

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
February 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 Angelica Mangieri, Wendel Hunigan, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman, 7. City Manager Eric Hanson, City Attorney Dan Alcorn, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz. Vacant: Council Member, Ward 3, following the resignation of Council Member Evan Miller, effective December 31, 2025.

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

Roll Call #2:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz gave the oath of office to Chuck Reynolds, Ward 3 Council Member.

Roll Call #3: Present: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Angelica Mangieri, Wendel Hunigan, Chuck Reynolds, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman, 8.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CONSENT AGENDA #2026-04

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

26-2004

Approve Resolution 26-03 approving the temporary closure of Main Street for the 2026 Railroad Days celebration from June 23-28, 2026.

26-2005

Approve Resolution 26-04 approving the City's share of construction costs for the first phase of the Lake Storey Multi-Use Path Project in the amount of \$117,943.95.

26-2006

Approve Resolution 26-05 approving engineering services for the second phase of the Lake Storey Multi-Use Path Project in the amount of \$17,000.

26-4013

Approve waiving normal purchasing policies and approve the provided product pricing for the first half of the 2026 supply of water meters for resale from Core & Main for various water meters for the Water Division.

26-4014

Approve waiving normal purchasing policies and approve the provided product pricing for the first half of the 2026 supply of water meters and radios from Core & Main for various water meters, handheld readers and radio units for the Water Division.

26-4015

Approve the renewal of a service contract between the City of Galesburg Public Transportation and Knox College to provide students, faculty, and staff unlimited rides on fixed-route bus service from March of 2026 through June of 2027 for total compensation of \$4,000.

26-4016

Approve addendum #4 to the annual cash rent lease with IF Farms at the City's business park by extending the current lease through the last harvest of the 2026 crop year or January 1, 2027, whichever occurs first.

26-5000

Receive the 2026 renewal applications for wrecker services.

26-8003

Approve bills in the amount of \$911,698.37 and advance checks in the amount of \$400,235.89.

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to approve Consent Agenda 2026-04.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

Council Member White requested more information about the Lake Storey path approvals, noting that the public is very interested in the project. City Manager Hanson clarified that while upcoming agenda items pertain to the total project, the two current items are specifically for

the City's share of the costs. The first item is related to the construction phase, which covers the portion from the entrance of Carl Sandburg College to past the Lakeside entrance and the second item is a resolution concerning the final engineering required for the complete path around the lake. He added that the Council would take further action later in the meeting regarding moving forward with the construction and final engineering for the rest of the path.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

26-1002

Ordinance on first reading amending Section 113.043 (A) of Chapter 113 of the Galesburg Municipal Code removing one license for a total of 26 Class A-1 liquor licenses.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Saul, to suspend the rules and move agenda item 26-1002 to final reading.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Reynolds, 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 approve Ordinance 26-3765 on final reading amending Section 113.043 (A) of Chapter 113 of the Galesburg Municipal Code removing one license for a total of 26 Class A-1 liquor licenses.

Roll Call #6:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

26-3004

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the purchase of enterprise scheduling and time entry software from TCP Software in the amount of \$269,133.57 over a seven-year term.

Roll Call #7:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hanson noted the February Traffic Advisory Committee Report and he also welcomed Council Member Reynolds to the dais. He also reiterated that staff continues to recommend setting the speed limit for all curved sections of South, West, and North Lake Storey Roads at 25 mph, provided Knox County grants approval. Separately, TAC had previously recommended reducing the speed limit on South Lake Storey Road near the Allison Lake Storey Campground from 45 mph to 35 mph, a reduction the County Engineer has agreed to present to the County Board.

Council Member Hunigan would like the City and County to consider a yellow flashing light at the curve in order to get the attention of drivers.

Council Member Cheesman stated that he strongly supports reducing the speed limit on South, West, and North Lake Storey Roads. He added that IDOT research confirms a direct correlation between higher speeds and an increased number of accidents. This is particularly concerning given that younger drivers frequent the area. He stated that the tragic accident that occurred here, and the neighbors' subsequent support for a speed limit change, further reinforces this necessity. While the recent accident may not have been speed-related, the consensus of most of the community is that the road is dangerous. Residents who live there and those who travel it regularly are united in their demand for reduced speed. He added that he regrets that this issue was not addressed sooner but that he would be voting in favor of this change and plans to either attend the County Board meeting next Wednesday or submit an email to express his views and encourage support for the County to pass this ordinance. He also noted that this road needs to be patrolled.

City Manager Hanson will send traffic data for these roads to the Council.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

26-4017

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to a maintenance contract with the Galesburg Downtown Council for services performed outside the boundaries of the Downtown Special Service Area.

Council Member Acerra voiced her support of this contract and feels that the Downtown Council's maintenance staff does a great job. Council Member Cheesman expressed his belief in the downtown area's immense potential for continued development, noting it is positioned to become a vital part of the City. He praised the current excellent management of the downtown and strongly encouraged maintaining an "outside the box" mindset. He urged continued support for downtown businesses and building owners and stressed the importance of implementing strategies to keep the area appealing and successfully attract new ventures.

Council Member Hunigan asked about the responsibilities of the City and the Downtown Council in this partnership. City Manager Hanson explained that the Special Service Area (SSA) is funded by a property tax paid by building owners within the designated boundaries. These owners have an appointed board to oversee the SSA, which has a long history dating back to the

1970s. Every ten years, SSA property owners must vote to reauthorize the additional tax they impose on themselves — voluntary taxes that are above and beyond their standard assessment that are used for various purposes within the SSA. These include maintenance, the facade program, and snow removal. All funds generated within the SSA must be spent there. He added that this proposal involves the City paying an additional \$15,000 to utilize the services of Downtown Council's maintenance team to expand their area, specifically for planters, flowers, and litter pickup. The expansion does not currently include snow removal, although that may be considered later.

The City Manager stated that the main goal is to create a more consistent gateway area, extending from the Library eastward to Chambers Street and over to Discovery Depot. This expansion includes areas not currently in the SSA and extends north toward the railroad tracks. This expansion aims to leverage the good work of the SSA to drive continued redevelopment downtown.

Roll Call #8:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4018

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the proposal from IMEG in the amount of \$68,500 for engineering services for the Public Safety Building electrical upgrades project.

Roll Call #9:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4019

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a joint funding agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation for construction costs for the first phase of the Lake Storey Multi-Use Path Project.

Roll Call #10:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4020

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a joint funding agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation for engineering services for the second phase of the Lake Storey Multi-Use Path Project.

Council Member White asked about the narrowing of the bridge to a single lane, particularly with the current speed limit of 45 or 50 mph. His concern is about the repeated transition between one and two lanes and the traffic flow. Public Works Director Aaron Gavin stated that IDOT has agreed to reduce the bridge to one lane, which will include a concrete barrier to separate path users from traffic. To address the flow concern, the single-lane section that is currently near North Lake Storey Road will be extended down and across the bridge. This will create a single, consistent lane change instead of multiple transitions.

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4021

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Reynolds, to approve a Farm Lease Agreement with Hawkinson Brothers for the City-owned property west of Bunker Links. The lease is \$200 per acre for five acres farmed.

Roll Call #12:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4022

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Reynolds, to approve the submission of the budget 2026 OPEB contributions to the City's OPEB Trust account in the amount of \$149,340.

Council Member Acerra voiced concern over the apparent gap between the net liability and the annual contributions and asked for a brief explanation. City Manager Hanson stated that the City has made significant progress, with the most recent report showing an increase to over \$3.3 million. Although the estimated maximum delta is around \$14 million (based on the actuarial assumption that all benefits will be paid out), the City is advancing substantially. Strong market returns this past year contributed to progress beyond just the regular contribution. This effort has placed, and will continue to place, the City in a much better long-term financial position and also helps with the City's bond rating.

Roll Call #13:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4023

Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve the second lease amendment with Community Power Group for a community solar garden located on unutilized space on the airport property. The lease amendment consists of a two-year lease extension and an additional payment of \$5,000 to the City.

Roll Call #14:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Reynolds, 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

26-9003

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	\$9,942.03
General Assistance Fund	\$6,742.40
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$4,385.22
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$21,069.65

Roll Call #15:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

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 Mangieri extended congratulations to Council Member Reynolds. She also reminded the public of her open sessions at the Library, every fourth Thursday in February, March, and April. These sessions are held in the CBI Bank Boom from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The purpose is to discuss any concerns, ideas, or issues the public wishes to bring to her or the City Council.

Council Member Hunigan reported that there was a devastating fire at 53 Duffield Avenue, just off Main Street, in his Ward and the family living there lost all of their possessions, escaping the house with only the clothes they were wearing. The fire was so devastating that it prompted the Fire Department to decide to demolish the house. Council Member Hunigan emphasized the family's extreme need, and announced his intention to contribute to a GoFundMe page set up to help the family recover and offered to provide information to anyone else wishing to contribute.

Council Member Reynolds thanked everyone for the warm welcome and stated his hope to contribute significantly to improving the City of Galesburg.

Council Member White shared information about the Freedom House ambulance service, founded in 1967 by African Americans in the Black Hill District of Pittsburgh. It was the first emergency paramedic system; however, after its success became widely known, the service was eventually shut down. He also told the story of James Durham, who was born into slavery, owned by three different doctors who recognized his intelligence, with one encouraging him to study medicine. Durham successfully practiced medicine, and his skills were well-known, causing his practice to flourish. However, in 1801, New Orleans passed a regulation that prevented him from practicing because he lacked a formal degree.

Council Member White also shared information on Vivien Thomas, an individual who played a pivotal role in the development of a heart surgery to treat infants with congenital heart disease, known as Tetralogy of Fallot or "Blue Baby Syndrome." Thomas, a highly skilled carpenter with only a high school education, worked alongside Dr. Alfred Blalock, a white surgeon. Although Thomas had no medical degree, he was instrumental in the creation and design of all the surgical equipment and tools. He highlighted that despite Thomas's crucial contributions, Dr. Blalock received all the credit for the surgery. Notably, when performing the operation, Blalock often had to call upon Thomas to guide him through the procedure. Vivien Thomas, who eventually taught surgical procedures at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine without ever earning a medical degree, is an important figure.

Council Member White stated that this history, and the history of other people of color including ex-slaves and ex-indentured servants, should not be relegated only to Black History Month. It should be taught as "American History" because of its fundamental contributions to

the nation. He added that people of color have been significant contributors to the United States and stressed that every person living here is an American, regardless of their ancestors' ethnicity or country of origin, and that the history of all Americans should be taught across all levels of the educational system.

Council Member Acerra stated she has also been working to educate herself, and that she recently watched a very encouraging movie called *Cabrini*. Many people, including those of Italian American descent are unaware of the struggles Italian immigrants faced in this country just a few generations ago and this film vividly depicted their journey. Many immigrant groups, including those brought here through slavery, came seeking a better life, often escaping extreme poverty in their home countries. The film highlights the work of Frances Cabrini, who established orphanages to help these children. She faced significant political opposition to prevent success, but eventually built one of the world's largest charity networks, including hospitals. It's a beautiful, entertaining, and educational film.

Council Member Acerra also noted that she recently enjoyed watching some high school students play jazz at Smokin' Willie's, where groups from Knox College also performed. She also congratulated the Galesburg High School Scholastic Bowl team for winning the 2026 Western Big 6 Conference Scholastic Bowl championship.

Council Member Saul also mentioned attending a live music event recently in Knoxville and that the 17-year-old musician might potentially perform at the Balloon Race. He also congratulated and welcomed Council Member Reynolds. He expressed his sympathy for the fire victims mentioned by Council Member Hunigan and will be requesting information about the GoFundMe page.

Council Member Cheesman welcomed Council Member Reynolds and is excited to work with him and the positive contributions he will bring to the Council. He also acknowledged the recent passing of an individual who spent considerable time downtown, Larry Brown. He highlighted that Mr. Brown was featured on the City's website and embodied a friendly spirit, making the world a better place through his presence.

Council Member Cheesman also added the Council's current projects, noting that the diverse issues being addressed are moving the City in a positive direction. He emphasized the importance of maintaining this momentum and recognized the hard work and collaborative spirit of the City's team. This effort aims to improve the quality of life for citizens through better roads, sidewalks, infrastructure, and services. He specifically mentioned ongoing work in housing, including more affordable options and property clean-up grants, as well as economic development and downtown beautification.

Mayor Schwartzman thanked Council Member Reynolds for agreeing to serve the community in his new capacity, noting the Council's unanimous vote and eagerness to have his assistance. He commented on the positive local movements mentioned earlier, including winning sports and academic teams, and agreed that the Council has significant work ahead in the coming year, particularly regarding housing and creating centers for people to meet and gather.

The Mayor noted the improving weather and while everyone is looking forward to the warmer months, he cautioned the community to be careful as more people, especially children, will be out. He stressed the importance of slowing down, particularly when driving through neighborhoods, and watching out for children running or playing in the street. Finally, he offered a public hello to his mother, who he noted was watching the meeting, wishing her a Happy Birthday and a Happy Valentine's Day.

There being no further business, Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Roll Call #16:

Ayes: Council Members Mangieri, Hunigan, Reynolds, 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