

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
June 2, 2025
6:00 p.m.

Called to order by Mayor Schwartzman at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call #1: Present: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Bradley Hix, Wendel Hunigan, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman, 7. Absent: Council Member Evan Miller, 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.

Deacon Michael Crummer gave the invocation.

Proclamation: Pride Month
Juneteenth

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from May 19, 2025.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Hunigan, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Abstain: Council Member White, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

City Attorney Dan Alcorn opened and read sealed bids for the following City-owned properties:

Bidder	Tract	Bid Price
Matthew Wheaton	9	\$100
Jeffrey Anderson	6	\$100
Flacco Family Farms, LLC	3	\$591
Rogue Shott	13	\$500
Shana Scott, No Limit Landscaping	1	\$100

	2	\$205
	3	\$100
	4	\$100
	5	\$100
	6	\$100
	7	\$100
	8	\$100
	9	\$100
	10	\$100
	11	\$100
	12	\$100
	13	\$100
Michael Akers	13	\$100
Glass Specialty, WLC, Inc.	11	\$200
Tuesday R. Spinks	7	\$100
Karla Johnson	9	\$300
Mark Rasmussen	1	\$351
	2	\$301
	3	\$151
	4	\$351
	6	\$351
	13	\$401
Marcus Kyser, Sr.	10	\$500

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Selkirk, Golf Commission Chairman, addressed the Council regarding the proposed resolution to purchase the land west of Bunker Links Golf Course. He recalled requesting the purchase 12 years ago, when the City believed they had the right of first refusal. He added that this property would provide future expansion options for the golf course and connect it geographically to Lincoln Park and Lake Story, and urged the Council to vote in favor of the purchase.

Candy Webb addressed the Council, expressing her gratitude to the City for all the support in organizing the Juneteenth Celebration, noting that everyone has provided invaluable assistance, directing their planning committee to the right resources and advising them on potential pitfalls. She announced that they have a wide array of activities planned and given Galesburg's long-standing commitment to open-mindedness and cultural engagement, this celebration will be a perfect fit for the community.

Charles Little addressed the Council and thanked them for addressing homelessness, referencing a recent news article. He stated his concerns about proposed budget cuts by the federal administration to HUD programs, including no funding for various homeless assistance initiatives, moving the financial burden to the state. He noted several cuts to homeless assistance grants, potentially leaving only a State Rental Assistance Program funded. This situation could impact existing HUD voucher holders with the Knox County Housing Authority, possibly increasing local homelessness. He expressed his concern about the increase in individuals not only due to these budget changes, but also from other communities. He would like to meet with the City Manager and the Mayor to discuss his research and develop potential solutions.

Mindy Knapp addressed the Council, noting a situation involving a homeless individual, who had initially been at the warming center, then was on the streets since February. Following an incident at the library last week involving mental health issues and claims of sexual assault, the police were called. It was discovered that this individual was a missing person from Peoria, and she has since returned home. Because of this, she questions the follow-through with people at the warming center. Ms. Knapp also addressed the issue of discarded items in dumpsters around the Knox College campus as students move out. She suggested organizing a donation system, so these items can be given to those in need, rather than being wasted.

Reverend Andrew Jowers praised Ms. Knapp for her positive strategy and her passion, and commended Mr. Little for caring about others. He expressed confidence that the Council could address homelessness and noted the City's vacant buildings. He emphasized participation in governance, stating that all individuals should have a voice in decision-making, directly or through representation. As a clergy member, he is engaging outside his religious institution, contrasting with people in the South during the Civil Rights era who were more cautious than courageous and detached from people's struggles. He urged the Council to re-evaluate their approach and to observe the community's struggling children and families firsthand. He also mentioned Juneteenth, announcing several local published authors will be in attendance.

CONSENT AGENDA #2025-11

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

25-8010

Approve bills in the amount of \$584,326.99 and advance checks in the amount of \$186,345.49.

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Consent Agenda 2025-11.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

25-2017

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve Resolution 25-15 authorizing the purchase of Parcel Identification Numbers 99-10-460-001, 99-10-460-002, 99-10-460-003, and 99-10-460-004 for the forgiveness of indebtedness in the amount of \$300,000.

