

5:50 p.m. Public Hearing: City of Galesburg FY 2024 Budget

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
November 20, 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, Sarah Davis, and Steve Cheesman, 8. Also Present: Interim City Manager John Schlaf, City Attorney Jason Jording, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Semenya McCord gave the invocation.

Proclamation: Leland Chandler

Youth Commission Report - Mia Haneghan

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from November 6, 2023, meeting.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Spinks, Skate Palace and All Sports Academy, addressed the Council and stated that he recently heard a parent say that kids are not coming to the Skate Palace due to safety concerns. He wanted to clarify that his location is completely safe and doesn't just offer skating, but also mini-golf, batting cages, and go karts. He knows that a community center has been a big topic in the community, and they want to change the narrative of their location and be part of the solution.

Dave Selkirk, Golf Commission Chairman, announced that Bunker Links is offering Tribute Bricks for sale for their walkway leading up to the Golf Shop. Bricks are \$100 each and can have up to three lines of text. Flyers will be available at City Hall for more information.

Joe Hicks addressed the Council in support of the resolution for the downtown residential fire sprinkler grants and feels that it will hopefully spur further interest and productive development in the downtown area.

Thomas Lytle addressed the Council and stated that he was ecstatic about the reopening of the skating rink. He has a young daughter who visits there several times a week, and he feels it is good exercise and allows her to socialize. He hopes the City can assist Mike Spinks in keeping it open so that he can give back to the community in return.

Yuchen Wang addressed the Council and reported that he was an intern for Tri States Public Radio and will begin writing part-time for the news outlet in the new year. He invited any of the Council Members to contact him if they have a story to tell and is looking forward to working with and talking to each member.

Pamela Bernand addressed the Council and stated that she has two kids who are homeschooled, one of which is autistic. She noted that Skate Palace is a family friendly place, not a babysitting service, and hopes that families take advantage of spending time together there. The skate rink helps kids excel where they struggle and feels that they are kept safe while there. It is a positive in Galesburg and one of the last good places left in our community.

Laura Lester addressed the Council and stated that Skate Palace is the only place for kids to go right now and that parents should feel comfortable letting their children go there and feel safe. She hopes the City donates funding to Mike Spinks so he can remain open.

Wayne Miles addressed the Council regarding the proposed relocation of holes and tees at Bunker Links next year. He understands that this will cost a lot of money and hopes that the Council Members talk to golfers and see if it is what they want for the course. He believes the City's money would be better spent on draining issues and cart paths instead.

Emily Bernand addressed the Council and stated that she works at Skate Palace and that when she was pregnant, Mike Spinks was the only person who would hire her. She assured everyone that it is a safe place for kids of all ages and families. She hoped that the City would help pay to have the floor fixed.

Council Member Dennis asked about the floor and Mike Spinks stated that it would cost approximately \$60,000 to have the asphalt floor fixed.

Darla Krejci addressed the Council and presented a check in the amount of \$5,705.80 to the City of Galesburg as part of her partnership on the Haunted Trail at Lakeside. She noted that this is the seventh year for the partnership and that volunteers also help cut and maintain the trails for the Nature Center. Despite having to cancel two nights this year due to weather, they still had 1,064 people attend the Haunted Trail. Over the seven years, they have contributed \$40,582.40 to the City of Galesburg, and that isn't counting the economic and tourism impact.

Bill Sime addressed the Council regarding the 2024 budget for Parks & Recreation and the Forestry Division. He feels that not enough has been budgeted to allow for the maintenance of several of the new parks, such as HT Custer and Lancaster, as well as the maintenance of the trees for the Project 350.

Nieko Morrow addressed the Council and stated that he has a great time at Skate Palace and feels safe. He enjoys skating, putt-putt golf, go karts, and their lock-ins.

Gabriel Wynkoop addressed the Council regarding a community center but also stated that he has been enjoying a podcast called *Hidden Brain*. He feels that doing good things in a community and for people provides an attitude of happiness and fulfillment. We have it great in the United States and we need to learn to recognize and appreciate that. He also stated that people are satisfied with experiences and not just purchased items. He added that he feels a community center needs to be adapted to the City's needs.

CONSENT AGENDA #2023-22

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

23-3036

Approve the use of the 2023-2024 State of Illinois bid for bulk rock salt in the amount of \$96.05 per ton from Compass Minerals America, Inc.

23-4116

Approve annual Springbrook Maintenance Fees in the amount of \$84,823.33 for 2024.

