month.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Schwartzman stated that he has had comments made regarding the tone of the meetings and comments made by the public and whether they constitute “city business.” He noted that he reached out to the Interim City Attorney and that a citizen’s right to speak at a public meeting or forum is protected by the First Amendment. The City cannot limit speech based on its content.

Carolyn Ginder addressed the Council and stated that she studied at Knox College and moved back to Galesburg in 2021. She loves Galesburg for its nature, wildlife, trees, animals, and the geese. She visits Lake Storey often and does not feel that it is in any way ruined by the geese, and feels that rounding up the birds and killing them is horrendous. She implored the Council not to spend tax dollars on this and to instead look at other reasons for possible poor water quality at the lake, including chemical run off at the golf course.

Sam Cohen addressed the Council regarding the last work session and the examples that were given to control the goose population. He noted that these animals are not potatoes and should not be rounded up and slaughtered or gassed and killed. He asked the Council to consider other options that are more humane, listen to other speakers, and find out the other reasons why the lake could be contaminated.

Robert Cain thanked the Council for their work and hoped that the comments on Facebook would stop. He also let them know that the burned building on Grand Avenue is an eyesore.

Samuel Carrington addressed the Council regarding the continued silence of Council Member Hix for his hateful and bigoted Twitter posts. Because he is a public official, he has a powerful voice and a platform in which he could be a catalyst for bullying. Carrington noted that one in five school children who were part of the LGBTQ community left or changed schools due to assault or bullying. He feels that Council Member Hix should be censured from all discussions on the City's current EEOC complaint. People could begin to heal if Council Member Hix apologized.

Bob Clark addressed the Council and stated that he moved here in 1999 and is grateful for many awards he has received while in Galesburg, which shows the respect and hospitality of our community. He believes that what a Council Member published was hurtful, hateful, and harmful. He added that we should love and honor all our neighbors.

Anthony Law thanked the Council for approving the Black History Month Resolution and challenged everyone to remember that this issue is bigger than the words on the paper and to live out what is written.

Pam Davidson addressed the Council and announced that she is the new NAACP president, which is one of the oldest and largest civil and human rights organizations. She is honored by the resolution and stands for the rights of African American and the LGBTQ communities. She hopes that everyone remembers those that came before us and that we are all American.

Andrew Jowers addressed the Council and stated that he recently attended a Black History Month event at Lombard Middle School, but was disappointed that event information wasn't sent out and communicated better. He commended the Council Members in favor of the bonds for a community center and understands that they are in the crosshairs when it comes to increasing a tax. He feels that we need to hear from the youth on a center, and also expressed his gladness with the work on the Hawthorne Pool coming to a conclusion.

Jowers also stated that even though the Black History Month Resolution was approved, there is still a lot of work to do. He thanked the Mayor and the Council Members who have the courage to try to retain their seats. He is sorry if in the past he has offended anyone, but wanted them to know that it was out of concern and not hatred or bitterness.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- A. February Traffic Advisory Committee Report received.
- B. It was announced that interim Public Works Director, Mark Rothert, will start at the City on Monday, February 27th. He is formerly from Pekin, IL, and will be working alongside Public Works Director Wayne Carl, who will be retiring in March. A permanent replacement for the position is on hold until the Compensation Study is complete.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

23-4015

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve a \$10,000 Minority and/or Woman Owned Business Startup Assistance Program and a \$25,000 Business Collateral Assistance Program incentive for Greenhouse & Decor, LLC. (963 East Main Street).

Ken Springer, KCAP, and owner Debbie Clague, addressed the Council and thanked them for their consideration.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4016

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve payment in the amount of \$26,000 for five new firefighters to attend IFSI Spring Academy.

Mayor Schwartzman noted that the Police Department currently has ten officers in training and that the Fire Department had the swearing in ceremony for these five firefighters a week ago. He thanked both Departments and the Fire & Police Commission.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4017

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to approve moving forward with the demolition process on the property located at 173 Garfield (residence and garage).

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4018

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve an engineering agreement with Klingner and Associates, P.C. in the amount of \$152,500, plus reimbursables, for a risk analysis and mapping study for the water transmission main from Oquawka to Galesburg.

Director Carl reported that the six miles chosen for the inspection is an area that has had issues in the past. Council Member Smith-Esters inquired about the cost if the entire pipeline was

completed, and it was stated that it would be approximately \$100 million. It was also noted that there is little to no indication of PFAS in the pipe.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4019

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Wallace, to approve a service contract between the City of Galesburg Transit and Knox College to provide students, faculty, and staff unlimited rides March 2023 through February 2024. Council Member Davis stated her appreciation for this service being provided to college students.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4020

Council Member Cox moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve a service contract between the City of Galesburg Transit and the Knox County Housing Authority to provide residents unlimited rides from June 2023 through June 2024. Derek Antoine, Knox County Housing Authority Executive Director, stated that they are providing a survey to their residents to assess the ridership and destinations.

Roll Call #11:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4021

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve an engineering services agreement in the amount of \$28,380 for improvements to the Carl Sandburg Drive storm sewer.

Roll Call #12:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member White, to sit as the Town Board. The motion carried.

TOWN BUSINESS

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member Hix thanked City Clerk Bennewitz for her assistance in letting him attend the meeting via telephone.

Council Member Dennis apologized for not being able to attend the firefighter swearing in ceremony.

Council Member Wallace thanked all who participated in the meeting and congratulated Pam Davidson on her appointment in the NAACP. He noted too that he had reached out to Chief Hovind regarding the train derailment in Ohio and the City's response should that happen here. He suggested that possibly in the future a town hall meeting be held to show the public the City's preparation.

Council Member Wallace stated that he lives Black History Month 24/7 and is proud of our community, those who stand up and have respect for others, and that our town is moving forward. He believes we need to practice what the Resolution stated, but in a civil manner. It is also his hope that the entire community gets involved with the plans for a new community center.

Council Member White stated that he is proud to be sitting as part of the Council as the third black alderman, but didn't run for office for the recognition. He noted that President Andrew McGadney is the first black president at Knox College and that City Manager Smith is the first black city manager for Galesburg -- all meaningful to him and the community. He is proud of everyone, but still believes there is a long way to go. He encouraged everyone to "love their neighbor" and to show empathy, love, and to learn from one another.

Council Member Smith-Esters stated that she is honored to sit next to Council Member White and that many people who are in the audience have helped others by letting them stand on their shoulders. She noted that her son is an empowered youth of color and sees no obstacles in his way. Council Member Smith-Esters congratulated Gauge Shipp on his perfect wrestling season for GHS and his State title, the first since the 60s. She also announced that the Polar Plunge will take place this Sunday, February 26th at Lake Storey. There will also be an All District Band Concert on Sunday, 2 p.m., in the Hegg Auditorium.

Council Member Davis thanked everyone in attendance for their courage to speak publicly. She understands there are a lot of controversial topics and information out there and that different views are needed, so they are taken into account as well. She feels it is an enormous privilege to sit as a City Council Member.

Council Member Davis also encouraged the public to go to the City's website and under the Knox County Emergency Management tab there is information on signing up for CodeRED. CodeRED is a high-speed emergency mass notification service that would be used in case of an emergency, similar to the train derailment in Ohio.

Council Member Cox encouraged Administration to continue looking into branding and marketing and recommended a meeting with Heart & Soul take place to assist. He also appreciates the Black History Month Resolution, but hopes in the future it is a proclamation so that it can be proclaimed each year, and not approved once.

Mayor Schwartzman also encouraged the public to sign up for CodeRED and to spread the word about the new system. He also congratulated Gauge Shipp on his remarkable wrestling season and added that he represented Galesburg well.

He thanked Pam Davidson and Anthony Law for challenging everyone to remember and act upon the Black History Month Resolution. He also invited the public to attend a great event commemorating Black History Month being held this Sunday, February 26th, 4-6 PM at the Hope Center (Knox College), formerly 2nd Baptist Church.

The Mayor reminded the public about the candidate forum that will be held on Wednesday, February 22nd, 7 p.m. at the Public Library. There are four Council seats that will be up for election in April. He noted that there will be a forum for School District candidates next Wednesday, March 1st, 7 p.m., at the Public Library.

There being no further business, Council Member Dennis, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Roll Call #13:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk