

5:00 p.m. Public Hearing: DCEO Housing Rehabilitation Grant Application

5:30 p.m. Public Hearing: HUD DCEO Lead Remediation Grants Conclusion

5:50 p.m. Public Hearing: FY 2024 Township Budget

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
December 4, 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.

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 November 20, 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

Mayor Schwartzman reminded citizens that they are limited to three minutes and to be respectful in their comments.

Rob Benedict addressed the Council and stated that he hopes the Council considers his interest in redeveloping the Mulberry Street parcels and explained that he would be looking at possible lodging as a use for the building. As owner of The Vault, he knows that people are interested in destination lodging, especially downtown. As the developer, he will expend time and resources completing due diligence and planning associated with the project. He is requesting that the City grant him a six-month option to purchase the property. He also plans to provide 50% of the cost for an appraisal.

Erin Glasnovich, Executive Director for The Orpheum Theatre, addressed the Council and stated the many reasons why the Theatre has a positive impact on the community in terms of its quality of life, entertainment options, civic engagement, tourism, programming, and is truly a local gem. The Orpheum is 107 years old, and they appreciate the many years of partnership with the City through difficult times with funding and grant support. She hopes to continue the renewed communication with quarterly reporting to the City as well, and hopes that the Council recognizes the Theatre's value to the community and continues to provide support.

Karen Cates addressed the Council and stated that she is on the Orpheum's board of directors. She stated that small theaters were hit hard during COVID and had to change their offerings and that the Orpheum has since begun a revitalization with new board members, new programming and offerings, and are looking forward to an exciting future. She appreciates the City's support and is eager to enhance their role in the community.

Cianja Bone thanked the City for their investment in the theatre and its future, which shows that the City Council cares and values it. It is a true jewel of the City and they are working hard to keep it alive with programming opportunities such as free movies, events, etc. She works at the Theatre and enjoys hearing the stories and memories from people over the last 70 years.

Mike Spinks, Skate Palace, addressed the Council and gave pictures of the rink floor to City Clerk Bennewitz to distribute to the Council showing a crack. He also read a review from Google from a patron that complained the floor needed to be repaired badly and that glue from tape was getting on the wheels of the skates and causing problems. He stated that he doesn't know what to do since he has talked to Council Members and made a request for help three times. In light of the Community Center Task Force report, he is hoping to brainstorm with Adam Sampson and is looking forward to working with the Discovery Depot too. He feels strongly that his location already serves as a community center and that the kids of our community deserve the support just as they do.

Chase addressed the Council stating that he has good memories at Skate Palace and it is hard for him to see Mike Spinks struggling. Phyllis Graham, Mike Spinks' mother, also stated that she is proud of her son who spends endless hours at the skating rink and mentors the kids. She grew up in Galesburg and recently moved back. She hears from her granddaughters that there is nothing to do in Galesburg, but now Skate Palace is back. She asked the City Council and citizens for their support and to realize that it is expensive to run this business and that they need a new floor.

Council Member Dennis stated that he visited Skate Palace and is attempting to get a price for Mr. Spinks to put an epoxy layer on the floor.

Lucy addressed the Council and added that she has had many fun times at the skating rink playing games and attending lock-ins. She doesn't want it to close and hopes everyone comes out to have a fun time.

Jerry Ryberg addressed the Council and stated that without the Mayor and a couple of Council Members, Galesburg would have no hope of democracy or good government. He mentioned an email that the Mayor sent out over the weekend and noted more than \$2.5 million that was taken for roads. He also reported that the Discovery Depot is only open 29 ½ hours a week and is pricey at \$11 per visit or \$160 for a membership. Over three years, the museum was given \$200,000, and now they are taking away money from The Orpheum Theatre.

Matthew Smith addressed the Council regarding a recent article by Judith Crown for *Crain's Magazine* regarding Chicago's post-pandemic problems, including low attendance, which are national problems as well. Downstate theaters are mostly non-profits and have seen skyrocketing costs with productions and utilities. There has also been a pivot in the philanthropy sector for social justice causes and away from the arts. He stated that as a community, the Orpheum is thriving despite adversity and noted the over 1,000 patrons who attended the Choral Dynamics shows over the weekend. He has been a volunteer at the theatre since 2010, and hopes that Council Members take the time to visit and understand the programming and the immediate impact of their decisions. He reported on several people he has met who were fortunate enough to visit the Orpheum over the last year. If funding is cut by \$30,000 it could mean missing out on a great act, threat to no or low cost programming, or all or most of the salary of one of four employees.

Bill Sime addressed the Council to make comments on the proposal from the Community Center Task Force. The first recommendation and the amount proposed for the library building is listed at \$1.5 million but the Farnsworth Group's report stated an amount of \$4.9 million. He wondered if the needed work to bring it up to code was included as it is unclear in the proposal. If the amount owed the City for the HVAC is forgiven, it is unclear to him how that would impact the cost of any upgrades. There is also a \$250,000 annual expense noted that he assumes is for operations, but it is unclear and asked that more details be provided. He stated that there is also no provision for staffing included in the proposal.

The second recommendation, the teen center would run a program at no cost to participants and asked if this would also include the senior lounge as well. Mr. Sime also noted that after talking to Task Force members, he was under the impression that participants had to be YMCA members or provide income information for a scholarship. He recommended that this be clarified as well and doesn't believe the City should be investing in programs that would require a membership or supply this information.

Pam Davidson addressed the Council and stated that her mother just turned 100 years old and if she attended events at the 107-year-old Orpheum Theatre as a kid she would not have been allowed to sit in the front row, only the balcony. She also reported to the Council that she attended the last Community Center Task Force meeting and thanked all those who volunteered their time to serve. However, she was truly appalled by the actions that night and was dismayed to not see the report from Pastor Antonio Franklin on the agenda tonight. It had all the options in it but was taken off the agenda at the Task Force meeting and something else was put in its place. As a taxpayer, she doesn't want her money to go to a private industry such as the YMCA and feels that the report on the agenda tonight is not very clear on how the money

would be spent. If tax dollars are used, the jobs should be City union employees and that everyone should be allowed to attend at no cost. She reminded everyone that the City already owns a pool and gym.

Robert Thompson addressed the Council and stated that he is a professor of theater and that everyone has listened to the arguments tonight in order to make decisions. In a community, the body of a community is important, as well as the mind. People need empathy, compassion, awareness, all traits that are learned from the heart. He noted how the Council Members are smart and that he was fired from Carl Sandburg College, where he couldn't give away theater scholarships, and stated that people should earn their way to college.

Linda Miller addressed the Council and stated that there are many in the community who want a community center but were not asked to be on the Task Force or for their ideas but has her own thoughts on why several of them were excluded. She would like to see a community center in Galesburg, but it should in no way involve the YMCA or any other private, for profit or nonprofit organization. She encouraged the City Council to purchase Cedar Creek Hall, which is for sale and listed at \$580,000 and can accommodate up to 350 people. Ms. Miller distributed copies of information for the building, which included information on the purchase within the soft cap of \$2.5 million and leaves the rest of the funding, approximately \$1.92 million, for staging a community center, building a metal building to serve as a future gym or multipurpose use, and to purchase two vans to be used exclusively for a community center. A community center would fall under the Parks & Recreation Department and they would hire a director, similar to the other City divisions. Moving forward with a community center fulfills one of the City's missions. Giving the YMCA \$800,000 and ongoing funding is not in the true spirit of a community center.

Amanda Larson addressed the Council and thanked them again for her recent grant and added that her business is going very well. She feels that Michael Spinks needs support and also noted that our kids are the most important thing to invest in as the future of our community. The more we invest in them now, the better off our City will be. She understands the soft cap that was put on the Task Force but knows there is much more money to be had for this project. She also suggests the City look into Cedar Creek and sees no reason to bring the YMCA into any part of this project.

Pam Gaither, Galesburg Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, reported to the Council that their member survey question for November asked if Galesburg needed a ride-share service. Out of their 377 members, 67 responded: 75.38% - yes; 20% - no; and 4.62% - other. Responses have been emailed to the Council. She noted that we have a great transit system now, but it doesn't operate after hours. She also congratulated Kraig Boynton, Transit Manager, on being awarded the Thomas B. Herring Community Service Award at the annual Thanksgiving Luncheon. Ms. Gaither reminded the community to shop local this holiday season.

Jamie Palmer addressed the Council in support of Mike Spinks and noted that she grew up here and learned to skate at Skate Palace. She stated that the floor is in need of repair and hopes that the City includes them in a plan for assistance.

Pastor Vince Marolla addressed the Council and stated that he has heard that the Discovery Depot will get \$100,000 and asked where that was in the City's budget. He wondered if it was for capital improvements or operations and that it isn't spelled out anywhere. He noted that based on that amount vs. the hours they are open, the City would subsidize them \$62.03 for every hour they are open. He added that he has nothing against the museum but asked if there was a plan.

Tom Simkins, Special Projects Coordinator for the City of Galesburg, addressed the Council and noted what a great parade the City had last night. He thanked those involved with its planning and also noted that he had visitors from out of town who were very impressed with the parade as well. He also noted that the Council will be voting on Board Up Services tonight and he wanted to let them know that Werner Restoration Services does a great job and takes care of the victims as well as the firefighters. He indicated that the code states that those boards need to be painted, and he would be willing to enlist some volunteers to do this.

Council Member Hix left the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Reverend Andrew Jowers read from the City's strategic plan on the website to include focusing on community, diverse residents, visitors, and providing a safe and healthy community. He feels that there is tension in the community and that they are divided similar to the nation and state. He noted that community views are different from the faith based community and that they have three attributes - compassion, courage, and commitment. The April 2023 election changed a lot for his community when the new Council changed direction and wondered what the new members could look to for achievements. He stated that he supported Council Member Cheesman but felt he deserved to have his election contribution returned.

Bruce Weik addressed the Council and mentioned that in watching the news this morning, there were stories of the war, the former President of the United States, mass shootings, and a story on suicides in the US, which numbered 126 per day. However, the top news was in reference to Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce, which shows the times we live in now. Locally, streets and potholes are more important than the youth and seniors.

Russell Flemming addressed the Council in support of Mike Spinks and suggested that possibly a TIF in that area of town could help. He also noted that the City should have a "most wanted" on the website.

Maria Salsman addressed the Council and stated that she had not planned to speak but was getting tired of people bashing the Council Members. She thanked them for all they do and noted that the lights on Main Street look beautiful. She believes good things are happening in Galesburg and hopes the Council keeps up the good work. She stated that she is a taxpayer and that potholes on her street were causing kids on bikes to be unsafe and thanked them for the patch work.

Molly Miller addressed the Council and asked that they not allocate or grant money to the Knox County YMCA. She is not against them or their mission but does not agree with the City giving

them approximately \$1 million plus \$75,000 each year because they are a private entity. She wondered if the YMCA would grant the City money for a community center. She compared public vs. private using the example of our schools. She noted that she has great respect for Costa and the Christian school, but she would not support District 205 granting them any of their tax dollars and she would not expect those schools to support 205 in that way as well. She stated that the YMCA serves our community but so does the City, and in fact, serves our community in many more ways. The YMCA will continue to fund their mission without the City funding this project.

Darla Krejci addressed the Council and stated that she served on the Community Center Task Force and was the only one who voted no on the proposal before the Council and wanted to provide her dissenting opinion. She dissents that the Council received the proposal they did instead of the consolidated report put together by the Task Force chairman. That report includes every aspect of the proposal but presented differently. Also included in the consolidated report and not the proposal are elements that were specifically requested by Task Force members such as the results of the teen survey and the top ten amenities list. She also stated her dissent to the allocation of \$800,000 to the YMCA, stemming from the fact that a community center is not brick and mortar but instead programming. She is also against the youth director as proposed in the report; however, believes it is a good idea but she feels the position should be a City of Galesburg employee, not a YMCA employee paid by the City.

Ms. Krejci stated her dissent on the proposal because the author never acknowledged that the City's Recreation Department already offers varied and diverse programming and is certainly capable of this programming if given the opportunity and the finances to do so. Since these employees are paid hourly, \$75,000 would equate to 5,000 hours of annual programming. She also dissented on the expected results of the proposal that states the recommendations were based on a strategy of having multiple community centers. She strongly believes this was not the intent of the City and the instructions given to the Task Force at their first meeting.

Jackie Smith-Esters addressed the Council and also served on the Community Center Task Force. She wanted to discuss ethics on the Task Force. She stated that last summer, Elizabeth Varner, Parks & Recreation Director, presented a presentation on what the group would do and what a member would look like. She noted that when the members were approved, they were hand selected by Council Members and were mostly friends, campaign supporters, and family members. She was also asked to be on the Task Force and brought to the table representation of who she helps during her day job, those on the poverty line, have small children, bi-racial children, households that rely on one income, and would make sure the Task Force was moving in an equitable and inclusive direction.

Ms. Smith-Esters stated that she soon saw who else was on the Task Force and questioned the motives of the Council Members and added that a specific member was appointed who she had a conversation with while she was a Council Member about why she felt Galesburg did not need a center and started a petition to stop a tax increase to support a community center. She also felt that the CEO of the YMCA was not an appropriate representative for the Task Force since there was a conflict of interest. She commented that she was blindsided at the last meeting

when a member read a typed motion to accept a proposal, which was not on the agenda. A majority of the members did not allow Mr. Franklin to present his report, which comprised everyone's hard work and a lot of the data. It was then determined that the whole of the consolidated report would be deleted and Mr. Sampson and Mr. Medley's report took its place.

The Mayor asked for a recess at 7:11 p.m.

The Council resumed at 7:17 p.m.

Jeannette Chernin addressed the Council and stated that in November, she and nineteen other people emailed a Council Member regarding problems they were having with the Community Center Task Force and never received a response from anyone at the City. Someone from the Task Force was quoted as saying that the email was in poor taste and created a divide that is in the City instead of trying to bring people together. It was also mentioned that the names on the letter were typed and not legal signatures, which was cowardly. Members of the Task Force did not address this email or these issues and public opinion was ignored or ridiculed.

Ms. Chernin stated that every member of the Task Force received a hard copy of this email. The inability of them to respond constructively to these legitimate questions supports the thought that this group lacked integrity and transparency. Their continued unwillingness to use the microphone system, moving the meetings, or not streaming the meetings, supports this theory as well. She was always taught that it was weak to send a complaint anonymously and morally wrong not to ask questions and cowardly not to stand up for your beliefs. She stated that strong people do not back down on what they believe in and to send a letter and wait for a response when there is an issue. She was told by a member of the Task Force that it is not only cowardly to send a letter signed by a group of citizens but that it is also in bad taste. She asked Council what they suggest citizens of Galesburg do when they have a problem since it seems sending emails is no longer a respectable way to communicate and feels that this is an ethics issue. She noted that her partner served on the Task Force.

CONSENT AGENDA #2023-23

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

23-2064

Approve Resolution 23-58 approving the support of an application for the State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Community Development Block Grant Program housing rehabilitation grant.

23-2065

Approve Resolution 23-59 designating authorized financial signers.

23-3037

Approve the bid from Brenntag Mid-South, Inc. in the amount of \$1,879 per ton for liquid chlorine for 2024.

23-3038

Approve a five-year agreement with American Pest Control to provide pest control services at City properties.

23-3039

Approve a five-year contract with Hawkins, Inc. for pool chemical supplies.

23-3040

Approve waiving normal purchasing policies and approve the purchase of one bulk delivery of approximately 46,000 pounds of phosphate inhibitor from Hawkins, Inc. in the amount of \$0.795 per pound.

23-8022

Approve bills in the amount of \$740,479.05 and advance checks in the amount of \$962,466.26.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve Consent Agenda 2023-23.

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

23-1034

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Ordinance 23-3718 on final 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.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, Cheesman, and Mayor Schwartzman, 8.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-1035

Ordinance on first reading amending Chapter 37 of the Galesburg Municipal Code creating section 37.40 allowing the City to opt out of the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act. Council Member Davis asked that the City's HR staff prepare a chart outlining the current paid leave for all City employees versus what the Act would require if they did not opt out. Council Member

Acerra noted that in order to not impact operations, it is being suggested by industry professionals to take advantage of opting out.

23-1036

Ordinance on first reading amending Chapter 94 of the Galesburg Municipal Code regarding Demolitions.

23-1037

Ordinance on first reading amending Traffic Appendix V of Chapter 77 of the Galesburg Municipal Code to restrict parking along a curve at the intersection of Monroe Street and Hackberry Road.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

23-3041

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve a three-year agreement with Klingner & Associates for asbestos consulting services.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-3042

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve a contract with Werner Restoration Services, Inc. through December 2026 for miscellaneous board up services.

Council Member White asked about specifics in the ordinance about the painting of boards. Fire Chief Hovind stated that painted boards weather better and it is suggested that they are painted for permanent board up situations.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-3043

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a one-year agreement with A to Z Lawn Care & Landscaping for miscellaneous pick-up and clean-up services.

Council Member Davis inquired as to why the contract is only for one year but bid out for three. Interim City Manager Schlaf stated that the bid request required vendors to provide pricing for

labor only, truckloads of debris pricing, equipment/man hour charges, rental markup fee, landfill mark-up fee, and other fees. However, after careful review of the submitted bid, it was determined that the best option was to accept A to Z's bid for a one-year term to ensure the City continues to receive pricing comparable to the market. He noted that the City has a positive working relationship with A to Z.

Kendall Zimmerman, A to Z, addressed the Council and stated that he has had this contract with the City for 15 years and has not increased his price once. He explained his reasons for the increase in cost but also stated that if a longer agreement could be reached he would lock in those prices for five years.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to amend the contract to three years.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to amend the agreement to include a renewal option of two years.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Approve amended agreement to reflect three-years with an option to renew for an additional two years.

Roll Call #9:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to remove agenda item 23-4119 from the table.

Roll Call #10:

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

Nays: Council Members White and Davis, 2.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4119

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

Interim City Manager noted that Hector Soliman-Valdez, from Flock Safety was available to answer questions on the telephone.

Council Member White stated that he had distributed two articles to the Council Members that he hoped were able to be reviewed. He asked several specific questions regarding the data storage, access of the data, and that none would be available if it were not linked or identified from crime activity. He noted that he is not against law enforcement or the tools used for safety, but that he believes there needs to be checks and balances in place.

Council Member White verified that the data is deleted after thirty days.

Council Member Hix left the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

Council Member White expressed his concern over the ability to monitor non-criminals and their travel patterns, as well as acquaintances that are in the vehicles with them. This information could be shared with other entities, showing intimate portions of someone's life and target possible sensitive travel areas.

Council Member Hix returned to the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Council Member White noted several comments and statements from an article published from the *Electronic Frontier Foundation* involving the use of automated license plate readers (ALPRs). Mr. Soliman-Valdez confirmed that the data is only available to police departments and is not sold. Other questions involved databases, hotlists, what kinds of data ALPRs collect and how law enforcement uses that data. Council Member White noted that the ACLU estimates less than 0.2 percent of the license plate scans are linked to criminal activity.

Council Member White reported that there are several lawsuits regarding the use of ALPRs and while he does think Chief Idle would abuse the data, he won't always be here. He asked that the Council read the information he gave them before a decision is made and to do their research.

Council Member Cheesman stated that there have been a lot of concerns raised and he is sensitive to Council Member White's comments. However, he does believe that there are tools in place to prevent misuse of the system or data collected. He has talked to many citizens who are in favor of the cameras.

Council Member Acerra stated that there are laws in place that govern protection and that the agreement does not allow for the sale or sharing of anything collected. It is government cloud protected and provides for audit trails as well.

Mr. Soliman-Valdez reiterated that the only information collected is the backplate of vehicles and that no one is personally identifiable in the vehicle. Information is not shared with a third party. The data is only used as it aligns with the department's policy. He also explained that all footage and data is encrypted throughout its entire lifecycle, from on-device to storage in the cloud. Flock uses AWS (Amazon Web Services) cloud storage. All data is stored in the AWS GovCloud and is only available to Law Enforcement agencies. No data is shared with non-Law Enforcement Flock Safety Customers. The date would not be available through a FOIA request.

Council Member Hix noted that a serial killer in Los Angeles was arrested over the weekend due to his vehicle being flagged through a license plate reader.

Council Member Hix moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to call for the question.

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: Council Members White and Davis, 2.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Roll Call #12:

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

Nays: Council Members White and Davis, 2.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4121

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the December 31, 2024, Annual Budget. The final 2024 budget is as follows:

Total Revenues: \$72,584,070

Total Use of Fund Balance and/or Other Financial Resources: \$13,762,865

Total Expenditures: \$85,309,185

General Fund Revenue Total: \$29,991,225

General Fund Expenditure Total: \$30,677,785

General Fund Use of Fund Balance: \$686,560

Council Member Hix thanked Finance & Information Systems Director Gloria Osborn and her staff for their work on the budget, as well as the Department Directors, and Interim City Manager John Schlaf. He noted that the City started the process in May, held several meetings, a Work Session, and a Public Hearing for the 2024 budget.

The Mayor inquired about notable changes in the budget for both the Fire and Police Departments. Interim City Manager Schlaf stated that the changes can be attributed to personnel, specifically pension costs. It was also noted that both departments have seen a decrease in overtime costs due to an increase in staff.

Mike Doi, Public Works Director, reported that the increase in his budget is attributable to the bond proceeds, the Lake Storey path, and some funds that have been reallocated to 2024 that were not spent this year.

Interim City Manager Schlaf stated that the Hotel/Motel Tax allocations are by agreement with The Orpheum Theatre, Galesburg Promise, and the Galesburg Tourism & Visitors Bureau. The 2024 budget does show a payment of \$100,000 to the Theatre, which is reverting to the agreed upon funding cap. He noted that contrary to media reports, the \$100,000 cap was discussed in detail in August of this year with The Orpheum's director, board members, and the City Manager at that time. Discussion was also held on the required financial reporting.

Funding for the Discovery Depot Children's Museum was also discussed and Interim City Manager Schlaf confirmed that they received \$60,000 plus a \$15,000 grant from the City for marketing this year. He encouraged the City and Council Members to reevaluate all the current funding agreements the City has at this time and noted that the Hotel/Motel Tax has increased.

Mayor Schwartzman noted the Dale Kelly Tot Lot has additional funding allocated for a project in 2025, but could be discussed by the Council for a 2024 project instead. He also noted the lighting for the tennis courts at GHS could be discussed for next year. The Mayor stated that the City Council could discuss and put forth a commitment tonight for these projects, including funding for the floor at Skate Palace, which would be a partnership between Mr. Spinks and the City. All total, he approximated an increase of \$140,000 to the 2024 budget.

Council Member Hix stated that at this hour, when the budget is close to adoption, he would recommend these projects and issues be explored and that a business plan be submitted for Mr. Spinks' project. There were no changes brought forth at the Budget Work Session but agrees that some of these items have value and merit but that they needed to be vetted prior to the meeting tonight.

Council Member Cheesman agreed that these projects need to be looked at prior to budget approval, but that Council can certainly entertain them in the future. He liked many of the ideas discussed tonight and would like more information to explore them.

Council Member Acerra stated her appreciation for all the speakers tonight and understands the requests from non-profits but not from for-profit companies. The City needs to improve the entire process for these requests in the future but would like to approve the budget as it is being presented tonight.

Roll Call #13:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4122

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve the 2024 Classification and Salary Schedule for Exempt Salaried Personnel and Temporary Seasonal and Part-Time hourly employees.

Roll Call #14:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-4123

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the demolition process on the property located at 239 South Cherry Street. It was communicated that this process can be stopped at any time and that all options will be considered once the owners can be contacted.

Roll Call #15:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member White left the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

23-5012

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to receive the recommendation from the Community Center Task Force.

Council Member Hix thanked the Task Force members for all their research, long hours of meetings, and listening to the public. He knows it was contentious and that the group was divided, but he appreciates their efforts. He also thanked Director Varner for her work.

Council Member Davis announced that she dissented.

Council Member Cheesman also thanked the members and knows they worked through many challenges. He was impressed by several members who may have had adversarial views but that they came together with a plan.

Council Member White returned to the meeting at 9:11 p.m.

Council Member Cheesman further stated that he believes there have been a number of recommendations that the Council will need to consider, including items such as transportation.

However, he does not feel that initially the City should not engage in childcare but that they can possibly help facilitate others to assist in this area. He understands that there were differences of opinion by the members but he thanked them all for working through the challenges.

Council Member White inquired about some of the pictures in the report. Council Member Cheesman noted that one of them is the Learning Center at GHS. The others are likely meant to be ideas for a future center.

Roll Call #16:

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

Nays: Council Members White and Davis, 2.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Mayor Schwartzman noted that the Task Force Chairman, Tony Franklin, emailed his formal report but that it could have been delivered to Members' spam folders. He encouraged them to read it as well.

Council Member White personally thanked Maria Salsman for her excellent research on the survey that was given to students at the high school. Ms. Salsman thanked him and added that it was a collaborative effort with several other members.

Council Member Acerra thanked the members as well for a job well done and added that they accomplished the objective Council gave them.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

23-9025

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$608.43
General Assistance Fund	\$5,335.49
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$4,728.14
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$10,672.06

Roll Call #17:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

23-9026

Ordinance on first reading approving the Township Budget and Appropriation for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2024, showing the following:

General Town Fund	\$528,200		
Audit Fund	\$19,000		
Liability Fund	\$10,700		
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$34,000		
Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)	\$34,000		
General Assistance Fund	\$440,188		
Total Appropriations			\$1,066,088.00

23-9027

Ordinance on first reading approving the 2023 Property Tax Levy for the Town of the City of Galesburg in the amount of \$531,000.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member Acerra thanked the Task Force again for their passionate work even when there were differing beliefs and opinions. The Council has received both the recommendations and there are good ideas contained within each. She added that this is what the exercise was about and that ideally there will be some consensus ideas that would come out to provide the City with direction. She also offered her appreciation for all the questions that were asked tonight and hopes that with guidance, the City Council can start to drill down on these projects and the details. She also thanked Director Steve Gugliotta and the City's legal team for hearing her concerns and her constituent's concerns about keeping our community clean and safe. She thanked them for addressing some of the properties that aren't being properly managed and pose a risk to our community. She appreciates the aggressiveness when necessary.

Council Member Davis thanked everyone who took time to attend the meeting tonight and that regardless of whether it's required, they made the commitment and came here of their own accord. She also noted that a lot of comments were made about organizations receiving support and hoped that no one felt that these organizations were being pitted against each other. She does not believe that was the intent of anyone speaking tonight. The bickering which occurs when the Council starts having these difficult conversations is likely the motive of those who want to sow discord in the community, which is an unfortunate result. She appreciates those

who are engaging and finding discrepancies and ways that we can be more intentional with our funds.

Council Member Davis added that there was a brief mention of the Christmas lights downtown, and she expressed her love for them too. It was clarified to her that the Downtown Council does the work of getting those set up and she thanked them for their efforts. On one final note, she stated that she had a few reports of inappropriate name-calling in the audience tonight and she respectfully asked people to consider the impression that they are making in the community when everyone is sitting in this room within an earshot of each other -- be respectful and be kind.

Council Member Cheesman stated that the Mayor would probably note this, but one of the speakers tonight was asking the Council questions and he wanted to let the public know that it is not their time to answer, but instead the public's time to speak and make comments. If an answer is needed, the correct or appropriate people will do that. He is all ears when people talk, and as he has said from the very beginning that he will listen with respect and an open mind. He noted that he does have certain views, but those views can change if someone comes up with something better. The vast majority of the 25 speakers tonight were passionate and had a lot of things on their mind, which the City needs to look at very closely.

Council Member Cheesman reiterated what Council Member Davis said and emphasized that there are people who come to the podium and try to create division or are insulting beyond what is acceptable and it should not be tolerated -- shame on them. In regard to Reverend Jowers, he gave him his money back. He added that he cannot be bought and in that regard, he does not need his money or any kind of campaign donation since he will not be bought. He added that if he does something different than what he likes, it's tough. For the rest of the citizens in attendance, he thinks we have a lot of good things going on. He would ask Reverend Jowers to go back and take a look at the minutes of the meetings that have taken place since May, and that there have been a lot of good things that have happened by this group of Council Members, our Mayor, and people in our city. He hopes he thinks about this the next time he talks.

Council Member Hix announced that Girls' Basketball Coach Massey got his 1,000th victory. Coach Massey is very well liked in our community, has a great reputation, and a great career. He added that he agreed with Council Member Davis about the YMCA and Discovery Depot and how people sometimes are pitting them against each other. He thanked John Schalf for his work and has enjoyed meeting with him over the last several months. He has done an amazing job through all the challenges and he has personally heard from staff that he was fair, thoughtful, considerate, and inclusive.

Council Member Dennis also thanked Mr. Schlaf and hoped that with his talent, knowledge, and relationship with the staff, the City could find a place for him. He also thanked Galesburg Police Officer Torres for pulling him over to let him know that his vehicle lights were off.

Council Member Miller said that it had been a pleasure to work with John Schlaf and wished him the best. He has always answered his questions and concerns and he has enjoyed their visits.

Council Member White commented that he and his wife attended the Choral Dynamics show at The Orpheum Theatre over the weekend and that it was very enjoyable. The Theatre is very nostalgic and he wants to see it taken care of and feels that if the City supports one, they support them all. He wondered how we could all get together and share what we have, such as our great golf course and Railroad Days. He would like to see people visit our community and attend or visit all of these places. He added that he hopes we can all work together in 2024 and get it done. He also stated that from his time in the military, when a ship sits at port and the tide comes in, everyone on the ship rises together or goes down together.

Interim City Manager John Schlaf wanted to share with the Council that people have asked him what it's like to be a city manager. He tells them that it's a little bit like being the person who mows the grass at the cemetery -- there might be a lot of people under you, but nobody listens. He noted that to the Council's credit, they have listened. The thing that gives him the greatest satisfaction is the fact that they have begun to listen to one another. He noted that the business that they got finished tonight was impressive and they all deserve credit for the work that has gotten done in the time that they have all been together.

He added that the City Clerk put together a summary of the items they have accomplished, one of which was participating in fourteen hours worth of Council meetings since he has been there. He wanted to sincerely thank each of them for giving him a great opportunity and that he could not have done any of this without the support he has had from Council, Legal, and from each of the department heads. He stated that it's important to remember the men and women that are out there on the street, the firefighters, the police officers, parks, streets, so many people that don't ever get any recognition but are out there doing the job every day. He added his thanks to his wife, Judy, who came to the meeting tonight.

Mayor Schwartzman thanked Mr. Schlaf and added that he has really enjoyed working with him. He is one of the pillars of our community and he knows he will continue to contribute. He stated that the Christmas parade was amazing and that he was able to walk the crowd and take in all the smiles and good spirits. He also noted that there was a PD Cares benefit concert before the parade at Lindstrom's, and thanked them for sponsoring that event for the last three years.

The Mayor also reported that this weekend, along with Council Members Miller and Hix, he attended the Filipino Christmas celebration at the Lake Storey Pavilion. It was a six-hour event with amazing food and people and it was beautiful to see people of all different persuasions sharing different food and music. This is another great example of our diverse community and how we collaborate, commune and celebrate. He mentioned Coach Massey and his 1,000 wins, which he feels is fantastic. He hasn't done a full count of his two daughters playing basketball for him over the last five years, but they may have contributed to 80 of those wins. He noted that his daughters are both in college and one of them is playing basketball. He thinks she would attribute her love of the game to her experience with him and his coaching staff. The

community is very fortunate to have him and his coaching staff and all the amazing women that have worked through the program, many of whom are back in town, owning businesses and doing wonderful things here.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that The Orpheum and Discovery Depot were mentioned many times tonight, and that he loves both of the institutions. He thinks they're the heart of the downtown, and bring people of all different persuasions to our town. The City wants to support them as much as possible and he hates to think of them as being pitted against each other and feels that it is the Council's responsibility for ensuring that that doesn't happen. He believes there is still work to be done over the next few months to do that properly and noted that it has been difficult with three interim City Managers to do this. He added that in his State of the City address, he noted the many marvelous things that have been accomplished this year, but that it's difficult for an interim city manager to make tough decisions. Mr. Schlaf did wonderful work and everyone here admires him, but Mr. Hanson will be sitting there at the next meeting. The Mayor encouraged everyone to attend the receptions for Mr. Hanson in the near future and reminded them that he knows Galesburg well, having lived in this area. He knows he has a tough job, but he also knows from talking with him that he sees a very bright future for our community, and he's going to work hard to make sure it happens.

There being no further business, Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:42 p.m.

Roll Call #18:

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