

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
October 20, 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 Angelica Mangieri, Wendel Hunigan, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman, 7. Absent: Council Member Evan Miller, 1. 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 White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from October 6, 2025.

Roll Call #2:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Spinks addressed the Council stating that he was not before them to complain and summarized his previous interaction with them regarding his floor project, where he was told that assistance for him could necessitate helping everyone in the community. He noted that with the Mayor's fundraiser, they raised approximately \$16,000, leaving a remaining \$107,000 for which he secured a personal loan. He expressed that he continues to feel overlooked, despite individual conversations, with Council Members but acknowledged receiving a startup grant and other significant contributions. He explained that he ran a program Monday through Thursday, April through August, from 3-7 p.m., serving over 300 children. This free program, funded by the Knox County Mental Health Board, and included field trips and meals, as the United Way had relocated and the YMCA couldn't accommodate them.

Mr. Spinks noted his newest offering, a free laundry service, which he believes teaches children how to do their laundry, emphasizing the importance of following a chain of command. He added that he had met with the City Manager and others, clarifying that he was not seeking a handout, but rather support. He also noted that his efforts for the past several years have been likened to the Carver Center and it is frequently suggested to him to approach the City Council

for support. He hopes that presenting his request in this manner will lead to him being placed on a future City Council agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA #2025-20

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

25-2031

Approve an MFT Resolution for the purchase of salt, hot mix asphalt, concrete, CA-6 gravel, and high-performance patching mixture in the amount of \$405,000 for the 2026 calendar year.

25-4064

Approve the renewal of the Employee Assistance Program contract with Risk Management Association at \$7,000 annually.

25-4065

Approve a proposal from Terracon Consultants, Inc. for the administration of two Federal Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Grants.

25-4066

Approve waiving normal purchasing policies and approve repairs to hybrid bus 1701 in the amount of \$36,980.66 from Interstate Power Systems.

25-8019

Approve bills in the amount of \$2,000,201.19 and advance checks in the amount of \$609,603.15.

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve Consent Agenda 2025-20.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, 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

25-1017

Ordinance on first reading adjusting various rates and fees collected by the City, effective January 1, 2026.

25-2032

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve Resolution 25-27 determining the 2025 Property Tax Levy, which is not more than 105 percent and

therefore will not require a truth in taxation public hearing. The tax levy request will not exceed \$10,453,588.

City Manager Hanson clarified that approximately 20% of the tax bill goes to the City, with an additional 5% allocated to the Library. The remaining portion of the bill is distributed among other taxing bodies. For further details, residents can refer to their tax bill or visit the City's website, which features a dedicated page on this topic. The City's Annual Report also provides a comprehensive breakdown of property tax revenue.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

25-3043

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve the 2025-2026 State bid for bulk rock salt in the amount of \$84.88 per ton from Morton Salt, Inc.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-3044

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve the bid submitted by Motorola Solutions in the amount of \$435,342.85 over a five-year term for the purchase and installation of 13 in-car squad cameras, 55 officer body-worn cameras and two interview room camera systems for the Police Department.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-3045

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman to approve the bid submitted by Motorola Solutions in the amount of \$1,240,420.49 for the purchase and installation of 27 mobile and 84 portable radios for the Police and Fire Departments.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

A. The October Traffic Advisory Committee Report was presented for review.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

25-4067

Council Member Mangieri moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve the purchase of insurance policies from the Illinois Municipal League Risk Management Association for the period 1/1/2026 through 12/31/2026.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-4068

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to initiate the demolition process on properties located at:

- 599 East South Street (residence)
- 116 Duffield Avenue (residence)
- 1319 North Broad Street (residence and detached garage)
- 1094 Garden Lane (residence and detached garage)
- 846 Avenue A (residence)
- 257 East Water Street (residence)
- 440 South Henderson Street (residence)
- 566 Hawthorne Court (commercial building)
- 72 Duffield Avenue (shed)

City Manager Hanson clarified that this action marks the beginning of the demolition process and authorizes the City to proceed with addressing properties that are not in compliance, but the process will halt if properties come into compliance. He noted that staff is currently working on approximately 60 to 70 properties, some of which were referred by neighbors, Council Members, or concerned individuals. He stressed that this is not an action for immediate demolition of the nine properties, but rather the start of a potentially long process, depending on interactions with property owners.

Roll Call #9:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-4068

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve a service contract between the City of Galesburg Public Transportation and Western Illinois Area Agency on Aging (WIAAA) to provide transportation to riders 60 years of age and older through September 2026.

Roll Call #10:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS**25-9024**

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$8,322.06
General Assistance Fund	\$9,725.00
IMRF Fund	\$3,782.18
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$21,829.24

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee Miller, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White stated his appreciation in seeing young and engaged faces in the audience and noted its importance to him that they get and stay involved in the community. He also urged every City Council Member to visit the City Transit building and ride a bus from one end of town to the other and back again. This will help everyone understand the challenges faced by seniors and others who rely on public transportation. He encouraged them to experience another route, which would highlight how our transit system, while good, still has shortcomings.

Council Member White thanked the police officers who were present at the “No Kings” rally. As an ex-military veteran who has been to war, he noted that he cannot ignore what is happening in the nation and country. He is deeply concerned, especially as an African American. The Supreme Court's upcoming review of voting rights is also a great concern. Regardless of whether an individual identifies as a Democrat, Republican, conservative, or liberal, these issues affect everyone, and he hopes people get involved and come together during this difficult time.

