

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
December 15, 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.

Pastor Antonio Franklin gave the invocation.

Proclamation presentation to Purple Heart Recipient Veteran Byron Baird.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from December 1, 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

Bruce Cook addressed the Council and noted that his intent in commenting on potentially controversial subjects throughout the year was to stimulate open-mindedness and encourage different perspectives, but that some citizens might have reacted negatively. He suggested future topics of discussion for the Council, such as encouraging homeowners to remove snow and ice from their sidewalks, and educating crossing guards and parents about the dangers of parking in restricted zones near schools. Mr. Cook stated that if people feel like they aren't reaching their goals because their life seems to be constantly moving one step forward and two steps back, they should turn around and go the other way. He thanked the Council for their time and patience and wished them and their families a happy holiday season.

Reverend James Hailey, Allen Chapel AME, addressed the Council and referenced the book of Matthew, Chapter 20, verse 26, which states that to be great among men, one must become a servant. He thanked the Council for their service to the City throughout the year, acknowledging that they have experienced both challenges and triumphs. He is hoping for an even greater 2026 for Galesburg and believes that by working together, even through disagreements, that

can be achieved. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah and invited everyone to a worship service at Allen Chapel AME on December 31st, at Noon, featuring Pastor Randy Davis.

CONSENT AGENDA #2025-24

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 following vendors for the annual supply of fill and patch for the 2026 calendar year, which are all eligible to be paid from Motor Fuel Tax funds:

- Coarse Aggregate CA-6 (Crushed White Stone) (Delivered) – Gunther Construction and Mill Creek Mining, Inc.
- HMA Surface Course “D” N50 (Picked Up) – Tickle Asphalt Co. Ltd.
- CLSM Flowable Mix 2 (Delivered), CLSM Flowable Mix 4 (Delivered), PCC Class SI (Delivered), PCC Class PP1 (Delivered), PCC Class PP2 (Delivered) – Roanoke Concrete Products

25-3050

Approve the following vendors for the annual supply of fill and patch for the 2026 calendar year, which are not funded by Motor Fuel Tax funds:

- High Performance Patching Mixture (Picked Up), Cold Patch (Emulsion) (Picked Up) – Hoerr’s Blacktop & Sealcoating, LLC
- Mason Sand FA-9 (Delivered), Fill Sand FA-1 (Delivered), Trench Backfill FA-6 (Delivered), 3/8” Pea Gravel CA-16 (Delivered) – Gunther Construction
- Mason Sand FA-9 (Picked Up), Trench Backfill FA-6 (Picked Up) – Galesburg Builders Supply
- Fill Sand FA-1 (Picked Up), 3/8” Pea Gravel CA-16 (Picked Up) – Galena Road Gravel

25-5010

Receive the 2026 Calendar of Meetings.

25-8023

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,514,060.58 and advance checks in the amount of \$998,065.29.

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, 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

25-2035

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, approve the following Resolutions abating property tax on General Obligation Bonds:

1. Approve Resolution 25-30 to abate property tax on General Obligation Bond, Ordinance 2013-3418, Series 2013A (Abatement-\$121,080)
2. Approve Resolution 25-31 to abate property tax on General Obligation Refunding Bond, Ordinance 2015-3484, Series 2015 (Abatement-\$625,263)
3. Approve Resolution 25-32 to abate property tax on General Obligation Bond, Ordinance 2016-3508, Series 2016 (Abatement- \$652,713)
4. Approve Resolution 25-33 to abate property tax on General Obligation Bond, Ordinance 2017-3540, Series 2017 (Abatement- \$714,606)
5. Approve Resolution 25-34 to abate property tax on General Obligation Bond, Ordinance 2023-3692, Series 2023 (Abatement \$718,000).

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-2036

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Resolution 25-35 to revise the Local Housing Repair Assistance Program to include rental-occupied single-family homes, increase the maximum grant award to \$5,000, add new eligible exterior repairs, and add possible supplemental funding up to \$1,000 for larger projects. The public is encouraged to find information on the City's website, social media, or by contacting the Community Development Department or their Council Member.

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

25-3051

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve an agreement for emergency demolition contractor services with JIMAX from January-December 2026.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-3052

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the bid submitted by Unlimited Sports Solutions in the amount of \$35,630 for the design and construction of two new team dugouts for the Jimmy Isaacson ball diamond located at H.T. Custer Park.

Council Member Acerra stated that this is an exciting enhancement, and encouraged the Council to vote in favor of the item. She emphasized that this addition builds upon the previous improvements to HT Custer Park and will strengthen the City's programs supporting local youth.

Council Member Cheesman stated his agreement and commended the City on the extensive improvements made to HT Custer Park. He noted how these gradual enhancements have transformed the park, not only as a baseball venue but also through the addition of other amenities, making it a popular destination. He added that the park was in need of these updates but also has benefitted from the aesthetics, which has significantly boosted the park's attractiveness. He thanked all involved, noting that many beneficial additions have been made to the City in the several years, making this another valuable contribution. He also added that the American Legion Baseball program has made HT Custer Park their home field.

Council Member Miller noted the significant improvements at HT Custer Park, and reminded the Council of the adjacent property to the east, the site of the former nursing home/care center. He stated that his goal would be to establish a community center there and possibly add pickleball courts to that area. He hopes the City continues to explore options to expand the park since he knows many people utilize it daily throughout the summer.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-3053

Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve the bid submitted by Heritage Tractor in the amount of \$60,000, including trade, for the purchase of a new John Deere 4075R compact utility tractor for the Golf Division.

Roll Call #8:

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

City Manager Hanson thanked the Council, noting that he had just completed his second year as City Manager last week. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity, the Council's ongoing support, and the accomplishments of 2025, stating he looks forward to 2026. He also commended the staff for their consistent performance, and believes they are a testament to the City's ongoing success. He also thanked the residents for the honor of serving them and wished everyone Happy Holidays and an exciting 2026.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

25-4084

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve a self-insured employee health plan agreement with United Medical Resources (UMR), effective January 1, 2026.

Roll Call #9:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

25-4085

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve a letter of commitment with the Illinois Department of Transportation for the second phase of the shared-use path project around Lake Storey.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

25-9033

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$2,953.24
General Assistance Fund	\$3,932.24
IMRF Fund	\$3,788.98
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$4,217.60

Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$14,892.06

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White thanked his pastor for his beautiful prayer, which he felt was very much needed at this time for our nation, our city, and our country. He also wished everyone a Happy New Year and a Merry Christmas. He added that he was reminded of a former Council Member who had him read a book about injustice, and stated that reading is knowledge, and knowledge is education and without it, you have nothing. Reading sometimes stirs up emotions and situations and he recently read a quote by Frantz Fanon: "The poor are not accidental failures. They are purposeful outcomes of economic architecture." He stated that this quote made him stop and wonder if this was true.

Council Member White also stated that another gentleman, Jason Wilson, said, "A thinking man cannot be fooled." He feels that we are in a tough situation in our nation right now, and this weighs heavily on him. He urged everyone to be kind and have empathy for people, because you never know how they got to where they are. He thanked everyone for the good year the City has had and added that the Council has grown, acknowledging that it started out rough, but ended on a good note. He sincerely appreciates everyone on the Council for the work they've done this year.

Council Member Saul shared that 81 years ago his father was shot in France by a German sniper. He expressed gratitude for his father's luck and encouraged everyone to hug their parents during their Christmas gatherings. He added his thanks to the efforts of the Council and staff, for all their hard work in 2025 and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Council Member Cheesman stated that he's fortunate to have his 96-year-old father, a veteran, and his hero, in his life. He also wanted to recognize a true American hero, Sergeant Baird, for his service, as well as Representative Swanson, another tremendous servant to our country through his military service.

He also announced that our community has recently experienced two losses since the last meeting, Marte Glass, a dedicated servant to our City as a school nurse, was lost in an automobile accident. The community also lost Jordan Ball, a young school teacher and father, in an accident. We remember them tonight and extend our thoughts and prayers to their families.

On a positive note, Council Member Cheesman acknowledged the ongoing efforts to assist our unhoused population by having several initiatives in place, including great partnerships, between the City and Knox County Housing Authority at the shelter on Iowa Court. The Salvation Army has opened a daytime resource, and the Rescue Mission and other groups have stepped in to provide meals. This shows people genuinely caring about and looking out for those who are less fortunate. He also encouraged everyone to learn the inspirational story of Michael Martinez, a Knox College graduate and the challenges he has overcome and the inspiration he provides to so many. He wanted to recognize Michael tonight for his work for others and for how much he inspires him and the community. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy Holidays to all of you.

Council Member Mangieri announced a community Christmas party hosted by All-Stars Sports Academy at Skate Palace. The free event is scheduled for Thursday, December 18th, from 5-8 p.m., and will include photos with Santa and the Grinch, as well as food, drinks, and holiday giveaways. She encouraged everyone to share the information, which is available on Facebook and their website. As the newest member of the Council, she thanked everyone for their collaboration and welcoming attitude and noted that in January, she will have completed three full months on the Council.

Council Member Hunigan wanted to again honor Byron Baird for his service to our country, and added that knowing his parents, he is certain they were essential in his development as both a human being and a soldier. He also wanted to pay tribute to Mr. Bud Westbay, who was Sergeant Baird's advocate and ensured people were aware of the sacrifice he made for this country.

Council Member Miller also thanked Sergeant Baird for his service and added that he has family who served in the military, one of whom was shot down in Vietnam and still carries the scars of that experience. He stated that two and a half years ago, he was honored to be elected to represent Ward Three, but that this would be his last meeting, as he has purchased a home outside of Galesburg.

He stated that he was born and raised on an Iowa farm, and that he has always loved the country. He has lived in Galesburg for 17 years in the same house, and that it has been a pleasure to represent the people of Ward Three, and the support from his constituents has been tremendous. He added that the City Council has been wonderful to work with and that he has learned a great deal and accomplished a lot in two and a half years. One of the significant achievements is the creation of at least two to three hundred new jobs in Galesburg, which is a major positive for the city.

Council Member Miller stated that he hopes Mayor Schwartzman will seek input from the citizens of Ward Three when appointing someone to fill his position. He stated that after he was elected, his first summer was spent visiting every department and meeting every employee. He was able to experience a police car ride for nearly an entire night, try on a fireman's suit, and even go to a house fire to witness our firemen's dedication. He also commended the City's Street Division and Director Gavin, especially with the recent snow events, and City Manager

Hanson, for his guidance. He stated that he has enjoyed his time on the City Council, but now it's time for him to move to the country.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that since this is the final meeting of the year, he wanted to speak from the heart, reflecting on the City's journey and expressing his gratitude. He told Council Member Miller that when he first started, they were adversaries, but two and a half years later, he is proud to say they consider each other friends. This is significant and speaks volumes about what we are trying to build in Galesburg. He thanked him for his service.

The Mayor thanked City Manager Hanson for his two years of service and added that when he came into this job, it was during a very contentious time, and it took immense resolve for him and his family to come here and serve. The Council feels blessed that he did, and he hopes he feels it was worth it. He also thanked Council Member Cheesman for sharing the names of the significant people we have lost in our community over the last couple of weeks and agreed that their contributions were tremendous.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that this is his 15th year of serving as an elected official, and he has worked with many Council Members and several city managers. He truly believes that the City has accomplished a lot in the last couple of years. We've shown great resolve as a community, such as holding a Christmas parade even with temperatures below freezing. He believes 2025 has been a very blessed year for Galesburg, but challenges remain as we look forward to 2026. He echoes earlier speakers about the future of our city and our continued efforts to improve and look out for each other.

He stated that this past weekend, he was humbled and blessed to be connected with a homeless family he found sleeping at the doors of a church. He made an individual effort to find them housing, which he came to find very difficult. One of these individuals has a full-time job in Galesburg but, due to various family complications, is unable to secure a place to live despite having the funds. He noted that this couple is not alone; he came across two other similar situations over one weekend, but with the help of other people, this couple did not sleep outside and were happy and thankful when he saw them today.

The Mayor stated that his plea to the community is that if you know of a place to live and are willing to give somebody a second chance, please contact him. Seeing this face-to-face convinced him that we can all help and hopes that the community can make sure every person is housed in 2026.

Mayor Schwartzman ended by stating that Sergeant Baird is a very humble man, but is a hero. He thanked him for his leadership and resolve he and his family have shown and he hopes to connect with him more in the future to see what they can grow and build together.

There being no further business, Council Member Miller moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Roll Call #12:

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