

5:30 p.m. Presentation: Transit Study

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
December 2, 2024
6:00 p.m.

Called to order by Mayor Peter Schwartzman at 6:15 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 Dan Alcorn, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Pastor Antonio Franklin gave the invocation.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from November 18, 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

CONSENT AGENDA #2024-20

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

24-4081

Approve the renewal of a one-year contractual agreement with Assured Partners to provide risk management consulting and insurance brokerage services for the City in the amount of \$35,000 for 2025.

24-4082

Approve the renewal of a service contract between the City of Galesburg Public Transportation and Carl Sandburg College to provide students, faculty, and staff unlimited rides on fixed-route bus service from September 2024 through August 2025 in the amount of \$4,000.

24-4083

Approve the renewal of a service contract between the City of Galesburg Public Transportation and the Knox County Housing Authority to provide residents unlimited fixed route rides from July 2024 through December 2026, which will be tracked and billed at the current fare rates.

24-5014

Receive the 2025 City Meeting Calendar.

24-8020

Approve bills in the amount of \$928,164.79 and advance checks in the amount of \$2,508,585.65.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve Consent Agenda 2024-21.

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**24-1026**

Ordinance on first reading amending the property at 40 East Simmons Street from I, Institutional, to B3, Central Business District.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

City Manager Hansen thanked the staff who worked diligently over the last couple of weeks to put up the lights throughout our downtown and noted that when he arrived here a year ago one of the things that struck him as he came into town was how amazing the lighting was throughout the downtown. He hopes the community enjoys it, but it takes a lot of effort from a number of people to make it happen, and he appreciates their efforts.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)**24-4084**

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve a Minority and/or Woman owned Business Startup Assistance Program for 360 Party Zone, LLC, for \$5,000 plus \$2,500 per full-time employee created, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4085

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve a Minority and/or Woman owned Business Startup Assistance Program for Bess-Tabb & Associates, LLC, for \$5,000 plus \$2,500 per full-time employee created, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4086

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a Minority and/or Woman owned Business Startup Assistance Program for The Griffin, for \$5,000 plus \$2,500 per full-time employee created, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

24-4087

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve a Southside Occupancy Assistance Grant to the Knox County Athletic Club, LLC, for \$5,000 plus \$2,500 per full-time employee created, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that four new businesses were approved for assistance tonight, making the total 28 that the City has assisted over the last three years. He believes eleven of those businesses are located downtown, and in the case tonight, there is a re-occupancy of the old Rescue Mission building, formerly Douglas Elementary School. He thinks this is phenomenal and is so pleased and that the public should be as well.

24-4088

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the fiscal year 2025 Budget and Salary Schedule.

City Manager Hansen wanted to thank Jennifer O'Hern, Finance Director and the Finance team, especially Tanya Billeter who is really the mastermind behind the budget and keeps us in line.

He also thanked all the department heads and staff, since as Council is likely aware, the budget process is a six to eight month endeavor. He added that Council held a fairly lengthy work session in September, and he provided updates in October and November as well. The tax levy was approved at the last meeting, and following the budget tonight, the last item will be to abate the bonds at the December 16th meeting. The budget is a culmination of a lot of work, and he is very pleased and appreciates the department heads and their staff and all the work that they did that goes into the budget. He noted that it accomplishes a number of goals, as he has stated before, on the capital side, and on the operational side there were no position eliminations.

He also reminded the Council that a lot of the priorities that have come before Council in 2024 are still in the budget. Also, with their action, the City kept the property tax rate flat or slightly declining, for next year. That is credit to the work of the Council and certainly to the staff. He hopes 2025 is just as good or better than 2024 in terms of what we get accomplished and stated that he is very proud of the work staff did and wanted to acknowledge them for their excellent efforts and the jobs that they do every day.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Mayor Schwartzman agreed with City Manager Hansen's comments but also stated that the City Manager deserves a lot of credit, as well as Director O'Hern. He added that in his 14 years serving the community as an elected official, this is the best, most thoroughly considered budget he has seen. He congratulated all those involved. He noted that \$78 million is being put to action for the betterment of our community, which is a significant amount of money that needs to be spent wisely.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

24-9027

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$181.80
General Assistance Fund	\$10,176.40
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	

Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$10,358.20

Roll Call #9:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White wanted to reiterate to everybody to get involved in their city and encouraged them to go to the City's webpage and sign up for the "Get Notified" feature. If signed up, it will give residents any piece of information that they need, from the City's budgets, Commissions, and everything that they need to know. He implored everyone to look at the Council packet, see what they are doing, and keep up with the Council and hold them accountable to their jobs as the City Council.

He also showed the audience a metal project that a young man made from the GAVC a few weeks ago. He noted that this kid is 16 years old but is qualified to go out to Jupiter and get a job right now. Another young man made him a new "G" and he wanted to showcase some of the work that these students are doing out there. He has one more item at home that the student made for signifying his tour of Vietnam. He encouraged everyone to invest in these students, take the time with them and help them get these skills that they can use to become productive citizens, and have good jobs with skills that will move our City forward. Council Member White also added that Christmastime is coming around and that we just gave thanks for another day and he thanks God that he's able to be here and to do what he does and to help this community. Christmas is a time to give and it's not about what you're receiving. A man gave His life for every single one of us and he hopes everyone thinks about that this year, not about what you can receive, but what you can give to one another. He hopes people can treat others with kindness and respect, whoever they may be, especially the ones that aren't like them.

Council Member White left the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Council Member Acerra echoed Council Member White's comments and agreed that there is so much opportunity to get involved in your city, not only at the municipal level, but also in volunteering. Maybe in sports, helping the needy, serving someone in a kitchen, and many churches have all kinds of volunteer opportunities, as well as the United Way. There are so many places if people are not sure where to start that might align with their interests, that will enhance the fabric of our community. She also wanted to remind everyone to shop local since there is still some time left before Christmas. She also noted that people could consider getting

gift certificates for a service or restaurants, and that small businesses really appreciate that kind of support.

Council Member Davis stated that she loved what the City Manager said earlier about the Christmas lights, which is one of her favorite things about our City. She would encourage everyone to take a drive down Main Street, or even a stroll, and see the lighting that the City employees have put up. She thanked City staff again for doing such an awesome job with that and added that she is so appreciative every time she gets to go out there and look around and bask in that beauty of our City. She feels that it is joyful and she loves that the giving spirit of Christmas and being involved with your community was just talked about. She hopes everyone can find something, whether it's those lights or something else, that brings joy for them this Christmas season.

Council Member Cheesman stated that this morning on WGIL, there was an excellent interview with a young lady named Ellen Tolley Davis, a Galesburg native, who coined the term Cyber Monday. There's another young lady that's been a commentator and a political analyst on Fox and CNN named Johanna Maska. He noted that we have a number of people that have come from our community, being raised by our citizens, their families, teachers, and our educational system. They have gone on and left our community and done great things, and he has heard a number of them, both face to face and through interviews, how much their city did for them, their schools, families, friends, those people that they've been around and have influenced them and helped raise them into the people that they are today. He feels we can never lose notice of the fact that so much negative is talked about in our city but that we have so many things here that are positive in many ways, and we need to accentuate those. He thinks that as we talk to people that have left our town, we need to do everything we can to retain what we have, encourage vocational jobs, but we need to speak with those people who have left and ask them what was done here that really helped them.

Council Member Dennis thanked Council Member White for his comments about giving and added that he gives to two fine organizations. One of them is the Tunnel to Towers Foundation and the Wounded Warriors.

Council Member Miller reminded everyone that this coming Sunday is the Christmas parade in downtown Galesburg. He added that he would like to challenge the Council to come up with a float next year for the parade. He also wanted to announce that the Warming Center is open and that if anyone sees somebody out there, please help get them there.

Mayor Schwartzman reiterated that the Holly Days Parade is this Sunday at 5 p.m. downtown and is one of the most festive events we have in our City. He also noted that at the last meeting, he mentioned that he gave the State of the City speech at the Chamber's Thanksgiving Luncheon, and it has now been posted on the WGIL webpage, and he thanked them for that. The written portion is available as well and he noted that he tried to cover the main successes we had in the City this year and then things looking forward.

Lastly, the Mayor stated that we have some really excellent basketball players in Galesburg, both male and female, at the high school level and at both colleges. He hopes to encourage

everyone to take the time to go out and enjoy a game since it's very inexpensive entertainment, and it supports our local players.

There being no further business, Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:45 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