Council Member Acerra acknowledged the excellent assistance she received from the Galesburg Public Library and Knox College Library during her research into the original builders of her home on North Prairie Street. Her research led her to discover the family that built the house had a daughter, Inez Webster, who attended Lombard College and Knox College, and later a seminary. She was a member of Pi Phi, a sorority known for its focus on community work. Locally, she was involved with the Galesburg and Knox County Free Kindergarten, an organization that cared for children and also facilitated the placement of orphaned children into homes within Galesburg. During the Armenian Genocide, she visited friends working for the Near East Relief organization. After receiving training in Greece, she traveled to Syria, where she was entrusted with the care of hundreds of children, predominantly young girls. Later, she went on to manage the largest orphanage in Russia. Ms. Webster, a woman from Galesburg, Illinois, truly exemplified her values and her family played a role in the founding of Lombard College.

Council Member Acerra stated that she thoroughly enjoyed this research and she's grateful for the support from the libraries. She encouraged everyone to delve into our City's rich history and discover individuals like Ms. Webster, who profoundly impacted not only our community but the entire world.

Council Member Saul congratulated Aaron Gebhardt of Indianola, Iowa, on winning the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. He noted that Aaron's father was formerly the balloonmeister for many years at the Galesburg Balloon Race. He also stated that he was able to watch a SpaceX launch from South Padre Island, Texas, and noted it was very exciting. He also addressed Mr. Spinks' remarks and hopes that he receives the necessary help to keep his facility open. Council Member Saul emphasized the importance of the skating rink for youth and offered to assist with fundraising efforts if needed.

Council Member Cheesman stated his appreciation for his colleagues' comments and hopes that the public considers them, noting Council Member White's point about seniors and public transportation. Many residents rely on public transit, and the City is committed to improving it, especially for seniors, and noted the transit study, which is a top priority. He also stated that regarding demolitions, the City Council does not take joy in these actions and wish circumstances were different. The City explores various options to save properties and attempts to educate owners on maintaining their property.

Council Member Cheesman stated that as the City Manager reported, the City Council is extremely mindful of controlling property taxes and strives to keep the tax rate as low as possible while still providing essential services, and is thrilled to be able to achieve this at this time.

Finally, he reported that he attended the NAACP Gala this past weekend, which was a wonderful event. He has been to many such events—fundraisers, educational programs, and informational sessions—that bring people together and foster positive feelings, which reflects the character of our citizens. He encouraged everyone to attend these events when they have the opportunity, as they significantly benefit our community, its citizens, and the causes they represent.

Council Member Mangieri addressed the transit system, referencing Council Member White's comments and noted her plans to ride the bus this week for a grocery store trip. As a family of six requiring a significant amount of groceries, she's looking forward to assessing the endeavor using public transit, including finding out the duration of the ride. She plans to report her findings at the next meeting. She also attended the NAACP Gala and thanked Council Member Cheesman for encouraging broader community participation in events. She emphasized that these events are open to everyone, not just specific groups. She acknowledged that there could be social anxiety for some but encouraged people to attend with friends, stressing that no one should feel excluded from these spaces.

Council Member Hunigan stated that our nation faces deep division, and this past Saturday, national politics significantly impacted Galesburg with over 1,000 citizens gathering downtown for the "No Kings, No President" protest against President Donald Trump. Similar to the Tea Party protests during the Obama administration, these demonstrations highlighted concerns about executive overreach, major rollbacks in public health and environmental protections, and the potential risk to healthcare and social security benefits for millions of Americans. During his presence at the protest, he observed no violence or harmful actions. He witnessed numerous concerned citizens expressing worries about executive overreach and a leader who has suggested a desire for a third term. Council Member Hunigan stated that the protest demonstrated that many people are actively engaged with the actions of politicians in Washington. He reminded everyone that Americans possess the right to protest, a right protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

Council Member Hunigan noted that it was an honor for him to attend the 93rd anniversary celebration of Full Gospel Church, founded by evangelist Daisy Huff Walker in a small storefront on Brooks Street. The church continues to thrive and serve the community under the leadership of Reverend Antonio S. Franklin and his wife Marie.

Mayor Schwartzman noted the many first-time attendees in the audience and that the City Council is grateful for their presence and for their decision to be part of the community. He also acknowledged Council Members who openly shared their diverse perspectives. He added that this rich diversity is what makes Galesburg a truly special place.

He also shared that he attended the NAACP Gala, where Dr. Dwight Ford, who is currently leading a project in Rock Island, delivered an extraordinary speech. The Mayor noted that he is one of the most passionate, intelligent, and heartfelt speakers he has ever encountered, with incredibly thoughtful insights relevant to our present day. Dr. Ford is a generation removed from Martin Luther King Jr. and was trained by someone who worked directly with Dr. King and he sees a great deal of Dr. King's spirit in Mr. Ford. Should he return to Galesburg, or if you find

yourself in the Quad Cities, he encouraged everyone to seize the opportunity to listen to and converse with him.

The Mayor reported that a few weeks ago, the City held a significant budget meeting, and that this is a crucial time for Galesburg citizens to express their thoughts, dreams, and aspirations for the coming year. If there's something the community hopes to see happen that hasn't been considered, now is the ideal time to share it with him, a Council Member, or the City Manager. He added that our community is experiencing substantial growth and many truly remarkable developments. Almost all of these achievements are the result of citizens and residents who dared to dream of a better future. The Mayor announced that to celebrate these successes and the future, he will be hosting a party on Saturday, November 15th. The location will be announced soon, but the community is invited. He noted that sometimes the broader outlook often appears dark and dire on television, but in Galesburg we can take immense pride in our accomplishments and its future anticipated growth. He hopes citizens can attend and enjoy the celebration of what we have achieved together.

There being no further business, Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Roll Call #12:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, 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