

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
July 15, 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.

Bonnie Ericson gave the invocation.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from June 17, 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.

Presentation: FY 2023 Annual Audit by Michael Malatt, Baker Tilly. Jennifer O'Hern, Finance Director, recognized Bobbi Chockley, who served as Interim Finance Director, and Denise Hensley, for their work on the audit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Cain addressed the Council and asked them to look closely at the pickleball court surface they are voting on, especially since Oak Run recently removed a similar court. He also thanked the Police Department for their excellent work during the Fourth of July holiday and Railroad Days. He also noted that a sidewalk is needed at HT Custer Park from the parking area to the swimming pool. Mr. Cain also expressed the great things such as the Knox Prairie Community Kitchen that he enjoys in our community.

Reverend Andrew Jowers addressed the Council and stated his appreciation for his neighbors during the July 4th holiday for their reduction in fireworks but still believes the City needs an ordinance in the future. He added that he can be a resource for the Police Department for any situation they have, especially in light of the young lives lost recently and encouraged the City to think outside the box in terms of the homeless problem and noted the space from the former nursing home on Fifth Street. He encouraged the City to do better for youth programming and

things for young people, some of which is connected with a community center. He feels that there is not a lot going on this summer in terms of programming for our youth and we have some other programs but they are not accessible if you don't have a car. Likewise, if you don't have the money, there are many programs you can't utilize.

CONSENT AGENDA #2024-12

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

24-2016

Approve Resolution 24-15 releasing executive session minutes that are no longer confidential, not releasing certain minutes that are still deemed confidential, and destroying recordings from executive sessions that are over eighteen months old.

24-2017

Approve a Supplemental MFT Resolution in the amount of \$57,609 for the Safe Routes to School project near King and Lombard School.

24-3028

Approve the bid submitted by Mechanical Services, Inc. of Galesburg in the amount of \$103,800 for water line replacement at the Central Fire Station.

24-3029

Approve the bid submitted by CAD Construction in the amount of \$372,400 to renovate a City-owned building as a backup dispatch center, funded by the Knox County Emergency Telephone System Board.

24-3030

Approve the bid submitted by Miller Trucking and Excavating in the amount of \$1,143,791 for a Galesburg Sanitary District sanitary sewer main. The City will receive reimbursement for all costs associated with this project.

24-4043

Accept the donated bus shelter at the Galesburg Public Library, located on West Simmons Street between Academy and West Street, to the City of Galesburg.

24-4044

Accept the Amendment One for State of Illinois Grant Agreement CAP-22-1222-FED to purchase paratransit passenger vehicles in lieu of heavy-duty buses and to extend the grant agreement to December 31, 2027.

24-5006

Receive the FY 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

24-8011

Approve bills as follows:

June 2024

Bills - \$837,932.06

Advance Checks - \$414,756.35

July 2024

Bills - \$1,118,210.50

Advance Checks - \$290,256.50

January 2024

Bills - \$432,389.98

Advance Checks - \$1,667,166.37

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Consent Agenda 2024-12.

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**24-1013**

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Ordinance 24-3734 on final 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.

Council Member Dennis stated that he has toured their facility and that he will be voting in favor of approving the liquor license.

Council Member White stated that while this is not in his Ward, there are already several liquor stores on the south side of Main Street and noted the corner of Henderson Street and Monmouth Boulevard, the corner of Academy Street and Monmouth Boulevard, and Academy Street and Main Street. He noted that these started out as gas stations or convenience stores and are now either liquor stores or in one case, a paraphernalia and liquor store. He believes we have enough liquor stores and that we need grocery stores that sell food. Council Member White announced that he would be voting against this license.

Council Member Miller stated that there was a very nice grocery store in his Ward and they sold a little bit of liquor and then changed hands. At this time, it has become more of a liquor store than a grocery store. At this point, he is in agreement with Council Member White and believes the City has enough liquor stores. He also noted that the City has had several shootings in town,

calls for abuse, among other issues, and he strongly feels that we need to step back and look at the mental health problems in our community and then proceed with caution when it comes to more alcohol. He stated that in his neighborhood, right across the street from his house, there have been several drug overdoses in the last two weeks. He urged the Council and community to start addressing the problem instead of adding to it.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: Council Members Miller and White, 2.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-1014

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve Special Ordinance 24-624 on final reading vacating Victoria Avenue between North Cedar Street and North West Street.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-1015

Ordinance on first reading amending the business at 275 North Seminary Street from Multi-Family (R3A) to Neighborhood Business (B1).

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to remove agenda item 24-3025 from the table.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: Council Member White, 1.

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-3025

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve the bid from Provantage Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$93,857 for the resurfacing of six outside pickleball courts at Bateman Park.

Council Member White inquired about the possible cost if the City were to remove the existing courts. City Manager Hanson stated that in his former community, they bid out a project for the same size court in 2022, with an overlay of new courts, nets, painting, and it was \$380,000. He

does recommend that the Council discuss the project in their upcoming Strategic Planning Session and designate funding if it is a priority project during budget sessions.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: None

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

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion failed.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hansen stated his appreciation for the discussion and feedback on the pickleball courts and wanted to take the opportunity to thank Don Miles and his staff for getting the courts brought here for people to test them out. He added that even though the bids were rejected, he appreciated the companies giving us that opportunity and for our staff in making the effort to make that happen for our community.

The City Manager also wanted to say thank you to all the staff, as was mentioned earlier in public comment, for the many events that go on here in the City that do not go on without effort of some who are required to spend many extra hours outside their normal day doing tasks to ensure that these events go off without challenge. This year, we had events stacked up back to back with Railroad Days, the Fourth of July, and Lipanda Days, basically in the same week. We had many staff members that provided public safety, as well as staff from Public Works and Parks and Recreation, and the people from the Downtown to make those happen. He added that we are going to turn right around this week on Thursday and do it again for the Taste of Galesburg, which is a huge event, and it looks like we're going to have absolutely perfect weather for a change. He wanted to let them know that their efforts are not unnoticed and appreciated not only by the City Manager but also the entire Council for the great work that they do.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

24-4045

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a \$5,000 Minority and/or Woman owned Business Startup Assistance grant for Elementary Earthworks, LLC.

Council Member Miller stated that he has a concern with the garden because in the past, the City has approved grants for gardens but in many instances nothing has come to fruition. He reiterated that this is taxpayers money and that many times there is no return on the City's investment.

John Schlaf, KCAP Small Business Manager, addressed the Council and stated that he has made a site visit to Ms. Theobald's location and assured the Council that there is activity. Their concept is a little different because rather than just farmers markets, although they will participate in those in the future, they have sought to deliver fresh produce to area restaurants so that they

have the freshest produce. He noted that Ms. Theobald came to Galesburg from Montana where she was involved in similar programs with her parents and grandparents, then went to Knox College, fell in love with the community and decided to stay.

Rosie Theobald addressed the Council and reported that she has a 3,600 square foot farm that is already complete, including much of the infrastructure. She added that she doesn't come into this project without any previous experience and last year, had the opportunity to manage a 10 acre farm and a farm to table restaurant outside of Knoxville. She has been harvesting produce and delivering to restaurants and markets such as Cornucopia since April, and is now looking to expand to supplying the public as well. They have also been doing a couple of produce stands at Libby's corner, a community orchard on the corner of Louisville road and Academy close to St. Patrick's Church. She reported that the \$5,000 grant will greatly help increase the ability to have additional irrigation infrastructure installed for watering.

Council Member Miller stated that he hoped he did not come across as negative but that he personally understands how much time it takes to be a successful farmer. He commended Ms. Theobald for her hard work and is looking forward to visiting her location. He noted that he supports her endeavor and is pleased that she has experience and will be voting in favor of the grant.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4046

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to waive normal purchasing policies and approve emergency repairs to the 54" brick sewer located near Monmouth Boulevard, estimated at \$60,000, by Laverdiere Construction.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

24-9013

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

Fund Title	Amount
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Town Fund	\$6,183.72
General Assistance Fund	\$13,251.64
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	\$4,468.76
Audit Fund	
Total	\$23,904.12

Roll Call #10:

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 Cheesman stated that he is pleased to see so many people doing the work of the City and appreciates everyone's efforts. He also invited everyone to the dedication ceremony for the Coach Jimmy Isaacson field at HT Custer Park at 11 a.m. this Sunday, July 21st. He reiterated that he has mentioned it before, but he truly believes that our citizens are the best thing that Galesburg has to offer. They take pride in the City, care, and for the most part, try hard to make this a great place to live. He stated that in the last couple of weeks, the City has lost one of the most impactful citizens in our community, Rodney Blue, who was a classmate of his. He cared a lot about our community, was selfless and compassionate. He was someone that everyone could look to as an example on how to lead our lives and he knows his legacy will be one that a lot of people will remember.

Council Member Bradley Hix remarked that he had the opportunity to participate in a First Tee golf tournament at Lake Bracken and noted that this is its sixth tournament locally. The organization helps collect funds for families who have critically ill children. He praised those that have helped each year and thanked them for their hard work and dedication, such as CC Wilcox, Brad Nolden, and Kori Jensen.

Council Member Wayne Dennis reminded everyone to be careful in the heat and to take their time and drink lots of water.

Council Member Miller stated that he and his wife attended the Big Bang Boom event at Lake Storey on the Fourth of July and it was a great show and tribute to Toby Keith and our country. The fireworks were top-notch and he applauded everyone who helped make it a success. He commented that earlier this year, the Council approved a \$25,000 Urban Ag for a garden on the south side of town. As of right now, they have been paid \$23,018.66 with a remaining balance of \$1,981.34. He stated that he voted against this when the item was brought before the Council for the same reasons he noted earlier, the hard work and for the amount of work that

people don't anticipate. If you drive by this piece of property, there is tall grass, no fencing, two small raised beds, eleven tomato plants, and a small building that is actually, all for \$23,000. He again noted that Council Members are elected to take care of the taxpayers money and the budget for the Urban Ag grants was \$100,000, and paid out to date is \$70,002.40 for four different programs. He stated that he feels these individuals need to return to the Council and answer questions on where this money went. He noted that he has pictures on his phone of this particular property and feels that it was a lot of money and still disagrees with the project.

Council Member White thanked Tony White and Regina Hodge, who took the time to notice and assist with the cleaning up of a mess in the new Lancaster Park. He appreciated their good citizenship, as well as appreciated the City picking up all the trash bags that they left behind from the cleanup. He also stated that the south side of Galesburg was out voted tonight when he and Council Member Miller asked not to put another liquor store on the south side of Main Street, and the motion failed. He added that it's their neighborhood and the people that live in their neighborhoods are the ones that are going to have to deal with this store. He stated that if you look at the statistics, most of the liquor stores and convenience stores are in impoverished neighborhoods. He asked that they consider the people in the Third and Fourth Wards when they vote against something in the future.

Council Member Acerra stated that this Saturday, we all experienced something very shocking when there was an assassination attempt on former President Trump. She wanted to echo the words of the Bishop of Pittsburgh about the man who was killed that day, Corey Comperatore, who was a retired fire chief, who was very involved in his community, a girl dad, and was still a volunteer firefighter. Also injured were David Dutch, a member of the Marine Corps League, and James Copenhaver. She stated that the Bishop of Pittsburgh, said everyone should take a moment to pray for unity and pray for an end to violence and inflammatory rhetoric in our community and across the nation. She stated that she appreciated the prayer that was given at the beginning of this City Council meeting, and she and her family believe in this and they said their rosary to pray for unity. She wanted to say that we can all be an example for that, and our community, and that we have had very inflammatory rhetoric in the past, but that she feels by and large that we are all doing a great job to get along. She ended by saying keep the faith, stand strong, and do your best to really reflect on the humanity of our communities and our nation.

Council Member Davis wanted to echo a lot of the sentiment today about the current weather situation and to stay safe, drink a lot of water and cool down. People don't realize just how dehydrated or exhausted they are so it's important to watch for those signs. She stated that she is excited about the Elementary Earthworks business and other local businesses with a similar endeavor, which is to keep growing and feeding the community, starting right here at home and then expanding.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that he would make his comments short because he was looking at the weather radar and there is a very severe storm headed this way. He hopes everyone stays safe tonight and sheltered since there are reports of straight line winds of up to 100 miles an hour.

He thanked Council Member Cheesman for mentioning Mr. Blue, who was an amazing man who coached his daughters, and he will be very sorely missed in this community. He also noted that there were a lot of amazing events in our community over the last month that our City Manager reflected on also, and they are all great assets to our community. He gave the reminder that Thursday, will be the Taste of Galesburg downtown, an event that you don't want to miss.

There being no further business, Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Roll Call #11:

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