

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
February 3, 2025
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 and Steve Cheesman, 7. Absent: Council Member Sarah Carrington, 1. 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.

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of an invocation.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from January 21, 2025.

Roll Call #2:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Carrington, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Reverend Andrew Jowers addressed the Council to follow up and make an official request that the Council name a street in Galesburg after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He feels that it's time that the Council and community demonstrate its resolve and a commitment toward building a community where decency and respect are championed. He understands that naming a street after Dr. King would not be without its controversy but that there should be discussion and debate of our citizens and leaders so that the City can move forward in spite of the past. Reverend Jowers also stated that he received some political literature from one of the candidates running for higher office in Galesburg who said he was going to address homelessness and not raise taxes. He wants candidates to be transparent and provide specific plans for addressing homelessness, including the associated costs.

Vince Marolla addressed the Council and echoed Reverend Jowers' idea regarding Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and how Dr. King talked about a beloved community as a place where people came together and a place where people loved each other. He acknowledged potential controversy but believes naming a street after Dr. King would demonstrate the Council's commitment to racial equality and inclusivity. He also understands that the Council supports the

idea of a community center and that it could be named after someone who exemplified the principles of nonviolence and community-building.

CONSENT AGENDA #2025-03

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

25-4010

Approve an updated zoning map.

25-4011

Approve a one-year renewal of the seven existing flood insurance policies with Selective Insurance Company in the amount of \$31,180 for the properties in the Mississippi River flood plain at Oquawka.

25-8002

Approve bills in the amount of \$718,602.95 and advance checks in the amount of \$1,425,152.41.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Consent Agenda 2025-03.

Roll Call #3:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Carrington, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

25-1000

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Ordinance 25-3746 on final reading amending an existing site lease agreement for an area of approximately 5,625 square feet of municipal property in Kiwanis Park for use as a telecommunications tower site. The City Manager will send an annual revenue report to Council.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Carrington, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hansen announced that he discussed several topics related to business and commercial development during his WGIL interview this morning. He encouraged everyone to listen to the interview, as many of the topics addressed common questions the City receives.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

25-4012

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a Redeveloper Agreement with Nancy Brown d/b/a Steve's Smith and Allen Garage for the property located at 41 North Kellogg Street. Council Member Cheesman stated that this is an excellent solution and appreciates the compromises. City Manager Hansen thanked City staff, the owner, and Bob Bondi, for their assistance.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Carrington, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-4013

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to waive normal purchasing policies and approve a four-year lease agreement for a 2025 Elgin Pelican Street Sweeper not to exceed \$374,918.92.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Carrington, 1.

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

25-9003

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$1,743.17
General Assistance Fund	\$6,226.00
IMRF Fund	

Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$7,969.17

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee Carrington, 1.

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 White announced that the Orpheum Theatre is moving and changing and he is glad that they're improving what they're doing. He attended the Motown Review and had a great time and is looking forward to more things happening at the Theatre. He also noted that at the last meeting he spoke about being kind and caring towards people and added that this is Black History Month, which is part of American history; however, it is not being taught in many schools because of CRT (critical race theory). He stated that he watched a tragic accident on television, where almost 70 people lost their lives, and a man blamed it on DEI. He asked some people in our city about DEI and a woman he asked stated when she goes into a corporate boardroom, most of the time it's all men, so she understands what it's like having to step into a world that you almost don't fit into and have to make a way. He stated that we need diversity and inclusion in every step of our life and that you can't have one with the other.

Council Member White urged citizens to get involved in the City. He encouraged them to sign up for email notifications on the City's web page, by clicking the "Get Notified" link at the bottom. This will help citizens stay informed and work together to grow the City, without divisions based on political party, skin color, or economics.

Council Member Acerra thanked City Manager Hansen and Administrative Services Manager Cathy St. George for the Economic Growth Report. The City Manager thanked St. George for her work on the report and noted that it will be on the City's webpage. Council Member Acerra noted a few highlights from the report, such as attracting industry was indicated on a 2022 survey of the community as the top priority by 77% of our residents. She noted that the City had a great year for economic growth and that there are many people who have worked on these initiatives including Ken Springer, the City Manager, and many others. She also noted that we've had 23 new developments, expansions or new businesses, 326 new jobs, and \$113 million of private investment in our community. She appreciates that we are headed in a great direction when things can seem rather gloomy and that it's good to look at these positive trends.

Council Member Cheesman also thanked Cathy St. George for the report and the terrific economic news in our town, the number of jobs, the economic impact, and the self-esteem that it creates. Whether it's the new potential railroad advancement, the Western Smokehouse expansion, ag business, healthcare, infrastructure additions, or beautification efforts, all these are making a difference in our community.

He also reiterated what Council Member White stated in that everyone is important and it doesn't matter their economic status, race, or gender. Everyone needs to work together to be successful and to keep this momentum going. He also added that when he was a teacher at Churchill Junior High School, black history was taught. He believes that one of the greatest Americans he admires is Jackie Robinson, not only because of his baseball but because of all the other things he did as well. He expressed his condolences to the family of David Uhlmann, who was a member of the City's Planning & Zoning Commission and another person who made our community great.

Mayor Schwartzman thanked the others for mentioning the economic report, which is something he hasn't seen the City do in recent years. He noted that the City had a great year last year, and in speaking to constituents around the City, there is a lot of positive attitude towards the future. He also reminded people that even though it's February and feels like the middle of spring, we will get cold weather again. We have had very little snow, which actually benefits the City's finances because of the reduction in labor costs and salt costs. He also urged everyone to stay healthy and to enjoy Black History Month.

There being no further business, Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Carrington, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Mayor Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk