

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
July 17, 2023
6:00 p.m.

Called to order by Mayor Peter Schwartzman at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call #1: Present: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Bradley Hix, Wayne Dennis, Evan Miller, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, and Steve Cheesman, 7. Absent: Council member Sarah Davis, 1. Also Present: Interim City Manager Wayne Carl, Interim City Attorney Paul Mangieri, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Proclamation: Labor Day
Disability Pride Month
Ron Noble

Presentation: Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Audit Presentation by Michael Mallatt, Baker Tilly. The report was sent to Council in the weekly report and will be on the next agenda as a receive item.

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of an invocation.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from July 3, 2023.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, Acerra, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Abstain: Council Member White, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Hannah Larson and Sarah Warren addressed the Council and discussed the fact that sometimes it is difficult to get an order of protection and that the Rescue Mission takes everyone -- those recently out of jail or prison or people who have a record of sex crimes. There is also not a space to keep women, children and men separated. They would like to see the City assist in having a Christ-centered place for people that would offer counseling, education, and clothing. They also plan to talk to area churches about this idea.

Not only that, but they also proposed faith based events at local parks that would have wholesome movies, games, and a family environment.

Holly McDorman addressed the Council and is worried that some of the proposed names for the Community Center Task Force have connections to Council Members (e.g. friends and family members), which could make decisions and conversations lean one way.

Darla Krejci addressed the Council and noted that she has been nominated by the Mayor to be on the Community Center Task Force. She is surprised that there is no application or request for a resume; however, she brought hers for the Council's review. She noted her commitment to a community center and Galesburg, as well as her background in education, programming, and connections with non-profit organizations.

Linda Miller addressed the Council and stated that for two years she has listened to many people talk passionately about the future of a community center, attend countless meetings, look at proposed structures, and doesn't understand why some of these good people weren't recommended for the task force. She also believes there are many on the task force that have a conflict of interest.

Anthony Law addressed the Council and stated that the proclamation presented for Disability Pride Month was great but two individuals he knows, Mike Martinez and Nick McMahill, weren't able to attend because they weren't given notice and don't have their own transportation. He hopes that as a community, we can be more inclusive, show empathy, and if another proclamation is available in the future, provide public transportation if need be.

Maury Lyon addressed the Council regarding 905 Maple Street, the former Churchill building, and noted that he represented himself only. He stated that over the past five years, he has sat on the local school district school board, and during that time, there has been a shared interest in reviewing buildings and making sure the mistakes of former boards were not repeated in the form of leaving public eyesores around town. He noted the reuse of buildings such as Lincoln School, Gale School, and Nielsen School. They thought there was a plan for Churchill, but the Council has decided to go another way.

Mr. Lyon noted two things he's hopeful for on this property. Since this property has a very large lot, 13 acres, he hopes part of it remains a green space. He noted that you can't make more green space in a community and that once it's built upon, it's lost forever, or very difficult to reclaim. The second point he made was that whatever development plan is decided upon, he hopes it is one that has the resources to make it happen in a timely manner. Too many times, the school district has sold properties that have become eyesores, and he would hate to see that happen with 905 Maple Street.

Alex Galarza, new Men of Distinction president at Carl Sandburg College, addressed the Council. He is bothered that there are no youth on the Community Center Task Force and feels that they need more representation. He also stated that the City does not need to reinvent the wheel and noted that there is no need for another gym or swimming pool. Furthermore, he suggested

possibly investing in a STEM center to get kids started younger and encouraging them to get an education.

Jack Templeton addressed the Council about the former junior high school property. He stated that he has spoken to the Mayor and several members of the Council about the chance of planting a seed for the possible use as a trade school. He added that this project couldn't be done by the City alone, but could be done by multiple entities including District 205, Carl Sandburg, and possibly some regional schools such as Knoxville, ROWVA, Abingdon/Avon, and even Monmouth/Roseville. Possibilities include learning construction trades, engine mechanics, electrical motor repair, and possibly the culinary arts. He understands that it would take a big investment, and he doesn't think the City should absorb all the burden.

Molly Miller addressed the Council and stated that she still really likes Churchill as the idea for a community center and hopes it's not completely off the table. She hopes if Council sells the building, they agree upon an amount and that they are aware of what it's worth. There is a lot of acreage and hopes that the City doesn't sell the property for anything less than what it's worth. She stated that if that's the case, then the City might as well keep it and renovate it for a community center.

Gabriel Wynkoop addressed the Council and stated that he likes the many of the ideas about Churchill so far, the green space that it has, that's irreplaceable, and he likes the idea of a trade school. He is also in favor of the property being sold for what it's worth. He noted that one of the beauties of this school is what it has been used for in the past. He wants this space to be a place that is accessible to everyone and supported by classes where the teachers get to have a portion of the proceeds. His idea would also include a place that would be supported by memberships. There could also be sales of materials, supplies and consumables. People could sell what they made, so it could also be considered a business incubator. He can't imagine a community center being more community oriented than one that is meant for people to enlarge themselves and become better in whatever trade they would like to be in.

CONSENT AGENDA #2023-14

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

23-4063

Approve an after hours Disc Golf Nighttime Glow at Kiwanis Park on August 19 and 20, 2023.

23-4064

Approve a three-year agreement with iWorQ for software services in an annual amount of \$18,500.

23-4065

Approve an annual maintenance agreement with ProPhoenix Corporation for the Police Department in the amount of \$81,914.15.

23-8012

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,414,002.91 and advance checks in the amount of \$189,403.57.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Consent Agenda 2023-14.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS****23-3022**

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the bid submitted by Gunther Construction, a division of UCM, Inc., in the amount of \$635,425 81 (including a credit of \$19,000) for the reconstruction of Irwin Street from Grove Street to Losey Street.

Interim City Manager Wayne Carl stated that in order to avoid potential arbitrage on the bond funds, he will be proposing an ordinance at the next Council meeting to pay for this project with bond funds and reserve General Fund money that was to be used for this project for future bond projects. This would help the City avoid paying a penalty on the interest earned on the bond proceeds. He noted that the City needs to spend 10% of the proceeds in the first six months in order to avoid arbitrage.

Finance Director Gloria Osborn stated that she looks at arbitrage as a kind of bonus and not a penalty. It's a bonus that you get to keep the interest that you earned and use it for your projects. However, if you don't use it on projects in a timely manner, then the government will take that money and use it elsewhere.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-3023

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the bid submitted by Gunther Construction, a division of UCM, Inc., in the amount of \$72,416.38 for the widening and resurfacing of a section of the Lake Storey multi-use path.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-3024

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the bid submitted by Quick Electrical Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$48,160 for the installation of fiber optic cable at various locations.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-3025

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the bid submitted by Johnson Trucking & Blacktopping in the amount of \$22,255.91 for sealing parking lot O, F, B, Voyles West, and the Lake Storey Pavilion.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-3026

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to reject the bid for 905 Maple Avenue.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Council Member White asked about the agenda packet and noted that sometimes the packets are ~400 pages, and he encourages citizens to read the packet so that they have an understanding of what is going on in the community. He noted that it would be difficult to read a 400-page packet that came out on Friday and be prepared to speak on it Monday. He would like to request that the release be moved to an earlier date for the citizens.

Council Member White left the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Mayor Schwartzman asked about an opening date for Hawthorne Pool. Parks & Recreation Director Elizabeth Varner stated that some repairs are still being made, as well as the cleaning and filling of the pool. She hopes to have it open by mid-August.

Council Member White returned to the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

23-4066

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the proposal submitted by Farnsworth Group in the amount of \$37,000 for architectural and engineering services for the Lancaster Park renovation project. The project is set to start next spring and be complete by October 2024.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4067

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the purchase of a 2023 Ford F550 cab/chassis in the amount of \$57,762 for the Traffic Division.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4068

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve a purchase agreement and lease with Solential Energy for a Distributed Generation, also known as “behind the meter” photovoltaic system, to supply power to the West Main Street Pumping Station.

Roll Call #11:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-6004

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the following appointments to a Community Center Task Force:

Mayoral Appointment - Darla Krejci

Ward 1 - Anthony Law III and David Hix

Ward 2 - Cassie Cirimotich and Connie Dennis

Ward 3 - Steve Albert and John Polillo

Ward 4 - Pastor Antonio Franklin Sr. and Del Tolliver
Ward 5 - Maria Salsman and Ted Hoffman
Ward 6 - Jaclyn Smith-Esters and Carl Dortch
Ward 7 - Adam Sampson and Graef Mulata

Council Member White stated that he chose Pastor Antonio Franklin for his extensive credentials and past employment with the University of Illinois Extension office and Knox College. Ms. Tolliver was chosen as a long-time Galesburg resident who also has a son who is well liked and a great basketball player from our community. He noted that both appointees are African American as well.

Council Member White also expressed his concern over some of the individuals on the task Force, some of whom spoke out against a community center. In his opinion, he has watched several people stonewall, slow down, and do everything they could to not let a community center happen. He found out that some of the Council Members don't want to spend any money on a center and understands that this will be an uphill battle. He stated that he heard people speak tonight about wanting to use Churchill and reiterated that if people in his Ward let him know that they didn't want Churchill, that's the way he would vote because he's a representative of the people in his Ward. His hope is that Council Members express why each chose their representatives, and be upfront about it, so citizens will know why they chose the people and what they're going to bring to the table.

Council Member Cheesman stated that he chose Adam Sampson, who in his opinion, has more knowledge and experience about the kinds of activities that the City would deal with here than anybody in our community. He also chose Graef Mulata, a young person who is also a minority. He believes he cares about this community as much as anyone, and has been an interpreter in court, church, and for other Congolese families.

He added that he represents the 7th Ward, but also represents every person in the room and in every Ward in our community. His Ward has said overwhelmingly that they felt like Churchill was a bad decision for a variety of reasons. He stated that with the Churchill building being defeated brings an opportunity for citizens to come together to try to figure out what we can do to have a community center that everyone could feel proud of and would offer the amenities, services, and opportunities needed. It would also be his hope that this can be done within a specific amount of resources, and where services that other nonprofits offer are not replicated. He firmly believes that this is going to happen a lot sooner than later, and that plans from this particular group or recommendations will be brought forward to the City Council soon. He hopes that his constituents have faith that he was elected from their Ward and that they can tell him what it is that they feel and that he will take those views and bring them forward to his fellow Council Members and colleagues.

Council Member Acerra stated that she was excited to hear enthusiasm for maker spaces and STEM labs, reaching out to kids much younger, which is near and dear to her heart. She firmly believes that so many of the problems seen in society today are because people just don't get their heads out of their phones and kids today are only about their screens and flat surfaces.

She also stated that she is aware that the library has plans to put some maker type spaces in their new building, although she doesn't see why we couldn't have one in a different facility. Likewise, she noted that she is involved with Peoria Bicycle Co-Op, which is an amazing organization in downtown Peoria. People can donate bikes there and the man who runs it fixes up the bikes and teaches young people to do the same. These young people leave with a sense of confidence, gained some skills, and they have pride for the bicycle that they've just put together.

She stated that she is pleased with her two nominations and stated that she was keeping in mind that they were to try to find individuals who represent different professions. She stated that Maria Salsman has been a math teacher for many years, which is something that she feels as a society we are failing in teaching to our kids, and she also has a lot of young members in her family. Ms. Salsman is very familiar with what the current situation is with sports facilities, as well as after school opportunities, and she also volunteers her time with kids. She stated that Ted Hoffman has a long history with the City, as well as knowledge of how it operates having been in leadership positions. She admires that he is a volunteer in our community, involved with churches, a Lions Club member, continues to be involved with outreach and helping kids get bags together for school, volunteers to help with homelessness, and food drives. Council Member Acerra stated she feels very confident that we can go forward with a really positive vision if we work together and everybody approaches each other with an open mind and listens to one another.

Council Member Dennis stated that he had a gentleman who was from Chicago move to Oak run who was interested in being on the Task Force. However, he was under the impression that since he wasn't in his Ward, he needed to find someone else. He is nominating Connie Dennis, no relation, whose husband was a Galesburg police officer, and has attended many Council meetings. His other nominee, Cassie Cirmotich, is the vice president of Bridgeway.

The Mayor thanked everyone for the unanimous vote and stated that Elizabeth Varner will be reaching out to the 15 members.

Roll Call #12:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

23-9015

Trustee Dennis moved, seconded by Trustee Acerra, to approve Town bills and warrants to be drawn in payment of same.

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$7,449.37
General Assistance Fund	\$6,540.71
IMRF Fund	\$1,387.02
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$2,442.08
Liability Fund	\$243.74
Audit Fund	
Total	\$18,062.92

Roll Call #13:

Ayes: Trustees Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Trustee Miller moved, seconded by Trustee Dennis, to resume as the City Council. The motion carried.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White commented that the first person who came to mind regarding the Disability Pride Month proclamation was a gentleman named Big Mike Martinez. He stated that he was sorry he didn't notice the proclamation earlier because he would have picked him up so he could have attended. He further stated that he has seen this young man at every Sandburg game, whether it be men's, women's, or in sleet or snow. He is now graduating from Knox College, and he takes his hat off to him.

Council Member White stated that he was glad to hear Mr. Templeton's ideas for Churchill and believes those are the things that people wouldn't be able to provide any place else. He, too, remembers making things with his hands in shop classes at Churchill. He noted that he will always be for the Churchill building and doesn't think the City could build another facility that could have those things in it. He hopes that Churchill ends up being the place for a community center.

Council Member Acerra also wanted to echo her disappointment that we didn't have representation of our disabled community here, which is something that she feels very strongly about. Her background is human resources and has always been concerned about this population and has dealt with situations during her career. She noted that she has a friend from Knox who has a disease which is causing him to lose his sight and hearing at the same time. Unfortunately, he also encountered issues in his employment. She spent an evening with him going through all different resources and told him he needed to get in front of the human resources professionals, and he is now working with disability awareness groups, through his own personal story, and is able to share his struggles. If you're an employer, she recommends really going out of your way to learn about disabled individuals because they're great people and would be so grateful if you take the time to help them become excellent workers.

Council Member Cheesman apologized to Mr. Martinez and all citizens that are in a situation where they face those challenges about the proclamation. He has known Michael since he was a student of his and he and like so many others are inspirations to us all. He also noted how much he loves Galesburg and all the great things that we have going for us here, with the biggest being all the people that come from all walks of life and have different views. He added that normally he is always positive but that there are two things that he wanted to issue challenges on. The first one is in the areas of aesthetics, cleanliness, taking care of your property, and littering. He hopes that even though most of us don't partake in that, that we take note of it and use whatever kinds of means we can to try to solve this problem. It matters in terms of our psyche, quality of life, and a pride factor, and right now, he feels it's a bit out of control in terms of people throwing things out their car windows and throwing things along the ground.

Council Member Cheesman noted that the second item is that the City is having a lot of issues with people breaking into cars and vandalism. He thinks it's incumbent on all of us to be vigilant and observant, call the police when necessary, and that our legal system should prosecute to the fullest extent of the law. Our citizens deserve to be safe, and we have to do everything we can, with all of us coming together in whatever means possible, to ensure that our community and property is safe, and not tolerate in any way shape or form those people that want to cause issues with it.

Council Member Hix mentioned that Michael Martinez was at a City Council meeting in 2018, promoting a positive message, but had to speak from his wheelchair at the back of the room. While he stated he's not an engineer or an architect, he wondered if the City could look at solving that problem. He also thanked Aaron Gavin, who he has gotten to know better since he's been the Interim Public Works Director. Gavin is working with the Airport Commission, which he serves on, and has done an excellent job keeping them on track.

Council Member Miller thanked the City Clerk for arranging a walkthrough of the new Library and noted that it's going to be a great facility for all the people of Galesburg and surrounding towns. He also reported that he received a call from someone in his Ward who had two cars that were shot up on South Street. He wanted the public to know that the City is not going to tolerate this and that we are going to fight crime one way or another.

Mayor Schwartzman echoed the comments about the vandalism that has been cropping up, even on City property, and encouraged people to report anything they see. He noted that people can do so anonymously. He added that there's some additional graffiti that's showing up in places, and we need to put a stop to that. He asked that if you see graffiti, take a photograph of it, send it in and tell us where it was. On a very positive note, he reported that Scooter's Coffee opened today on North Henderson Street.

He also stated that Joe Hicks has started a new project called the Galesburg Revival Society. People can get online and check out what that's about and noted that he has written quite a few in depth pieces about Galesburg and how Galesburg could move forward. He thinks this is a really admirable project that he's involved with and wanted to give the public notice.

The Mayor stated that Bunker Links is setting records every month. He was out there last week and noted many young people from all over the country participating in a PGA junior event. It was fabulous to see, even the parents in tow, carrying the bags for some of the younger children. He also reported that the solar array that's going in at our water treatment plant is going to be a fantastic opportunity. He noted that the savings numbers were even shocking to him, 4.2 cents a kilowatt-hour for the next 25 years, which is unheard of in his opinion. Electricity rates are going to go up, but this rate is fixed. He added that the company is also leasing the land from the City.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that he is happy to see everybody at the meeting and feels that the tone of the Council has shifted. There were growing pains, but he feels they've gotten past that and are much more hospitable, calmer, and working together on some amazing projects and ideas for the community. He hopes the ideas that were brought up tonight circulate and percolate within the Council and believes there are opportunities to do all of those things. He stated that we have tremendous assets in our City, and we are seeing things change in very, very radical ways. We now don't have a hideous obstacle on our downtown square, just a block away from that is a \$20 million library, which is going to open early next year, a tremendous facility particularly for a city the size of ours. He noted that on the other side of Main Street, we have the Civic Art Center, who is completely refurbishing a three-storey historic building, a \$4 million project. As Mayor, he sees some really amazing opportunities coming forward in the next year or two, some of which are inevitable. He thinks some of them are going to require additional effort and work and the City will be combing through the audit. He stated that those are really powerful numbers, especially the surpluses of nearly \$6 million for our City last year. He noted that this is not all coming from the state government and that a lot of it is coming because people are attracted to Galesburg and are spending their money in the community, whether they're going to the golf course, the Orpheum, or Discovery Depot, all of which are assets. He believes we need to look at those numbers carefully and when we have those surpluses, don't spend them wildly, but spend them and invest them in ways that will benefit us all. He feels that the City is in a very good place and that we have a diverse Council in terms of thinking.

There being no further business, Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:54 p.m.

Roll Call #14:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Mayor Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk