

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
May 20, 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 James Kelly, 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.

Proclamation: Poppy Days

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from May 6, 2024.

Roll Call #2:

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.

City Attorney James Kelly opened and read sealed bids for the following properties:

Bidder	Tract Number	Amount of Bid
Robert Henness	5	\$610.00
Patrick Hathaway	4	\$1,500.00
John Stipp II	9	\$150.00
Flacco Family Farms LLC	2	\$589.00
Andrew Ahlberg	4	\$6,000.00
Joyce Matuasilua	4	\$150.00
Joyce Matuasilua	5	\$300.00
Joyce Matuasilua	6	\$200.00
Cecilia BoFio	7	\$500.00
Cecilia BoFio	5	\$300.00
Cecilia BoFio	8	\$500.00

Mark Rasmussen	4	\$351.00
Mark Rasmussen	5	\$451.00
Mark Rasmussen	6	\$201.00
Mark Rasmussen	9	\$351.00

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stefan Roldan addressed the Council and asked why nothing had been done about the rental at 1470 Grand Avenue. He is a taxpayer and would hope that vandals could be held accountable and incarcerated.

Jeanette Chernin addressed the Council regarding the Fishing Derby and announced that she has volunteered for the event for a decade and they were prepared for 600 children this year. She was made aware that there were reserved places for handicap parking at the picnic shelter and Lincoln Park; however, she noted that they are too far away and difficult for someone to walk or use a wheelchair in order to get to the ponds. Her suggestion is that this special parking be along the sides of the road near the ponds, with a person at the entrance to let vehicles in since that road is closed to traffic during the Derby. She again thanked Angie Buchen and the Parks & Recreation staff for the outstanding free event. She also stated that she lives very close to the middle of town and heard fireworks for a couple of hours during the night, which is hard to live with if you have PTSD or a dog. She asked that the law be enforced with a few individuals who are doing this right now, which will get on Phil Garza's page, which will in turn get around that tickets, which cost money, are being issued.

Darla Krejci addressed the Council regarding the importance of the City's external agency funding that is on the agenda and the controversy that it has caused. She did state that she is the business manager for Nova Singers, one of the recipients that is being awarded funding. She applies for grants frequently as part of her job and feels the City requires her to justify their budget items, list their top three sources of funding, top three expenses, plans for sustainability, etc. She believes this to be a very thorough application process and that the City takes a lot of information into consideration when making their decisions. A lot of funding is going to tourist events or events that bring people to the community, which is why she believes the arts are so important. She gave City Clerk Bennewitz information for distribution to the Council Members on reasons to support the arts and why they matter in Illinois.

CONSENT AGENDA #2024-09

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

24-3019

Approve the bid from Tickle Asphalt Company, the lowest bidder, or if they do not have the material available, the city will utilize the next lowest price vendor.

24-5004

Receive the December 31, 2023, Investment Schedule.

24-6001

Approve the following appointments:

Community Relations Commission

Osee Ngunda, term expires February 2026

Golf Commission

David Selkirk, term expires, June 2027

Library Board

Sarah Brakenbury, term expires June 2027

Heather Hellenga, term expires June 2027

Laurie Muelder, term expires June 2027

Public Transportation Advisory Commission

Stephanie Grimes, term expires June 2027

Rose Morris, term expires June 2025

Shannon McVey, term expires June 2027

Linda Miller, term expires June 2026

Annette McAllister, term expires June 2027

Genny Gibson, term expires June 2027

24-8008

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,554,079.41 and advance checks in the amount of \$155,885.53.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Consent Agenda 2024-09.

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**24-1006**

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Ordinance 24-3729 on final reading amending Chapter 30 of the Galesburg Municipal Code regarding the election of a Deputy Mayor.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-1008

Ordinance on first reading amending Appendix X of Chapter 77 of the Galesburg Municipal Code by allowing parking on East Ferris Street east of Kellogg Street on Sundays only.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hanson reported that May is clearly appreciation month, noting that he mentioned the Municipal Clerks at the last meeting. This past week was Police Appreciation Week and added that he was able to spend time with a shift and appreciated Chief Idle and Deputy Chief Legate's time and thanked them for their great work and the continued efforts of their staff in keeping everyone safe.

He also stated that it is Public Works Week and among potholes and a multitude of other things, including a long list of repairs going on in the City this summer, he wanted to thank Mike Doi and his staff for the great work they do for our community. It is also EMS Week, and although the City's Fire Department works in cooperation with GHAS, we have people on staff that respond to all ambulance calls, which is roughly 85% of the call volume. The City Manager stated again that he wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to all those individuals and to acknowledge them, because without them Galesburg would not be the place that we all call home.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

24-4033

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve a Development Agreement with Western Smokehouse Partners to retain and expand the company's operation in Galesburg. The City of Galesburg shall provide a total incentive of \$300,000.00, payable in three installments, which will retain the Western Smokehouse Partners headquarters locally and retain or create 32 local jobs, including 15 manufacturing jobs, with a total positive local economic impact of \$2,175,000.00.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4034

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve a Development Agreement with Graham Hospital Association for the purpose of creating a second entrance to the property, which aligns with Mayo Drive. The City will provide \$250,000

to Graham Hospital Association as well as benefiting from the significant economic impact of the medical facility, which Graham Hospital Association intends to develop on the property.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4035

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve a settlement agreement with an employee related to an injury sustained in November 2020.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4036

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the external agency funding request for 2024 in the amount of \$115,000 as recommended by Administration.

City Manager Hanson reported that the City received requests at nearly \$250,000 with a budget of \$135,000 and priority was given to those who had already received funding in previous years. In the end, what is being recommended is funding each agency at a level at least at last year's funding amount, with priority given to those larger events that draw economic tourism. He noted that the remaining balance would be going to support the homeless shelter program, which was started with ARPA funds, which are no longer available. He also noted that Council will need to re-evaluate how much they want to budget and enter into a discussion during budget sessions.

Council Member White expressed his concern over equality and how Council Members can make a decision not to fund an agency based on personal views. Several Council Members expressed their concern over the increase in funding over the years from \$31,000 to \$250,000 and from ten organizations to 27 agencies currently. All are valuable and blessings to our community but most feel that Administration had a fair approach for these hard decisions.

Council Member Davis stated that she appreciated all the comments and agrees that it is a complex situation; however, she cannot support the existing list with the Prairie Players Theatre receiving funding due to a mishandling of a sexual harassment issue in the recent past. Council Member Davis made a motion to amend the External Agency Funding list by amending the funding to zero for Prairie Players Theatre, seconded by Council Member Hix.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, and Davis, 4.

Nays: Council Members White, Acerra, and Cheesman, 3.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member White stated that this was his concern and that in truth he would not like to fund Heritage Days due to their use of the confederate flag and uniforms because he finds it offensive, but then added that he then is picking and choosing who receives funding due to his personal feelings.

Council Member Acerra stated that she voted no also because she feels that she needs more time before she passes judgment, especially when staff put so much effort into their recommendation and she believes it was a fair process.

Council Member Davis stated her agreement with both Council Members and noted that she would like to reconsider the vote in order to abstain. Council Member Davis moved to reconsider the vote to amend the External Agency Funding list by amending the funding to zero for Prairie Players Theatre, seconded by Council Member Acerra.

Roll Call #9:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Davis made a motion to amend the External Agency Funding list by amending the funding to zero for Prairie Players Theatre, seconded by Council Member Hix.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: None

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

Absent: None

Abstain: Council Member Davis, 1

Chairman declared the motion failed.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the external agency funding request for 2024 in the amount of \$115,000 as recommended by Administration.

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: Council Member Davis, 1.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4037

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve an agreement between the City of Galesburg and the Public Safety Employees' Organization (PSEO) and the 2024 Classification and Salary Schedule for personnel represented by PSEO.

Roll Call #12:

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 Dennis, to sit as the Town Board.
The motion carried.

TOWN BUSINESS

24-9009

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$1,323.99
General Assistance Fund	\$7,702.23
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	\$4,349.64
Audit Fund	
Total	\$13,375.86

Roll Call #13:

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 Miller, to resume as the City Council. The motion carried.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member Hix thanked Mike Doi, Public Works Director, for his time and efforts on the Airport Commission, as well as the rest of his team and staff during Public Works Week.

Council Member Dennis thanked all the well-wishers on behalf of his wife, Barb, on her recent surgery.

Council Member Miller thanked all City employees who work hard each day from the City Clerk's Office, Finance Department, Administration, Fire Department, etc. He doesn't feel City employees get enough praise for all that they do and wanted to thank the public employees for their hard work.

Council Member White thanked Don Miles, Parks & Recreation Department Director, for his work on the Dale Kelley Tot Lot and knows that the neighborhood kids are very excited about being able to use the park soon. He also thanked the Police Department for a recent incident he had with a vehicle following him and his wife. He was able to call Dispatch, who called a Police Officer (Officer Todd Olinger), where he was able to stay on the line and communicate the problem with both of them and wanted to express his gratitude to them for the way they handled the situation.

Council Member Acerra stated that Ward Five is proud to be the home to the parents of a Pulitzer Prize winning author, Silvia Foster-Frau. She also announced that she had a good time on Saturday visiting with people at Bateman Park playing pickleball, despite the issue with the birds roosting in the building on the property. She thanked the Administration for their attention in getting that problem addressed. She also wanted to thank and give her appreciation for the commitment that both Graham Hospital and Western Smokehouse Partners are making in our community and believes their growth is going to be amazing. She appreciates that they are keeping good jobs here in our community, which is how Galesburg is going to grow. She noted that her final thought was that on May 20, 1873, two businessmen named Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis were given a patent to create work pants, reinforced with metal rivets, creating the first blue jeans known as waist overalls at that time.

Council Member Davis wanted to say thank you to the entire community for the amount of awareness and participation in conversations that have to do with the community and the different things people are passionate about, whether it's nonprofit organizations, or other topics, both on social media and in public comment at a Council meeting. She is grateful to have different perspectives because the Council's decisions are not made in a bubble but instead are made in the context of the community. She also thanked City Manager Hanson for the boldness in wrangling the complicated topics and figuring out how to explain them so that the Council can understand them, especially with the external agency funding. She reminded people to be careful with the heat, especially with their pets.

Council Member Cheesman stated that it can't be said enough that there are a variety of really great things happening in our town, and specifically noted the impact economically the Western Smokehouse Partners and Graham Hospital are making in our town. He also commented on the difficult and challenging topic of external agency funding. He added that Galesburg has a lot of great events and tremendous groups trying to make our city the best place it can be and he will continue to applaud them and encourage them. He believes we still have significant work to do and that each week, Council Members get calls, emails, and have people stop and talk to them about things that they'd like to see done. He hopes that these things can be brought forward and is looking forward to the upcoming strategic planning.

Mayor Schwartzman reported that in regards to the external agency funding, to put \$115,000 into perspective, on an overall budget of approximately \$80 million, that is about 14 cents on \$100. During the City's strategic planning, he believes it will be important for the Council to look at the City's level of commitment in supporting all the wonderful organizations. He stated that in his opinion, we should want organizations thriving in our community.

The Mayor stated that at the last meeting he noted that it was the beginning of his 13th year of service, but he also wanted to thank the Council Members who have also been serving. He thanked Ms. Acerra, Mr. Miller, and Mr. Cheesman, for completing their first year of service on the Council. He also thanked Mr. White and Miss Davis for completing their third year of service, Mr. Hix for completing his fifth year of service, and Mr. Dennis for completing his 15th year of service.

The Mayor reported that May is also National Military Appreciation Month, which was designated to ensure the nation was given the chance to publicly show their appreciation for our troops. He thanked Council Members White and Dennis for their service in our military. Monday is also Memorial Day, and everyone also heard about the history of Poppy Days tonight. The Mayor asked that everyone keep in mind on Monday all the soldiers that have lost their lives, and all that their families have endured on this coming Monday.

Mayor Schwartzman noted that last week was National Police Week and he wanted to thank all of our employees and our Police Department. He also wanted to thank City Manager Hanson, who has become a regular guest on WGIL and added that it can't be understated how important it is to communicate directly with the public. The Mayor thanked Ken Springer and KCAP for their strategic planning session last week, and that he left that meeting feeling very confident about the future. The Mayor also noted the Chamber of Commerce Local Elected Officials Luncheon where he was asked to give an abbreviated state of the city address. He noted that he has posted this on social media if anyone would like to read what his thoughts were. He also announced that a week ago the Library held its grand opening and he was happy to see people of all ages. He hopes everyone has had a chance to visit the incredible library and all the services and amazing staff that work there.

There being no further business, Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Roll Call #14:

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