



**Galesburg City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE: July 20, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: City Council Chambers, 55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, IL

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members Wendel Hunigan, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Angelica Mangieri, and Charles Reynolds.

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Eric Hanson, City Attorney Dan Alcorn, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

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

Roll Call #1: Present: Deputy Mayor Steve Cheesman, Council Members Wendel Hunigan, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, and Greg Saul, 5. Absent: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Angelica Mangieri and Charles Reynolds, 3.

Deputy Mayor Cheesman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Pastor Antonio Franklin gave the invocation.

Presentation: Michael Malatt, Baker Tilly FY 2025 Annual Audit Report

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting of June 15, 2026.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve the minutes of the Executive Session from May 5, 2025.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Matthew Gates addressed the Council and thanked the City for the initial sidewalk installations; however, he questioned the placement of certain segments, specifically noting a recent project off Fremont Street that appears to terminate at a dead end. He asked whether Motor Fuel Tax funds were being used for these improvements and noted that at Lake Storey many sidewalks were only partially installed leaving several new homes and families without continuous pedestrian access. He emphasized the necessity of expanding the sidewalk network to accommodate wheelchairs and meet ADA standards, citing a specific block on Seminary Street near Graham Medical that remains gravel. He also commented on the walking trails at Lake Storey, suggesting that riprap should have been utilized to prevent soil erosion into the lake. He noted safety concerns he has in the Lincolnshire neighborhood where the absence of sidewalks forces pedestrians and children on bicycles into the street. He urged the Council to consider using available tax revenue to address these issues before an accident occurs.

David Amor addressed the Council regarding the current demographic makeup of the Galesburg Election Commission. He noted that since the retirement of Veronica Peoples, who represented the Democratic Party for many years, the Commission has been comprised exclusively of elderly white men. He shared that despite efforts by Knox County Democratic Party Chair Pamela Davidson to advocate for more diverse representation through the Ninth Circuit Administrative Judge, no changes were made. With the impending resignation of Democratic member Roger Williamson, he emphasized that a critical opportunity exists to ensure the Commission reflects the community's diversity. He stressed that because the Commission oversees vital functions such as polling locations and the selection of election judges, its composition must meet the needs of the entire population to guarantee fair elections. He encouraged the public to contact the Election Commission office to advocate for commissioners who represent both the political and demographic diversity of the City.

Diane Crock addressed the Council and expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to work with many Council Members over the years and provided an update regarding the closing of Hope House operations. Seven years ago, she began community service through the local Blessing Box initiative and maintained one at her residence, which through grant funding and community donations, provided both food and winter coats. As the need for indoor facilities grew during the pandemic, she consulted with former Mayor John Pritchard, and the City provided a dedicated space at 120 East Main Street. The initiative transitioned to 156 North Seminary Street, the former parsonage of First Lutheran Church, where it officially opened as Hope House, where it served thousands by providing clothing, footwear, employment assistance, seasonal meals, rehabilitation support, transportation, and Narcan, while offering a supportive environment. She highlighted collaborative efforts with the Gale Scholars Program, as well as the Men and Women of Distinction programs at Carl Sandburg College. She thanked former Mayor Pritchard, Mayor Schwartzman, Steve Gugliotta, Chief Hovind, Dave Dunn, and Council Members White, Acerra, and Cheesman for their significant investment of time. Ms. Crock reminded the public that while the City assists, the responsibility to care for neighbors in need rests with the community. She emphasized that cooperation between residents and

municipal government is essential and commended the City for being consistently accommodating and helpful.

Jeanette Chernin addressed the Council regarding the Galesburg Board of Election Commissioners and noted that she has attended their meetings for the last five years and highlighted that while commissioners are appointed to three-year terms by the Knox County Circuit Court Administrative Judge, these terms often conclude only upon resignation. She expressed a desire for increased diversity on the board, specifically recommending the appointment of a person of color or a woman to succeed Roger Williamson to better reflect the Galesburg community. While acknowledging the Council does not oversee these appointments, she wanted to place her request for a more representative board on the public record. She commented on the lack of transparency in the selection process, noting that efforts by Pam Davidson to engage with the judge and Executive Director Lisa Watson had not yielded changes. Ms. Chernin also expressed her gratitude to the City for the recent demolition of the property at 362 North Broad Street, which had remained standing for over five years.

Oletha Wallace addressed the Council and expressed her skepticism regarding the City's impartiality, citing past instances where she felt her family was treated unfairly. She raised specific concerns regarding the management and condition of neighboring properties, particularly at 675 Holton Street. She reported that a large greenhouse-style shed was erected in May directly behind her property. She stated that this construction occurred without the required permits and noted that over a dozen trees were also planted. She stated that the property owner, Mark Reisenbigler, is a disruptive presence in the neighborhood who ignores regulations and has prompted multiple police calls. She urged the City to intervene before the situation escalated further. Mrs. Wallace stated that despite residing at her address for 60 years and never requesting special treatment, she felt the City was permitting a neighbor with a history of racial bias and property neglect to act without consequence.

Pastor Tony Franklin addressed the Council and stated that he is a member of the advisory board for the All-Stars Sports Academy. He emphasized the current lack of recreational opportunities for local youth during the winter months and advocated for the continued existence of the facility. He specifically encouraged the Council to approve agenda item 26-4050, noting that the grant would benefit the community by supporting developmental programs for young people. He also expressed concern regarding reports of hate crimes and targeted harassment associated each time Mr. Spinks makes presentations to the Council. He encouraged the Council to support the initiative despite any controversy.

Nick Collins addressed the Council and expressed his concerns regarding the installation of five Flock cameras at various city entrances. He noted that these devices record license plate data for storage in a private database accessible via subscription. He urged the City Council to conduct further research into the technology and stated that he does not support the use of these cameras or any Council Member who favors their implementation.

CONSENT AGENDA #2026-13

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

26-4042

Approve a Special Event application for the Battle of the Burg Disc Golf Tournament.

26-4043

Approve waiving normal purchasing policies and approve the product pricing for the second half of 2026 as provided by Core & Main for water meters for resale to be purchased by the Water Division.

26-4044

Approve waiving normal purchasing policies and approve the product pricing for the second half of 2026 as provided by Core & Main for various water meters, handheld readers and radio units to be purchased by the Water Division.

26-5006

Receive the fiscal year 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

26-6005

Approve Demarkius Medley to the Library Board, term ending June 2028.

26-8012

Approve bills in the amount of \$1,344,657.11 and advance checks in the amount of \$509,225.27.

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Consent Agenda 2026-13.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**26-1013**

Ordinance on first reading amending Chapter 94 of the Galesburg Municipal Code establishing minimum maintenance standards for private parking lots.

26-2013

Council Member Hunigan moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve an MFT Resolution 26-2013 for the BNSF Peoria Subdivision improvement project.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

26-3024

Council Member Hunigan moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve the bid submitted by D&T Demolition LLC in the amount of \$27,130 for the demolition and clean-up of 1970 East Main Street.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-3025

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve the bid submitted by Miller Trucking & Excavating in the amount of \$161,898 for phase II of the installation of the drainage systems at Bunker Links Golf Course.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-3026

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve the bid submitted by Centennial Contractors of the Quad Cities, Inc. in the amount of \$72,252.50 for the BNSF Peoria Subdivision improvement project.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-3027

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the bid submitted by SHI in the amount of \$37,699.16 for the City's annual security software renewal.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-3028

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Hunigan, to approve the bid submitted by Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc. in the amount of \$122,660 to provide a comprehensive review and update of the City's Development Ordinance, Chapter 152 of the Galesburg Municipal Code.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hanson extended his gratitude to Transit Manager Kraig Boyton for his exceptional leadership during the recent Taste of Galesburg. He added that the festivities were phenomenal and acknowledged the efforts of the planning committee and numerous volunteers, while noting Kraig's dedication to the event remains unmatched. He also recognized the Galesburg Gives Committee and the many City employees who volunteered their time, expressing great pride in his colleagues. Despite the high temperatures, he noted that the event was a success. He thanked Mr. Boynton and the committee for their significant contributions and for successfully hosting another landmark event for the community.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

26-4045

Council Member Hunigan moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve a two-year extension of the agreement with Klingner & Associates to provide asbestos inspection and consulting services.

Roll Call #11:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4046

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Hunigan, to approve a five-year maintenance agreement with the Galesburg Downtown Council.

Roll Call #12:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4047

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve a Downtown Façade Redevelopment Grant for the property at 10 West Main Street in an amount not to exceed \$40,000 or 50% of the verified final project costs, whichever is less.

Roll Call #13:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4048

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Hunigan, to approve a Façade Improvement Grant for the property at 221-223 East Main Street in an amount not to exceed \$18,000 or 50% of the verified final project costs, whichever is less.

Roll Call #14:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4049

Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Galesburg and Knox County authorizing the City to serve as the County's public transportation provider and grant administrator for 5311 Rural Transit funds and Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP) funds.

Roll Call #15:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-4050

Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Hunigan, to approve a grant agreement with All Stars Sports Academy of Western Illinois in the amount of \$266,941.14 to be used exclusively for the acquisition of 1855 East Knox Street and the payoff of loans associated with prior property improvements, facilitating the space's utilization as a youth community center.

Council Member Acerra expressed appreciation for individuals providing youth programming in Galesburg and asked Mr. Spinks to outline his five-year vision for the organization and to explain the strategy for maintaining financial sustainability after the loan is satisfied. Mr. Spinks thanked the Council for considering All-Stars for the grant and emphasized his approach of surrounding himself with knowledgeable individuals. He clarified that the facility is intended to function as a youth community center and safe haven rather than just a skating rink. He envisioned the center as a place where children can access meals and laundry services in a secure environment. He noted that children thrive on structure, clear routines, and consistent expectations, which he has aimed to provide for families over the past three years. He indicated that his committee members were also available to provide further details regarding the specific enrichment programs being discussed.

Council Member Acerra also asked him about the regulatory frameworks governing his program. She noted that in Illinois, such initiatives typically fall under either the daycare requirements or an exemption for school-aged programming. She requested clarification on which framework the academy operates under and sought assurances that all regulatory standards and background check protocols are being fulfilled. Mr. Spinks clarified that the academy is not a daycare facility, noting that although parents may drop off children for extended periods, the focus remains on safety, nutrition, and physical activity. He further noted that the academy has collaborated with Bridgeway and the

Regional Office of Education to facilitate various summer programs hosted at the All-Stars Sports Academy.

Council Member Hunigan inquired about the \$260,000 funding request, asking Mr. Spinks to provide a detailed breakdown of the proposed expenditure. He explained that \$130,000 of the requested funds would be used to facilitate the purchase of the six-acre property. He noted that he personally secured a loan for \$127,000 approximately two and a half years ago, and \$105,000 would be applied toward the remaining balance of that obligation. He further clarified that the City's assistance would address three additional loans related to essential electrical and plumbing improvements at the facility. He stated that the funding is intended to retire debt incurred for the project rather than for personal gain, noting that despite remaining in the red, his primary motivation is to ensure the youth of the community have a dedicated facility.

Council Member Hunigan remarked on the revitalization of the facility, noting that it had previously been vacant for numerous years and has since been transformed into a significant community asset. He stated that it remains the only skating venue within a sixty-mile radius and that the location is hosting a summer youth camp with approximately 70 to 80 children. In addition to providing meals for youth, the facility offers essential services to the homeless population, including laundry amenities for those experiencing financial hardship. He expressed his strong support for the ongoing project.

Deputy Mayor Cheesman asked if there was any consideration given to expanding the reach of the facility by providing transportation. It was noted that efforts have been underway since January to secure two 15-passenger buses that do not require a CDL license.

Roll Call #16:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, Saul, and Cheesman, 3.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Abstain: Council Members White and Acerra, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

26-9013

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Hunigan, to receive the Fiscal Year 2025 Town of the City of Galesburg Audit.

Roll Call #17:

Ayes: Trustees Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Trustees Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-9014

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$23,586.69
General Assistance Fund	\$15,119.73
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$38,706.42

Roll Call #18:

Ayes: Trustees Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.

Nays: None

Absent: Trustees Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member Hunigan shared his impression of the East Main project open house held at the Galesburg Public Library on July 14th. Hosted by Terra Engineering, he stated that the event was attended by many residents reviewing the multi-million-dollar reconstruction project, which spans from Grand Avenue to the I-74 interchange. The speaker noted that the significant turnout demonstrated the public's desire for involvement in the revitalization of this vital city gateway. It was clarified that the project is currently in the first of three phases, with the final construction phase expected to last two years. Assurances were given that two-way traffic and business access will be maintained throughout the duration of the work, and the I-74 exit will remain open, addressing concerns regarding economic disruption. The traffic study indicated that a three-lane configuration would effectively manage flow without significant delays. Although the project, estimated to be between \$10-\$20 million, currently remains unfunded and years from starting, the City intends to secure state grants for completion. Planned improvements include widened sidewalks for pedestrian safety and a modern bike path. Council Member Hunigan stated that he is more encouraged following the presentation and emphasized the necessity of updating aging infrastructure, such as sewers and the water system, as part of the reconstruction. He urged the City to aggressively pursue state funding to ensure the project's success.

Council Member White encouraged the community to view "Firsthand Democracy: Community Conversations," available on Facebook and YouTube. He stated that it was enlightening and could help with understanding among citizens across the political spectrum, especially considering current national challenges and overcoming partisan, which is essential for the nation's continued prosperity over the next 250 years.

Council Member White left the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Council Member Acerra stated that property maintenance remains one of the primary concerns reported by constituents, noting that issues ranging from trash and debris to structural deterioration affect nearly every ward. She acknowledged that some residents have expressed concerns regarding inconsistent enforcement or feeling unfairly targeted, and many have expressed gratitude for the City's ongoing efforts to demolish derelict structures and address these issues. She emphasized the need for clearer communication and more uniform enforcement of the City's ordinances and expressed a commitment to collaborating with City staff and the Council to ensure these standards are applied effectively.

Council Member Saul also thanked Kraig Boyton for his recent efforts on the Taste of Galesburg, noting his own upcoming role in coordinating the Great Balloon Race. Having participated for twenty-six years, he shared his appreciation for the opportunity to showcase Lake Storey and commended Parks & Recreation Director Don Miles for his exceptional management of the City's parks. He thanked all City departments, including the Police Department for traffic safety and the Fire Department for fulfilling FAA safety mandates. He stressed that the success of these community events relies heavily on the dedication and teamwork of numerous volunteers.

Deputy Mayor Cheesman shared several community highlights, beginning with the recent Taste of Galesburg and the upcoming Balloon Race. He noted the success of the previous weekend's car show and remarked on the abundance of local festivals that provide residents with opportunities for enjoyment. He expressed gratitude for these events and observed that the community is seeing significant progress due to the combined efforts of the Administration and City Council. He noted that the Council has made it a priority to move beyond discussion and focus on tangible achievements, specifically noting the upcoming senior housing development planned for the area behind Graham Medical Center, which is a vital step toward addressing the City's housing needs. He also highlighted the ongoing support for youth programming, including the recently approved grant for the All-Stars Sports Academy.

Addressing public concerns regarding infrastructure, Deputy Mayor Cheesman stated that street and sidewalk improvements remain top priorities. He acknowledged that these areas have been neglected for many years but assured the public that the City is working diligently to address them, specifically noting that the North Seminary Street area is a high priority for sidewalk extensions. He urged residents to report potholes or other maintenance issues to their respective Council Member or City Hall. He clarified that while certain major thoroughfares like Grand Avenue are state routes and outside the City's direct jurisdiction, City Administration continues to coordinate with the state within its available means.

He also extended his appreciation to City Arborist Brandon Phillips for his professional and punctual response to a citizen's concern, noting the importance of recognizing the everyday efforts of City employees. He also recognized Diane Crock and the Hope House, along with many other individuals who dedicate significant time and effort to supporting the community. He also issued an urgent plea for bike safety following two recent accidents on Seminary Street, reminding drivers to remain vigilant as the City continues to improve its bike lane infrastructure. Lastly, he offered his congratulations to the American Legion Post 285 baseball team for qualifying for the state tournament, noting this is a significant achievement and wished the team success. He added that

positive momentum continues to build within Galesburg and echoed earlier sentiments regarding the necessity of maintaining open dialogue to further the common good.

There being no further business, Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Hunigan, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Roll Call #19:

Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 4.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Mangieri, White, and Reynolds, 3.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk