

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
June 17, 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 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.

Presentation: Galesburg Township -- Recognition of Dave Natof

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from June 3, 2024.

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

Jim Jacobs addressed the Council and stated that he understood that for the last several years, the City has recognized Pride Month. To date, nothing has been done and he feels that it's important that the City recognize this month and the people that it represents who, throughout history, have been marginalized all over the world. He believes this would show to everyone in Galesburg that we are not going to stand for any kind of hatred, discrimination or oppression of the people represented by Pride Week. He thanked Council Member Davis for bringing her pride flag.

David Amor addressed the Council and thanked the City Manager for adding this resolution to the agenda, as well as thanking the Council for approving the resolution for the last four years. He commended them for their intention of continuing to do so every year, as is mentioned in the resolution. He stated that he is the secretary for United Against Hate and the group was concerned at the last City Council meeting when the resolution was not on the agenda. He believes it is important for our community and a significant component, particularly for the youth who are members of the gay community, who are more at risk than their peers for

suicide, depression, and potential substance abuse. He feels it is important for the City to make it clear that as a community we recognize, welcome, and support everyone who is in our community.

David Selkirk, Golf Commission, addressed the Council and announced that at Bunker Links' 100 year Centennial Golf Outing they had approximately 140 players and were able to give away great prizes and enjoy music and food. The following Saturday was the Galesburg Firefighter Golf Tournament, the largest golf outing that Bunker has ever hosted. They enjoyed breakfast, lunch, and secured many sponsorships. He thanked everyone at the golf course, Bryan Luedtke, Matt Miles, and all the staff, for taking care of the course so well. He also indicated that if anyone would like to tour the golf course, please stop by and the staff will contact him.

Bill Sime addressed the Council in favor of the Pride Month resolution. While he didn't support the Lake Storey expansion proposal for a number of reasons, he does recognize that growth is essential for the City to thrive. He believes sustainable growth also depends on Galesburg presenting itself as a welcoming community in which to live. He feels that Pride Month promotes inclusion, equity and diversity and believes that these concepts are ones that our community wants to embrace. We want to show people that we want them to come here, stay here and help grow our community. He asked the City Council to vote in favor of the resolution and would like to see it on the agenda in 2025.

Salle Wade addressed the Council regarding the fireworks that have already started in neighborhoods. She stated that if you live in an upscale part of town, this may not be a problem for some, but they have already started in her part of town. This problem affects four populations of people -- household pets and the wildlife in our area, veterans who have PTSD, people who have chronic anxiety, and depression, and who are recovering from abuse of alcohol and drugs, and the kids who live in environments where there is a lot of violence and gun use. She proposed that the City take action by offering a healthy fine for these individuals who set off fireworks in town.

Darla Krejci addressed the Council and stated that she was also here to commend the Council for adding the Pride Month resolution to the agenda; however, she made a request that it be removed from the Consent Agenda and made its own agenda item that's voted upon, and that the resolution be read aloud for the record. As a statement to those in the LGBTQ+ community, this would be very meaningful.

Reverend Andrew Jowers addressed the Council and noted that he has been absent for a while but that it's good to be able to participate in local government and that he is excited that he lives in a land of opportunity, liberty and justice for all. He shared two pictures that his students drew of people, one is black and one is white. He stated that some may say we have come a long way but if times were reversed, he wouldn't have had a chance to speak here this evening. He noted Romans 3:23 and that as a country, we have lost our way in terms of love and holding up life. He went on to say that the young people in Galesburg are bored and have nothing to do, and noted the bowling alley that is gone and has been turned into a liquor store. He now sees that there is an expansion of the cannabis facility and a lot of people went to jail for

marijuana, but now it's legal. He stated that we have a contradiction and asked everyone to examine their hearts on November 5th, where there will be a decision made on whether there will still be liberty and justice for all, which is also a Galesburg issue. That is what he thinks the whole idea of America is for all of us, to live and be free, and noted his black skin and there was a time when his hands weren't free.

CONSENT AGENDA #2024-11

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

24-2013

Approve Resolution 24-12 adding Jennifer O'Hern, Finance Director and City Treasurer, as an authorized bank signer.

24-2014

Approve Resolution 24-13 declaring the month of June as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month.

24-3023

Approve the proposal submitted by Decision Optimization Technology in the amount of \$100,000 to provide Pavement Management Services. The City will be reimbursed for the total associated costs through a Statewide Planning and Research Grant from IDOT.

24-8010

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,159,660.04 and advance checks in the amount of \$49,844.15.

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Consent Agenda 2024-11.

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.