23-8021

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,360,297.89 and advance checks in the amount of \$1,107,142.50.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Consent Agenda 2023-22.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

23-1029

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Special Ordinance 23-620 on final reading amending Special Service Area Number One to extend the \$1.50 levy an additional ten years.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-1030

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Special Ordinance 23-621 on final reading approving the 2023 Property Tax Levy in the amount of \$10,088,040, which is an increase of 3.92 percent compared to the 2022 tax levy extension.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-1031

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Special Ordinance 23-622 on final reading approving the 2023 levy for the Special Service Area #1 (Downtown Area) in the amount of \$188,088.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-1032

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Ordinance 23-3716 on final reading dissolving the Tax Increment Financing Fund and Redevelopment Project Area 3 (Regency TIF 3).

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-1033

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve Ordinance 23-3717 on final reading adopting the 2021 editions of the International Building code, the International Residential Code, the International Mechanical Code, the International Fuel Gas Code, the International Existing Building Code, the International Fire Code and the 2020 edition of the National Electric Code.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-1034

Ordinance on first reading authorizing execution of an Option Agreement for sale of the property at 465 Mulberry Street and the vacant lot formerly known as 473 Mulberry Street.

Council Member White asked for an explanation for the cost of the \$1 option to purchase the property and what it represents. Community Development Director Steve Gugliotta and City Attorney James Kelly stated that it holds the property and provides for the consideration to have a bargaining agreement should they decide to purchase the property.

23-2061

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve Resolution 23-55 authorizing the purchase of 1409 East Main Street, 58 North Pearl Street, and 203 Lake Street from the Knox County Trustee in the amount of \$813.00.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-2062

Council Member Hix moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve Resolution 23-56 approving the Downtown Residential Fire Sprinkler Grant Program. It was noted that this program will hopefully spur development downtown and remove some barriers.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-2063

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve Resolution 23-57 authorizing the City of Galesburg to opt in to the PFAS settlement against Dupont and 3M.

Roll Call #11:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Traffic Advisory Committee Report for November 2023

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

23-4117

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve a non-binding site control letter regarding Lot 2 of the Greenspace Subdivision located at 905 Maple Avenue.

Eric Lintvedt, Vice President for Bywater, joined the meeting by telephone. Council Member White clarified that the City will still own the building until March 2025. If Bywater is not able to move forward with this project, this agreement is non-binding and the City will be able to put the building up for sale again.

Mr. Lintvedt reported that Bywater Development Group is proposing an adaptive reuse, by converting the former school into apartments for active seniors aged 55 and above. They have done similar projects over the past 10 years in other communities. The project is estimated to be just over \$17M, much of which will rely on them obtaining Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). These credits require an application process to the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), and it is a very competitive process. Step one in the LIHTC application process is to submit a PPA to IHDA by December 8th, which requires a letter of support to be submitted by the City.

It is anticipated that IHDA would notify applicants if they were approved or denied by February 2024; however, this does not guarantee an allocation of tax credits at that point but does provide for the project to move on to the next step. The next step would be the submission of a Final IHDA application by March 2024. This would require an Option to Purchase be executed between the City and Bywater with IHDA announcing successful applicants by July 2024. If approved, it is anticipated that a closing date to sell the property would be in March 2025.

Roll Call #12:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4118

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a three-year funding agreement with Hope Cemetery in the amount of \$10,000 each year.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Hix, to amend the agreement to ten-years in the amount of \$10,000 each year.

Roll Call #13:

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

Nays: Council Members White and Cheesman, 2.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member White stated that he is supportive of the agreement with Hope Cemetery but that he also has many entities in his ward that would also benefit from City funding and would like to expand, such as Discovery Depot Children's Museum and The Orpheum Theatre. He was acceptable to the three-year contract but not the ten-year amendment.

Council Member Cheesman also stated that he fully supports the cemetery and wants to protect the community's history but that he would have preferred a three-year contract that could have been re-evaluated before any renewal. However, he will vote for the motion as amended.

Roll Call #14:

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

Nays: Council Member White, 1.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4119

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the purchase of five license plate recognition (LPR) cameras in the amount of \$19,750.

Several Council Members asked about privacy and security with the information that would be gathered by the cameras. Chief Idle reiterated that data from vehicles not identified as being used in criminal activity is not accessed and that it automatically deletes by default every 30 days on a rolling basis and is encrypted. There is a maintenance fee of \$3,000 per camera each year.

Council Member White asked for a point of order and asked what Council Member Hix passed to Legal Counsel. Council Member Hix stated that he was asking Legal if there were constitutional issues with having access with this data. It was noted that the data would only be accessed if it were flagged as being a vehicle involved in a crime, which would lead to reasonable suspicion. There would be no reason to check license plates, although that is done by officers on a routine basis.

Council Member White stated that he is not happy with surveillance and infringing on a citizen's right to privacy in this way is a slippery slope. He understands that there are good intentions but that there are nefarious people who could have access to the information. He will be voting no until he is able to talk to his constituents and hopes that his colleagues do the same.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to refer agenda item 23-4119 to the December 4, 2023, Council Meeting.

Roll Call #15:

Ayes: Council Members Dennis, Miller, White, Davis, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: Council Members Hix and Acerra, 2.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4120

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve the settlement agreement for Jeaniece Davidson v. Gabriel Trulson in the amount of \$23,000.

Roll Call #16:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

23-9023

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$8,048.40
General Assistance Fund	\$6,935.95
IMRF Fund	398.22
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$15,382.57

Roll Call #17:

Ayes: Trustees Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-9024

Trustee Acerra moved, seconded by Trustee Davis, to approve Resolution 23-01 determining the 2023 Property Tax Levy, which is not more than 105 percent and therefore will not require a truth in taxation public hearing. The tax levy request will not exceed \$531,000.

Roll Call #18:

Ayes: Trustees Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Trustee Acerra moved, seconded by Trustee Davis, to resume as the City Council. The motion carried.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White stated that at the last meeting there was a discussion about a person's integrity and that he could have handled it better. He read a definition of the word integrity, which is the cornerstone of someone's character. He made an apology if he offended anyone. Interim City Manager John Schlaf accepted and appreciated the apology.

Council Member White also stated that he has known Leland Chandler for many years and still finds it incredibly difficult to believe he was a POW for three years, something no one has ever experienced. He also thanked Nieko Morrow for speaking up and addressing the City Council. He again noted that he did not vote against Hope Cemetery but simply does not agree with a ten-year agreement. He also thanked the other Council Members for agreeing to table the License Plate Reader agenda item and restated that he takes privacy issues seriously.

Council Member Acerra stated that the Council took great steps to grow our community today by approving the Bywater agreement and the Residential Fire Sprinkler Grant program for downtown. She also noted the upcoming Housing Study as well. She wished all the citizens a happy Thanksgiving.

Council Member Davis acknowledged that there were still questions regarding the license plate readers and agreed with some of the issues in question. She thanked Chief Idle for his information on their policy for addressing the concerns. She also thanked those in attendance for taking time out of their evening to be active in their community. She also wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Council Member Cheesman stated that he has considered and reflected on how grateful we all are for living in America and the City. We have a great staff and employees who take pride in their work and in their civic duty. He added that he has deep respect for everyone and hopes that we can move forward together and that in spite of the differences, no one should be an enemy. He appreciates his fellow Council colleagues and hopes they are all inspired to serve others too.

He noted that today at the Chamber of Commerce's annual Thanksgiving Luncheon, Kraig Boynton, City Transit Manager, received the Thomas B. Herring Community Service Award. Kraig epitomizes this award and always goes beyond the call of duty to make Galesburg a better place.

Council Member Hix thanked John Schlaf for his service to the City and added that he has been great to work with on issues. He also thanked all City staff and added his appreciation for all the work they do. Council Member Hix added that information on the bricks for Bunker Links is a great project and thanked Dave Selkirk and the Golf Commission. He also thanked Bryan Luetdke and his staff for the great season.

Council Member Dennis also thanked John Schlaf for his assistance over the last couple of months. He also wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Council Member Miller wished everyone a great holiday and safe travels. He also thanked staff for their help with issues on Pine Street and appreciates Mr. Schlaf and Chief Idle's help on working to get them resolved.

Mayor Schwartzman thanked John Schlaf for his service and for stepping up when the community and City needed his help. He reported that on November 10th there was a ceremony at Walmart, assisted by Linda Howarter, to celebrate the veteran's in our community. It was a privilege for him to be there.

The Mayor also noted that he was at the Chamber's Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon today and delivered his "State of the City" address to 200 people in attendance. He also posted his speech on his Facebook page, website, and sent it to City employees. There was great news to share for 2023 and thanked the City staff for their part in the success since they are responsible for many of those achievements.

Mayor Schwartzman congratulated Kraig Boynton, Transit Manager, for being chosen for the Thomas B. Herring Community Service Award. He noted that this is not the first time a City employee has received this honor.

He also reminded the community that the Christmas Parade will take place on December 3rd at 4:30 p.m. He hopes everyone can attend this festive occasion and he wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

There being no further business, Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Roll Call #19:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Mayor Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk