

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
January 16, 2024
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: City Manager Eric Hanson, City Attorney Marilynn Dye, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Reverend James Hailey gave the invocation.

Proclamation: CASA of West Central Illinois 30th Anniversary

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from December 18, 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 stated that with the new year, new City Manager, and new staff, he wanted to remind everyone to be as positive as possible in their remarks and it is his hope that collectively everyone can help move the City forward.

Michael Spinks addressed the Council from All Sports Academy and Skate Palace. He stated that he wanted to clear up any misinformation and noted that he is not in business to get rich and only wants to help the kids in the hometown where he grew up. He does have insurance and has recently received non-profit status. He is not seeking a donation of \$60,000 for a new floor but is instead interested in a partnership with the City. Mr. Spinks added that anyone can contact him with questions.

Jeannette Chernin addressed the Council and noted how great the roads look after the recent snow. She feels that the City crews did a great job. She did note that the snow piled in the middle of Main Street makes it difficult to see around and forces traffic to one lane. Ms.

Chernin also wanted the City to know that the dilapidated home at 110 West North Street is being lived in with no electricity.

Reverend James Hailey addressed the Council and stated that he is looking forward to 2024 and working together to make Galesburg great. He noted that even though we all don't agree, everyone needs to be on the same team, be more positive, and help those in our community. He encouraged the City to help Mr. Spinks with Skate Palace.

CONSENT AGENDA #2024-01

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

24-2000

Approve MFT Maintenance Resolution in the amount of \$275,000 for the annual sealcoating for the 2024 calendar year.

24-4000

Approve the Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program for historic and owner-occupied residences.

24-4001

Approve the updated purchasing policies and procedures dated November 27, 2023.

24-5000

Receive Police Pension Fund Municipal Compliance Report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2022.

24-5001

Receive Fire Pension Fund Municipal Compliance Report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2022.

24-5002

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

24-8000

Approve bills in the amount of \$788,229.44 and advance checks in the amount of \$645,027.93.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve Consent Agenda 2024-01.

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

24-2001

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Resolution 24-01 appointing the Director of Finance & Information Systems as the City Treasurer through May 2025.

Roll Call #4:

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

24-3000

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve a bid from Brandt Construction in the amount of \$223,594 for Lancaster Park renovations.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-3001

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to reject all bids for the backup dispatch center renovation project.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Cheesman stated his appreciation to the City Manager and Chief Idle for addressing the Dispatch Center and explaining the reason for the rejection of the bids to the public.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hanson thanked City staff for their tremendous job during the past weather events, including the Public Works Department and Parks & Recreation Department, as well as both Police and Fire personnel. He noted that Council Members and many others have also expressed their appreciation and he wanted to publicly thank everyone for their hard work.

The City Manager also announced that after thirty-seven years at the City, twenty as the Director of Finance & Information Systems, Gloria Osborn will be retiring on Friday. He noted that she has long been identified as one of the top finance directors in the state for her leadership and excellence in budgeting. She is a trusted colleague and friend and will be greatly missed.

Council Member White added that he has known Gloria for thirty years and loves her name since she shares it with his sister. He has appreciated all she has done for the City.

Council Member Hix stated that he and Gloria graduated from high school together and is grateful for her help over the years as a director, friend, and citizen.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

24-4002

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve a one-year contractual agreement with Assured Partners to provide risk management consulting and insurance brokerage services at an annual fee of \$35,000 through 2024.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: Council Member Acerra, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4003

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve fiscal year 2024 post-employment benefit (OPEB) contributions to the City's OPEB Trust in the amount of \$143,555.

Director Gloria Osborn, Finance and Information Systems, reported that the City Council has proactively funded the OPEB trust, which helps to reduce the City's liability and may be viewed positively when the City is requesting or receiving a credit rating. This in turn may help lower interest costs when issuing debt. In the end of the year statement received today, the ending balance for the OPEB trust is \$2.3 million.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

24-9000

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$729.05
General Assistance Fund	\$9,614.97
IMRF Fund	\$1,664.73
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$652.97
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$12,661.72

Roll Call #9:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member Cheesman stated that there have been many accolades given tonight and that the teams at the City are great. He thanked Gloria Osborn for making a difference at the City and for doing a superb job. He also thanked emergency personnel, the Public Works Department, and others for the great job they did through the challenging weather. He also thanked the Knox County Housing Authority and Salvation Army for their work on the warming center. He added that he was there Saturday night and saw firsthand how people are taken care of. He also thanked the CASA volunteers who were in attendance tonight for their service.

Council Member Cheesman stated that he is looking forward to a great 2024 and that he has great expectations for this team, the City Council. He knows they need to address some issues and hopes that they can reach a consensus and compromise as they have much to offer. Galesburg is a great place to live and hopes that we can bring others here too and make it the best it can be.

Council Member Hix thanked staff as well, particularly Orlee Lucero for helping with his City iPad, and Don Miles who he reached out to with an issue and it was solved quickly. He also noted that while shoveling his driveway at 2 a.m. he noticed that the Street and Park crews were out taking care of the roads. He knows that the Police Department was overwhelmed with calls as well and thanked the staff at every level.

Council Member Dennis also appreciated all the crews taking care of the streets and added that his 90-year-old neighbor had someone stop and clear his driveway at no cost, showing the compassion we have in our community. He also stated that he hates to see Gloria Osborn leave and thanked her for her service.

Council Member Miller also thanked Ms. Osborn for her service. He also believes the City crews did an unbelievable job with the snow storms. He noted the Police and Fire Departments, Public Works, and vehicle maintenance/garage, did a great job keeping everything going. He's looking forward to 2024.

Council Member White thanked Gloria Osborn for her service and fantastic job as well. He also stated that he appreciated the help of City Manager Hanson and Mike Doi, Public Works Director, for a snow issue. He also thanked Elizabeth Varner, Parks & Recreation Director, for all her hard work on the Lancaster Park project. He thanked those involved with the warming center as well as the City employees who have worked long hours to keep the streets clean and safe.

He is looking forward to 2024 and has great expectations. He hopes the Council is able to help everyone, from the rich to the poor, and old to young, and make Galesburg the best city.

Council Member Acerra announced that the cover of the Illinois Municipal League magazine cover is a picture of Galesburg and that we have a lot to be proud of. She also stated that Gloria used to work with her dad and that she will be missed. She thanked the Street Division crews, Police Department, and those involved with the warming shelter. She reminded people to take care of their animals during this cold weather and that they should call the Police Department and report a neglect issue if they see one. She is also looking forward to a new year with great progress forward.

Council Member Davis thanked Gloria Osborn for her leadership and stated that has impacted everyone with her presence at the City. She also thanked the Public Works and snowplow crews for their around the clock work and noted that she thought the roads look great. She reminded everyone to be watchful of people walking in the street due to snow covered sidewalks. She is also looking forward to making Galesburg even better in 2024.

Mayor Schwartzman thanked Gloria Osborn for her service and added that when he has interacted with others in the state it is clear that our finances are in a remarkable position. He also thanked all the workers over the last week, including the Street Division employees, first responders, vehicle maintenance workers, plumbers, electricians, and all other essential workers.

The Mayor announced that he was able to attend the Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation at Knox College to hear featured speaker Maurice McDavid. Mr. McDavid went to Knox College, Class of 2010, and is a current DeKalb middle school principal and minister. Both the Mayor and Council Member Cheesman had Mr. McDavid as a student. He added that he gave a powerful speech and loves Galesburg and Knox College.

Mayor Schwartzman expressed that during December he was able to do a lot of soul-searching and many things crystallized for him for the upcoming 2024 year. He is excited about the rebirth that a new year brings and is looking forward to making greater progress, working together, and setting aside differences and working on items that the Council has in common. He announced that the City Council will soon embark on strategic planning where they will work together as a unified team.

There being no further business, Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:49 p.m.

Roll Call #10:

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