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to remove agenda item 24-2014 from the Consent Agenda.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: Council Member Hix, 1.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve Resolution 24-13 declaring June as LGBTQIA+ month.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, White, Acerra, Davis, Cheesman, and Mayor Schwartzman, 7.
Nays: Council Member Miller, 1.
Absent: None
Chairman declared the motion carried.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

24-1009

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Ordinance 24-3731 on final reading amending the zoning for the property at the northeast corner of Saluda Road and Huston Street from R2, Tow Family, to R1A, Single Family.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.
Nays: None
Absent: None
Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-1010

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Ordinance 24-3732 on final reading amending the zoning for the property at 755 North Henderson Street from B1, Neighborhood Business, to B2, General Business.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.
Nays: None
Absent: None
Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-1011

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Ordinance 24-3733 on final reading amending the zoning for the properties generally located south of First Street and between Pennsylvania Avenue and Michigan Avenue from R1A, Single Family, to B2, General Business.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Miller, White, Acerra, Davis, and Cheesman, 7.
Nays: None
Absent: None
Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-1013

Ordinance on first reading amending Section 113.043 (C) of Chapter 113 of the Galesburg Municipal Code regarding the limitation on the number of Class C-1 liquor licenses.

24-1014

Ordinance on first reading vacating Victoria Avenue between North Cedar Street and North West Street.

24-2015

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve Resolution 24-14 in support of the City's application to the State of Illinois' Rebuild Downtowns and Main Streets Capital Grant for proposed improvements on Simmons Street between Cherry Street and Prairie Street and between Kellogg Street and Seminary Street.

Roll Call #9:

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**24-3024**

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the bid from Bi-State Masonry, Inc. in the amount of \$57,622 for the masonry repairs at the Galesburg Water Treatment Plant building.

Roll Call #10:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-3025

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to discuss the resurfacing of six outside pickleball courts at Bateman Park.

City Manager Hanson reported that staff has talked to at least one of the vendors who have agreed that if this is tabled tonight, they will bring a court into town and set it up and let people play on it. Staff would recommend putting this particular item on the table while staff works with the vendors to bring the product in so that people can try it out. The Council can then either proceed or vote the bid down and go a different pathway.

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to table agenda item 24-3025 for the resurfacing of six outside pickleball courts at Bateman Park.

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-3026

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve the sale of the following City-owned properties:

ACCEPT SOLE BID:

Tract 2: Flacco Family Farms LLC for \$589

Tract 9: John Stipp for \$150

Tract 10: Mark Rasmussen for \$201

ACCEPT HIGH AND BEST BID:

Tract 4: Andrew Ahlberg for \$6000

Tract 5: Robert Henness for \$610

ACCEPT BEST BID:

Tract 7: Mark Rasmussen for \$201

Council Member Davis inquired on the few that are recommended to reject based on a lack of documentation of plans for the properties and asked if it is necessary to have documentation or is it a recommended part of the procedure to bid for the properties. City Manager Hanson noted that staff in fact met with some of those submitters earlier today, but that the justification for that is so that if they are not adjoining properties and they intend to use the property for development purposes, the City has adequate information to believe that those projects are going to proceed. He added that in most cases, the City has spent a substantial amount of money acquiring, maintaining, or demolishing these properties, and before we sell them we want to ensure that something productive happens to them, which is why we ask for development plans. He also noted that this isn't the only pathway, and that anyone can submit a proposal on any track once they meet all the requirements, and provided guidance to that effect to those individuals this afternoon.

Roll Call #12:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-3027

Council Member Hix moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve the bid submitted by Brandt Construction Company in the amount of \$2,189,342.20 for the 2024 intermittent resurfacing project.

Roll Call #13:

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

City Manager Hanson announced and welcomed the City's new Director of Finance, Jennifer O'Hern. He added that she is a phenomenally talented individual who we are glad is returning home to Galesburg to help lead our finance department. He also thanked Bobbi Chockley for her six months of service leading as the Interim Director of Finance following Gloria Osborn's retirement; she did a phenomenal job and appreciated her leadership.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

24-4041

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a letter of commitment with the Illinois Department of Transportation for replacing the structure carrying Lincoln Park Drive over U.S. 34. The City will continue the maintenance of the sidewalk, similar to the agreement currently in place for the existing bridge.

Roll Call #14:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4042

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve a proposal submitted by Farnsworth Group in the amount of \$81,000 to complete the engineering and architectural work on the Cooke Park development project.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

24-9012

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$7,445.93
General Assistance Fund	\$9,990.31
IMRF Fund	

Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$1,500.00
Liability Fund	\$4,177.58
Audit Fund	
Total	\$23,113.82

Roll Call #16:

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White stated his appreciation for the approval of the Pavement Management Services tonight, which will be \$100,000 well spent. He has always stated that there are problems with the streets in his ward and this will be a way to look at all of them in our community in a consistent and manageable manner. He's also glad that the intermittent resurfacing project will soon start and is happy that South Street and Academy Street around Knox College will be a focus.

Council Member White also stated that he is glad that Cooke School has been chosen to be developed into a park since he spent so much time there as a kid and is proud of the individual who has spearheaded that project. He announced that on Juneteenth there will be several events, starting at the library from Noon to 4 p.m. there will be a movie and vendors, and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Park Plaza there will be a young man from the Quad Cities speaking. He also thanked Council Member Dennis and his wife for attending a special event for his daughter and for helping them celebrate.

Council Member White left the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Council Member Acerra wanted to express her confidence that the City will be able to come to a resolution on the controversy of what surface should be on the pickleball courts. She is a big proponent of wellness and she wants to advocate that racquet sports in particular are one of the best ways to maintain health as people get older, as well as dancing, for cognitive function, coordination and so forth. She hopes everyone approaches this with an open mind and noted that the City was very successful with the disc golf project and getting input, and now the City has a fabulous new disc golf course. She also announced that Josh Fleming would like to have the City Council come and learn to play disc golf, and she hopes that it can be coordinated in the near future. She appreciates all the efforts of the City and staff and all the input from those that are enthusiasts for pickleball.

Council Member Davis thanked the community members who helped make sure that the City had a Pride Month resolution on the agenda tonight, and also offered an apology, stating that

she should have been on top of making certain that it was on an agenda previous to this evening and apologizes for her lack of initiative. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to read the resolution out loud tonight and added that it meant a lot to her. She added that unfortunately, even though much progress has been made, there are still people who speak against and vote against the inclusion of queer people and the full recognition of our human rights. She wants the queer community in Galesburg to know that she is a safe person, her home is a safe place, and her inbox is a safe place to email. If anyone is concerned about anything related to being LGBTQ+ or just related to life in general, or a specific concern or complaint in the community, and you want to make sure that you feel safe and comfortable talking to a City representative, she encouraged citizens to reach out to her. She noted that her email is on the City's website as well as a cell phone where she can be texted or left a message.

Council Member Davis stated that she wanted to add a few more items to some of the statistics and facts that were mentioned, including a few positive ones. It is mentioned a lot about the LGBTQ+ community struggling more with mental health, depression, suicide, and addiction. She thinks it is really important to point out that that is not due to anyone's inherent state of existence but is due to how they are treated. They are not inherently prone to higher risks because of their sexual orientation or gender, or gender identity, but they are placed at higher risk because of how they are mistreated and stigmatized in society. It is also acknowledged that 90% of LGBTQ+ young people this year have said that their well-being is negatively impacted due to politics. In 2023, more than 500 bills were introduced in state legislatures, 84 of which were signed into law, targeting the LGBTQ+ community. In the current year, more than 475 bills have been introduced, and is just a reminder that there is still a lot of work to do.

Council Member Cheesman wanted to mention with a summer solstice coming officially on Thursday, that citizens in our community and surrounding communities can get out and enjoy the opportunities that our City offers, both within our recreation services and what private businesses and vendors offer. There's a lot to do here and a lot of things for us to get out and feel good about so he hopes everyone has a chance to get out and enjoy the summer in Galesburg.

Council Member Hix welcomed Jennifer O'Hern and is looking forward to working with her. He also announced that he is getting closer to playing his 100 rounds of golf at Bunker Links in honor of their 100th anniversary. He also wanted to note that it is the 80th anniversary of D-Day and was recently reading a book and watching several movies on that history and acknowledged that we would likely not be able to stand up, put our hands over our hearts and say the Pledge of Allegiance if it hadn't been for the thousands of brave men and women who stormed the beaches in Normandy and saved our freedom. Council Member Hix added that his wife works for the VA Clinic in town and meets veterans every day and has the chance to talk to these amazing people every day.

Council Member Dennis stated that he had lunch at the new Mexican restaurant downtown on Main Street, El Barril, and encouraged people to visit them too.

Council Member Miller announced that this coming Friday at 11 a.m there will be a ribbon cutting at H.T. Custer Park and added that the money that the City spent there has been well worth it, as well as the other parks around town. The children that have been out there have been enjoying it, as well as the families having cookouts on weekends. He stated that he couldn't be prouder to be a part of it and is looking forward to seeing what the City is going to do with Cooke School.

Council Member White returned to the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Mayor Schwartzman restated that the ribbon cutting will be held on Friday at 11 a.m. at H.T. Custer Park. He also announced that the City Council will not meet on July 1st but will next meet again on July 15th. He announced that there are a lot of things going on in Galesburg, including Railroad Days in two weeks, which is one of our long-lasting events, the Big Bang Boom event on July 4th, where he hopes everyone can turn out for the festive occasion. In addition, this coming Wednesday is Juneteenth, which is actually a federal holiday as of 2021, and we are very fortunate to be able to celebrate it in our city. He noted that as Council Member White mentioned, there are events at the public library and Park Plaza.

The Mayor also announced that concurrent with Railroad Days will be Lapanda Days, which will be partly in Galesburg and partly in Monmouth. This is a phenomenal event and one that he looks forward to each year. He will be posting information about these events on his Facebook page, and assumes the City and other entities will be posting the events as well so that everyone can get details. The Mayor also reminded everyone that it is PTSD month and as was noted earlier in the meeting, it's really important that we try to reduce if not eliminate the fireworks that are taking place throughout the City at irregular times during the month. He asked that people be cognizant and respectful of those individuals and animals that live in their neighborhood and do their best to constrain their desire for fireworks.

There being no further business, Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Roll Call #17:

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