Council Member Hix stated that he would be abstaining from this vote due to his professional relationship with the Martins.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Abstain: Council Member Hix, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-2018

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Hix, to approve Resolution 25-16 authorizing the purchase of Parcel Identification Number 05-34-101-002 in the amount of \$63,000.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

25-3016

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to rescind the bid approved at the May 5, 2025, City Council meeting from Yemm Chevrolet in the amount of \$52,497 for the purchase of a one ton heavy duty RAM 3500 for the Water Division.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-3017

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve the bid from Victory Lane Ford in the amount of \$52,990 for the purchase of a new one ton heavy duty 2024 RAM 3500 to be utilized by the Water Division.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

25-4043

Council Member Hix moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve an engineering agreement with Hanson Engineering for the Airport Fuel Farm project in the amount of \$120,612.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

25-9014

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$166.00
General Assistance Fund	\$3,597.52
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$3,763.52

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Trustees Hix, Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Trustee Cheesman moved, seconded by Trustee Saul, to resume as the City Council. The motion carried.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member Hunigan expressed his appreciation to Acting Police Chief Kevin Legate for visiting his home, as well as for the City Manager in facilitating the meeting between law enforcement and residents of his ward. He noted that Acting Chief Legate spent two hours engaging with his neighbors, addressing concerns about problem houses, illegal drugs, and the connections between homelessness and mental health issues. He stated that he has lived on Mulberry Street for nearly five decades, and highlighted the significant negative impact a single problematic residence can have on an entire neighborhood. Over the past year, two drug overdoses requiring paramedic assistance occurred at a house next door to him, as well as an incident at the same location where a resident experienced a mental health episode and disrobed in his yard. He and his neighbors appreciated Acting Chief Legate's proactive and collaborative policing approach, which has fostered trust and cooperation. The meeting also included a conversation with the homeowner residing in the concerning house. Acting Chief Legate assured the residents that the house would be monitored using all available legal means. He stated that at the next Council Meeting, he would like to discuss dilapidated houses.

Council Member White urged everyone to look up HR 3518, expressing his hope that it doesn't impact Galesburg, as federal mandates often have local repercussions. He also raised concerns about license plate readers and Flock cameras. He noted an incident in Texas involving the use of thousands of cameras to locate and arrest a woman suspected of having an abortion. He stated that this was a prime example of the surveillance issues at hand and highlights broader concerns about nationwide trends, noting how cell phones also track individuals. He believes this instance underscores the worry that this mass surveillance infrastructure, initially presented as a tool for locating stolen vehicles or missing persons, is now being utilized to target those seeking reproductive health care. He feels that this unchecked, warrant-less access enables law enforcement to surveil across state lines.

Council Member Acerra agrees with Council Member Hunigan's concerns and stated that in her ward, as in other parts of town, there are issues such as dilapidated homes, residents with mental health challenges, and drug use. From her personal observations on her walks through the ward, confirm this reality and she thanked public safety personnel for their response to numerous incidents. She also thanked Director Gugliotta and his staff for their efforts to find grants and resources to renovate and repair homes despite limited funding. She believes it's a challenging situation, and ongoing efforts to find solutions and maintain awareness are essential.

Council Member Saul stated that he agrees that a single neglected property can detract from an entire neighborhood's appearance. He personally noted several residences and businesses in his area with unmown lawns. He suggested residents consider hiring local youth, many of whom are recently out of school, to help with yard work if they are unable to manage it themselves.

Council Member Cheesman also agrees with the issue of dilapidated homes, but also highlighted the City's many positive aspects and the majority of responsible citizens. He stated that the community has many excellent landlords, but concerns have been raised about others who exploit tenants and neglect their property. He shared an example of a disabled individual living in poor conditions due to landlord inaction. Accountability for landlords needs improvement to ensure everyone is moving in the right direction.

Council Member Cheesman stated that he attended the dedication of the Albert and Elbert Kimbrough Fieldhouse, which honored two significant individuals who made substantial contributions and exemplified dignity and grace. He also noted the importance of proclamations and the opportunity they give for sharing important stories and events where the community can learn and connect. He noted that he would like to revive the "Youth Extra Effort Award" originally championed by former Alderman John Peterson. This award recognizes ordinary young people making unnoticed contributions. Council Member Cheesman announced that he would be holding a town hall meeting at the Public Library on Tuesday, June 17th, from 6-7 p.m. He hopes to encourage citizen engagement, have questions and discussion, and inform residents about City initiatives.

Council Member Hix expressed his appreciation for Deacon Crummer's presence for the invocation tonight and considers him a friend and admires him greatly. He values his consistent even-keeled demeanor and sound advice and it meant a lot that he took time to begin the meeting.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that the recent weeks have seen many graduates and celebrations in the community with many young people achieving wonderful things. The upcoming Juneteenth event, spanning multiple days with various activities, offers numerous engagement opportunities, and participation is encouraged. He added that he would also be sharing information about Juneteenth on his Facebook page. Additionally, he added that public input is highly valued, and that he would be establishing bi-weekly community meetings for discussions and idea sharing and that they would be announced on Facebook, too.

There being no further business, Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Mayor Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk