

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
March 16, 2026
6:00 p.m.

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

Roll Call #1: Present: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Wendel Hunigan, Chuck Reynolds, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman, 7. Absent: Council Member Angelica Mangieri, 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.

Deacon Michael Crummer gave the invocation.

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Reynolds, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from March 2, 2026.

Roll Call #2:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laun Dunn addressed the Council regarding her new role as Community Outreach Coordinator for the outside solar project. She expressed appreciation to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, staff, KCAP, and the County for their support of the initiative. She noted that the project provides meaningful utility savings for both renters and homeowners without the burden of equipment maintenance or repairs. She invited the Council and the public to an information session at the library on Tuesday, March 24th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Marian Spurgeon addressed the Council regarding the use of Flock safety cameras and license plate readers. She expressed concerns that the system operates as a data brokerage, collecting extensive information on all vehicle movements rather than just lawbreakers, and noted that a Secretary of State audit found such broad data sharing to be in violation of state law. Ms. Spurgeon highlighted issues regarding the security of the network, the potential for AI errors leading to false accusations, and the lack of independent oversight for for-profit tech companies. She urged the Council to engage in a wider community discussion, consider local regulations as recommended by the ACLU, and evaluate ending the contract with Flock due to security

vulnerabilities and legal liabilities. She concluded by thanking Council Member White for his work on this issue as well.

Hannah Lyon addressed the Council regarding traffic safety concerns at the intersection of Seminary and Grove Streets. She highlighted the danger to pedestrians crossing in this area due to vehicles traveling at high speeds off the bridge, often reaching 35 to 40 mph. She noted that motorists frequently fail to yield to pedestrians, creating significant difficulty for residents, children, and those walking pets, especially during peak traffic periods. She recommended that the City consider the installation of a striped crosswalk and pedestrian crossing signage to enhance safety and driver awareness. She also stated that several other neighbors share these concerns.

CONSENT AGENDA #2026-06

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

26-6002

Approve the appointment of Jill Johnson to the Golf Advisory Commission, term expiring June 2029.

26-8005

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,994,732.77 and advance checks in the amount of \$541,960.51.

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Reynolds, to approve Consent Agenda 2026-06.

Roll Call #3:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

26-1003

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve Ordinance 26-3766 on final reading amending Section 94.48 of Chapter 94 of the Galesburg Municipal Code regarding emergency demolitions.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-1004

Ordinance on first reading amending Section 113.043 (A) of Chapter 113 of the Galesburg Municipal Code adding one license for a total of 27 Class A-1 liquor licenses.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Saul, to suspend the rules and move agenda item 26-1004 to final reading.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve Ordinance 26-3767 on final reading amending Section 113.043 (A) of Chapter 113 of the Galesburg Municipal Code adding one license for a total of 27 Class A-1 liquor licenses.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Cheesman voiced his full support for the proposal and praised the owners' qualifications and commitment, noting the restaurant would be an excellent benefit to the downtown.

Chris Deligiannis, owner, addressed the Council and stated that he and Gina Suhomske plan to open their restaurant, Evgenia, at 41 South Seminary Street, in early April. He thanked the Council for their consideration.

26-1005

Ordinance on first reading authorizing the sale of a portion of the land adjacent to 1721 South Lake Storey Road in exchange for the right-of-way required for the multi-use path.

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Cheesman, to suspend the rules and move agenda item 26-1005 to final reading.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve Special Ordinance 26-634 on final reading authorizing the sale of a portion of the land adjacent to 1721 South Lake Storey Road in exchange for the right-of-way required for the multi-use path.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None
Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-2008

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Resolution 26-07 authorizing the execution of a service agreement with the lowest responsible bidder for energy aggregation.

Mayor Schwartzman inquired about the duration of the contract.

City Manager Hanson stated that bidders typically present two or three time frame options to determine the most favorable recommendation. He noted that given the current global volatility and significant daily fluctuations in the energy market, he expects a short-duration contract, with the final duration to be determined based on market conditions on March 24th or 25th. He also mentioned that the program is working to include renewable energy credits at 10% and 20% levels. He added that despite challenges with energy prices following the pandemic, the program still resulted in approximately a 5% savings over the standard rate this past year.

The City Manager also noted that a 14 or 15-month contract duration is being considered to move the bidding cycle away from this time of year, as the current timing has presented several challenges. He noted that energy rates typically increase just before summer.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, Reynolds, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

26-3008

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the bid from Aramsco, Inc. in the amount of \$34,000 for the purchase of a new trailer attenuator and arrow board to be utilized by the Water Division.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, Reynolds, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 6.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-3009

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve the bid from Synergy Telcom in the amount of \$29,785.85 for phones and related equipment for the City's voice over IP system.

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hanson reported on the recent weather challenges, noting the transition from mild temperatures to significant snowfall. He expressed appreciation to the staff in Public Safety, Public Works, Communications, and Dispatch for their dedicated efforts working throughout the night and day to address issues associated with the snow. He stated that despite the difficult conditions, the roads are in good shape and noted that warmer weather is expected by the weekend.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

26-4024

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the facade improvement grant in an amount not to exceed \$40,000 or 50% of the verified final project costs, whichever is less, for the Weinberg Arcade, LLC, 64 South Prairie Street.

Roll Call #12:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

26-9005

Trustee White moved, seconded by Trustee Saul, to approve the agenda for the Annual Town Meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, April 14, 2026.

Roll Call #13:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee Mangieri, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-9006

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$20,202.15
General Assistance Fund	\$4,306.21
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$24,508.36

Roll Call #14:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Trustee Mangieri, 1.

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 White recognized several influential women in his life as we neared the end of Women's Month, including his wife Jodi, his mother Norma M. Ford, and his grandmother Golden Williams. He also highlighted Alice Augusta Ball (1892-1916) and her significant contributions regarding leprosy, and Ann Lowe, who was born in 1898 and passed away in 1991, and noted her career as a dressmaker. He also brought attention to Anna Murray Douglass (1813-1882) and Pamela Hemphill, whom he commended for her integrity and accountability for a situation she was involved in and took the punishment she deserved. He also recognized Cato Bontjes van Beek (1920-1943), noting she was only 23 years old at the time of her death. He highlighted that she stood for her convictions and lost her life for doing so, and urged the public to research her legacy and consider its relevance to the present day.

Council Member Acerra also recognized several influential women in honor of Women's History Month, including Inez Webster, who lived in her current house, and for her significant work with Armenian refugees. She noted Mary Ellen West, the first child born in Galesburg in 1837, highlighting her career as an educator and reform leader who served as the Knox County Superintendent of Schools in 1873 and held a prominent position within the Women's Christian Temperance Union before passing away in 1892. She also highlighted Elizabeth A. Hurd (1840-1913), a Knox College alumna and pioneer in the legal profession who was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1873 and specialized in corporate and railroad law while practicing in Chicago. Council Member Acerra also thanked City staff for their work on the snow removal and expressed her excitement for the ongoing progress of the Lake Storey multi-use path and the opening of the new restaurant downtown.

Council Member Saul also expressed his appreciation to City staff for clearing the roads and ensuring community safety from the recent snowstorm.

Council Member Cheesman expressed appreciation to KCAP Executive Director Ken Springer and his staff for the City's ranking of 25th in the annual micropolitan standings, noting the economic progress achieved through their collective efforts with the City. He also recognized Judy for her remodeling initiatives and Victor Dantas for the publicity generated for the community. In honor of Women's History Month, he highlighted the contributions of women who have overcome significant obstacles, noting that Mother Bickerdyke's legacy is even recognized in history textbooks. He shared his personal story of his great-grandmother, who raised seven children as a single parent, and his grandmother, who arrived in a covered wagon and lived without modern utilities well into the 20th century. He thanked the City Council for providing stability and hope through compromise and collaboration, stating that Galesburg serves as a positive example for other communities.

Council Member Hunigan addressed the Council, noting that March 16th marks his first full year as the Ward 2 Council Member. He shared that he receives regular emails from constituents regarding the quality of life in the City, and specifically Ward 2, and read excerpts from several emails he received in March. He highlighted concerns regarding the demolition of an abandoned home on Fulton Street and a partially burnt structure on Elm Street that has remained for years. He also noted reports of uncollected waste on Allen's Avenue and abandoned shopping carts in Kiwanis Park. He highlighted the issue of vacant, dilapidated housing, specifically mentioning the Weston School property. He stated that safe, quality housing is essential for the well-being of children and serves as a vital tool for attracting professionals and skilled workers to Galesburg. He urged the City Council and local service organizations to provide help to Ward 2, which serves as a gateway into the community off of I-74, and advocated for a block-by-block revitalization strategy. He asked for immediate financial assistance from all levels of government to ensure the "American dream" remains attainable for everyone, including those in Ward 2.

Council Member Reynolds thanked everyone who attended his Third Ward Meet and Greet. He also offered his congratulations to Gina Suhomske and Chris Deligiannis on the opening of their new restaurant and wished them success.

Mayor Schwartzman also recognized Ken Springer and KCAP for the City's ranking as a top 25 micropolitan area, noting the achievement as a testament to their leadership over the past decade. He stated that while many projects require extensive behind-the-scenes effort, several upcoming announcements in 2026 are expected to benefit the community. He also highlighted the significant public excitement for Chris Deligiannis and Gina Suhomske's new restaurant, thanking them for their tireless work and noted he looked forward to its opening next month.

There being no further business, Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:53 p.m.

Roll Call #15:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk