

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
December 1, 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, Evan Miller, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman, 8. 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 Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from November 17, 2025.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CONSENT AGENDA #2025-23

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

25-4079

Approve the annual service renewal for streaming and storing of public meetings with Granicus in the amount of \$25,565.61

25-8022

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,365,003.26 and advance checks in the amount of \$1,360,263.67.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve Consent Agenda 2025-23.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

25-1020

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Mangieri, to approve Special Ordinance 25-633 on final reading authorizing the sale of surplus firearms from the Police Department. It was noted that this will be a public auction through a licensed federal firearms dealer.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-1021

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve Ordinance 25-3762 to amend Appendix F of Chapter 76 of the Galesburg Municipal Code designating a stop intersection at Holton Street at West 2nd Street.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

25-3048

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the bid submitted by Brandt Construction Company in the amount of \$1,392,000 for the replacement of the airport fuel farm. City Manager Hanson noted that the underground storage tanks would be removed at a later date.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- A. November Traffic Advisory Committee Report is available for review.
- B. Fire Chief Hovind recently issued a press release celebrating a successful, nearly decade-long partnership with the American Red Cross to provide free smoke alarms to

local residents, a program so effective that the GFD now ranks among the top five fire departments in the northwest region of the state for alarms installed, averaging about 200 annually. Homeowners in need of a smoke detector can request one by filling out the form on the City's website.

- C. The City Manager thanked the snow plow crews and public safety for their efforts and hard work during the recent snowstorm over the holiday weekend.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

25-4080

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve the 2026 Budget and the 2026 Classification and Salary Schedule. The City Manager thanked Finance Director Jennifer O'Hern, Staff Accountant Tanya Billeter, department directors and other staff for their work on the budget.

City Manager Hanson noted that the budget process takes many months and thanked the Council for their dialogue and effort. He highlighted that the budget includes critical investments such as infrastructure, public safety improvements, IT, and communication upgrades for public safety, and the completion of the Lake Storey path, among other projects. He also pointed out the anticipated property tax rate reduction and the sunseting of the grocery tax, as the City chose not to extend it, a decision that makes Galesburg one of the few communities in the region to do so. He expressed his appreciation for the Council's guidance and the staff's hard work and is looking forward to what can be accomplished with the 2026 spending plan.

Council Member Hunigan inquired whether eliminating the grocery tax would create a future financial burden for the City. City Manager Hanson responded, acknowledging that fewer projects would be completed, but emphasized that there are trade-offs. He reminded the Council that the City has maintained a solid financial position in recent years, with revenues surpassing expenditures, as confirmed by the recent presentation by the auditor. He explained that part of the plan involves using surplus funds. The City Manager confirmed that the spending plan presented to the Council, which addresses numerous priorities, is not expected to significantly affect City operations this year. Regarding the future, he noted he couldn't predict the future but he wasn't convinced the grocery tax would be the appropriate future revenue source, even if a different discussion were necessary. He is confident in the presented budget and its included revenue sources.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-4081

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve a memorandum of agreement between the City and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-4082

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve a successor collective bargaining agreement between the City and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and a side letter.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-4083

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve a workers' compensation settlement agreement with Marc McMahon related to an injury sustained in May 2024 in the amount of \$32,000.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

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**25-9028**

Trustee Acerra moved, seconded by Trustee Saul, to approve Ordinance 25-01 of final reading approving the Township Budget and Appropriation for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2026, and ending December 31, 2026:

General Town Fund \$747,860.00

General Assistance Fund \$436,325.00

Trustee Hunigan asked for a synopsis of the key elements of the budget. Supervisor Thierry stated that most items in the budget are operational and standard from year to year except the new addition for the VNA. Total budget is \$1,184,185.00.

Roll Call #11:

Ayes: Trustees Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-9029

Trustee Miller moved, seconded by Trustee White, to approve Ordinance 25-02 on final reading approving the 2025 Property Tax Levy for the Town of the City of Galesburg in the amount of \$531,000.

Roll Call #12:

Ayes: Trustees Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-9031

Trustee White moved, seconded by Trustee Cheesman, to approve a contract for legal services with Jeremy S. Karlin, Karlin Raver LLC, at a rate of \$200 per hour.

Roll Call #13:

Ayes: Trustees Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-9032

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$1,001,60
General Assistance Fund	\$8,361.42
IMRF Fund	\$3,788.98
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$4,079.22
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$17,231.22

Roll Call #14:

Ayes: Trustees Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member Miller commended the City's streets crew, Fire, and Police Departments for their response to the recent weekend weather. He stated that the condition of the streets was fantastic, suggesting that the City's efforts surpassed those of surrounding areas. Specifically, he noted that the crews were working as early as 4:00 a.m. to clear Main Street.

Council Member White recognized December 1st as Rosa Parks Day, acknowledging her significant contributions to the struggle for civil rights. He thanked the City crews for their excellent work on a sidewalk, noting that residents who called him acted as if he were personally responsible. He also agreed that the street maintenance crews do a great job and commended all their efforts when they usually have little sleep. Finally, he offered a belated Happy Thanksgiving, noting that although the holiday had passed, he hoped everyone had a good day.

Council Member Acerra stated that suddenly the holiday season is here and urged the community to shop locally. She mentioned that the recent "Shop Local Saturday" suffered from poor weather, resulting in low activity for downtown businesses. She emphasized that spending dollars within the City strengthens the community and encourages residents to support local merchants. She also reminded everyone to enjoy the various festive activities taking place, such as the Festival of Trees at Discovery Depot and the Christmas show at the Orpheum. She wished everyone a safe holiday season.

Council Member Saul echoed Council Member Miller's comments regarding the excellent condition of the streets after the snow this past weekend. As someone who has recently taken on snow plowing, he understands the difficulty of the job and commends the effort. He thanked everyone for their hard work.

Council Member Cheesman acknowledged the challenging and difficult work the Finance Director and her staff have done with the budget. He recognizes it's a difficult job to produce the results that ensure the City functions over the course of a year, and thanked them for this very difficult work. Through this process, the City has successfully kept, and even lowered, the tax rate and accomplished this without implementing a grocery tax as many other communities have done. The City managed to make this work within its existing budget, avoiding the introduction of any new city taxes, which he strongly opposes. He feels these are impressive accomplishments on the part of the City Manager and staff.

He also commended City Manager Hanson, who in Mayor Schwartzman's absence, delivered the State of the City address at the Chamber of Commerce Thanksgiving luncheon. He was very

informative and did a great job painting a promising picture of our City and one that we can look forward to with great hope and anticipation. He believes good things will continue to happen because of many people working together, confirming we are moving in the right direction. While challenges remain, he believes we are all eager to face them and continue striving to make Galesburg the best possible place to live and work.

Council Member Cheesman mentioned two young ladies whose story has been in the news before, but felt it deserved to be highlighted again. They are examples of the many people who selflessly give of themselves to help others. Sisters Bailey and Harper Mayfield, students at Galesburg Christian School, have raised at least \$10,000 this year by selling scrap metal for “Junk for Jingles.” Their goal is to raise enough money to buy presents, spending \$100 per child, off the Salvation Army Angel Tree. He added that the Mayfields were not prompted; they did this purely out of the goodness of their hearts.

He noted that Council Member White made an excellent point about Rosa Parks—a person who gave of herself to nonviolently stand up for something, setting a great example for all of us to stand up for what is right. He also believes she is the only civilian ever to lie in state in the United States Capitol building, an honor she certainly deserved as an American hero.

Council Member Mangieri urged the public to use and widely share the warming center resource information available on the City's website. Given the current weather, including snow and significantly lower temperatures, she encouraged residents to share this information across all social media platforms to help their neighbors.

Council Member Hunigan stated that he would be using his time to honor a respected Galesburg citizen, Tristan Wallace, who passed away on Sunday, November 16, at the age of 37 from complications of cancer. Despite being given a prognosis of only six months, Tristan was immediately placed in hospice and died just three weeks later. He described Tristan as one of the kindest individuals he had ever met and although not widely known, Tristan was a constant presence in Galesburg. He was diagnosed with autism early in life, which often placed him in special education classes, though he loved school and was rarely absent, graduating from GHS in 2006.

He further stated that Tristan became an icon at the corner of Henderson and Dayton Streets, where he worked for 17 years, carrying a sign for Little Caesars. Regardless of the weather, he faithfully walked the sidewalk, accumulating an untold number of miles. His dedication was evident, as his employer honored his service by sending 17 pizzas to the church after his funeral.

Council Member Hunigan stated that Tristan exemplified goodness, righteousness and was trustworthy, reliable, supportive, honest, respectful, and empathetic. He never used profanity, went out of his way to help others—even financially, knowing he wouldn't be repaid—and loved helping the needy. He also volunteered for the Riverbend Food Bank for the last two years and never allowed his autism to define or control his life. Council Member Mr. Hunigan added that

recognizing and respecting differences in others and treating everyone as you want to be treated will help make the world a better place for everyone.

Mayor Schwartzman noted that it was snowing and urged everyone to be careful and also thanked the excellent work of the City's road crews. He noted that while nature presents challenges, residents should drive carefully, particularly watching for pedestrians who may be walking in the street if sidewalks are unplowed, especially at night.

The Mayor also announced that if anyone was looking for local, low-cost or free entertainment, Galesburg has quality basketball programs, including the men's and women's teams at Carl Sandburg College, Knox College, and the Galesburg Silver Streaks.

There being no further business, Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Roll Call #15:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Miller, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Mayor Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk