

Proclamation: Blick Art Materials Anniversary

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
April 18, 2022
5:30 p.m.

Called to order by Mayor Peter Schwartzman at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call #1: Present: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Bradley Hix, Wayne Dennis, Kevin Wallace, Dwight White, Jaclyn Smith-Esters, Sarah Davis, and Larry Cox, 8. Also Present: City Manager Todd Thompson, City Attorney Brad Nolden, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present at 5:39 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Pastor Tony Franklin gave the invocation.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from April 4, 2022.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA #2022-08

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

22-2019

Approve Resolution 22-16 authorizing the submission of a grant application to the Illinois Department of Transportation to purchase seven medium duty paratransit vehicles for Galesburg Public Transportation.

22-2020

Approve Resolution 22-17 to authorize a compensation increase for the City manager for 2021 and 2022 of 2.5 percent each year to be paid retroactively.

22-2021

Approve Resolution 22-18 to install a street light in Lancaster Park

22-3014

Approve the bid from Ennis-Flint, Inc., in the amount of \$30,952.35 for the 2022 traffic paint supply.

22-4041

Approve a letter of understanding with the Illinois Department of Transportation for maintenance responsibility for the proposed decorative lighting improvements on West Main Street.

22-8007

Approve bills in the amount of \$588,430.76 and advance checks in the amount of \$175,489.55.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Consent Agenda 2022-08.

Roll Call #3:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried by omnibus vote.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**22-1009**

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to approve Special Ordinance 22-611 on final reading authorizing the submission of the Section 5311 and Downstate Public Transit Operating Assistance Grant applications for the period July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, to provide public transportation.

Roll Call #4:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

22-1010

Ordinance on first reading amending part of the property that was formerly part of HT Custer Park from Institutional (I) to Single Family (R1B).

Council Member Cox moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to suspend the rules and move agenda item 22-1010 to final reading.

Roll Call #5:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Ordinance 22-3668 on final reading amending part of the property that was formerly part of HT Custer Park from Institutional (I) to Single Family (R1B). This parcel is on the west side of the park.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

22-1011

Special Ordinance on first reading amending Section 113.036 (C) of Chapter 113 of the Galesburg Municipal Code to establish a Class C-3 liquor license.

22-1012

Ordinance on first reading authorizing the sale of a property located at 883 West Third Street to Veracity Holdings Construction Group for the price of \$20.00.

Community Development Director Steve Gugliotta noted that the renovations and/or improvements should be substantially completed within one year. Mr. Preston hopes to start the project as soon as possible after approval.

Council Member White stated that he is glad to see the property being refurbished. Council Member Wallace inquired if the property would be sold once the project is complete. Mr. Preston stated that it was his intention to lease the property or offer it for sale. He is also working with the Knox County Housing Authority to offer opportunities for their clients.

Council Member Cox moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to suspend the rules and move agenda item 22-1012 to final reading.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Wallace, to approve Special Ordinance 22-612 on final reading authorizing the sale of a property at 883 West Third Street to Veracity Holdings Construction Group for the price of \$20.00.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

22-1013

Ordinance on first reading approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Community Unit School District #205 for the purchase of the former Churchill Middle School located at 905 Maple Avenue.

City Manager Thompson noted that there is no closing date yet but that the building is currently being used and would not be available until after the school year is finished. He also stated that the Administration's recommendation to purchase the building is not necessarily a recommendation to move forward with any renovations. He believes more due diligence needs to be done to determine if moving forward is a good idea for the City.

Council Member Hix thanked all the constituents for their emails and noted that they were all against purchasing the building.

22-1014

Ordinance on first reading approving amendments to Chapter 94 of the Galesburg Municipal Code regarding nuisances.

Council Member White asked what the current issues were with the ordinance and why items needed updated. Director Gugliotta gave an overview of some of the proposed changes:

- Change the time to pay a bill after abatement of a violation from 15 days to 30 days.
- Create a consistent compliance date of 10 days for abatement of weeds (was 5 days), prairie plots (was 5 days), outside storage (was 15 days), trash & debris (was 10 days), pests (was 7 days), enclosure of building openings (was 10 days), open cisterns (was 10 days). Inoperable vehicles will remain 7 days and dilapidated structures will remain 15 days.
- Allowing graffiti on a building, fence or other structure would be considered a nuisance, also adds a definition of graffiti.
- Allowing a fence to exist on a property in violation of city ordinance or is in an unsafe condition so that it is unstable, insecure or is in such a condition that it is a menace to the safety or health of the public.
- Amending the definition of "pest" to match State law.

He also noted that he is proposing a section in regard to Structures Unfit for Human Occupancy. Currently, the only section applicable to designating a structure as unfit for human occupancy is in the Housing Ordinance, which is only applicable to residential. The proposed new section would be applicable to all buildings and structures to be used in egregious situations.

22-2022

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Resolution 22-19 approving the appointment of Wayne Carl as Interim City Manager.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

22-2023

Council Member Wallace moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve Resolution 22-20 to place the following non binding advisory question of public policy on the ballot at the next election in the City of Galesburg: Should the City of Galesburg spend between \$5 million and \$10 million to convert the former Churchill Middle School (905 Maple Avenue) into a community/activity center?

Council Member Smith-Esters believes that when items are put on a ballot it narrows it to only voters. She believes that when you look at our City's statistics over the last several years, not a lot of people are voting. In her opinion, the average voter is an older white crowd and that the City would be losing the voice of the poor. She noted that when she was running for Mayor in 2020, she encountered a lot of people who were not registered voters. She believes that this referendum vote would narrow it to only voters' opinions, and that it is not just voters who they represent but the entire community. She is not in favor of this referendum question.

Council Member White stated that he believes they have the votes for Churchill and that in his opinion this is an attempt to stop it from moving forward. He doesn't understand why some Council Members are against a complex that would benefit the youth of Galesburg. He asked those who do not want to purchase Churchill for a youth and community center what they propose to do for the youth. He stated that the library will not be able to meet the needs, nor the YMCA. He is trying to figure out why some have issues with the Churchill building. He understands that some feel it is a money issue, but that everything the City does is about money. He also knows that past Councils have not funded certain projects and the maintenance of buildings for the last ten years, some who are still serving on this City Council.

Council Member White stated that there are problems with the Hawthorne Pool but that it was not kept up or taken care of by previous Councils and now it is in shambles with staff trying to get it fixed. The youth in our city need a place to go and he argued that this Council voted down the push tax, money which was going to be used for the project, because the Council thought it was going to hurt businesses. He also noted that the City is hiring three extra police officers and one of their jobs will be to help with youth problems and issues.

He believes that it would cost a lot more than \$10 million dollars to build a new youth center. He also noted that there was no referendum when the Golf Course was failing but instead the City salvaged it. He can't understand why some don't want the project to move forward and has a hard time believing it's about the money. Council Member White stated again that he doesn't understand why some are against the project and noted that a new building would cost more than \$10 million dollars.

Council Member Hix stated that the City's budget is \$66 million and it's being proposed to spend \$10 million on this project, a huge percentage of the budget. He also noted that two on the Council were appointed and not elected and believes the City needs the public's input. He added that the Council received many emails, all of which have asked to express their opinion.

Council Member Hix noted that no one on the Council has been against a youth center but that the City's money needs to be spent wisely and to look at other options other than just Churchill.

He believes that once the Broadview Hotel is down, that could be a potential site, as well as other places that could have an exact building built to meet the needs of a center. He feels that 87,000 square feet is way too large and that a new building could be built at a cheaper price. He's afraid that the hidden costs of the Churchill building could be extraordinary. If it is approved to move forward, he hopes those Council Members own the overruns and the costs to remediate the asbestos and mold removal. He does not like to be characterized as being against youth when he is not.

Council Member Cox stated that Council Member White was one who voted to repeal the video gaming push tax. As for other facilities, he believes that the existing library could be an option and that the 14,000 square foot building would be more than enough for a youth and senior citizen center. He also noted that it could be added onto if needed in the future and has a fairly new AC unit, roof, and is in much better shape, which would mean lower maintenance costs. If used as a community center and it is found that it is not needed, that building could be sold since it would be marketable, unlike the Churchill building.

Council Member Cox stated that he agrees with Council Member Hix that City doesn't need 87,000 square feet and that the City has several facilities now that go unused, such as the Hawthorne Gym and the Pavilion. He definitely supports the youth and ways to provide for them, but remembers his teenage years and like most at that age, always thought there was nothing to do in town. He believes there is a lot to do in Galesburg if people would look and pointed out the "100 Free Things to do in Galesburg" from the Heart & Soul initiative.

He believes that Council needs to use their imagination and understands that the new Library or YMCA cannot serve everyone but doesn't believe that an 87,000 square foot building that would be vacant most of the time is the answer.

Council Member Smith-Esters stated that she believes the whole Council wants the City to be successful. She feels that the Library building could be used as a senior center or that the property could be sold to bring new businesses downtown. She also believes that the Council needs to understand the definition of a teenager now and that the City's poverty rate of 23 percent is not your typical teen, but instead one that has no support system, no role models, or anyone at home for them. She stated that this is an opportunity for the community to come together and be role models for these teens. She also doesn't want to have a temporary teen center, similar to what the Library is now from 1961. She believes that if the City drags their feet on this project, our poverty rate is going to go up. She added that we need to dare to dream and invest in the community and stop talking about the budget.

Council Member Wallace stated that he came back to Galesburg and his agenda has been to bring something for the youth. He feels that the kids have spoken and that they want a place to go and things to do. He believes it will benefit the entire community, provide role models and be a community center for everyone. He trusts that there is money available out there from other government agencies and that it won't all come from the taxpayers. Council Member Wallace stated that we need to get kids out of trouble and off the street and provide them with a youth center. He added that if we don't try then it says we don't care about them. He

believes people will volunteer their time to provide for the kids and once retired, he will be devoting all his time to the community center.

Council Member Hix reminded Council Members that this would be a non-binding advisory question and that we are only seeking public input.

Council Member White asked about the Pavilion and Council Member Cox stated that he was aware that the Pavilion was only used once last November and goes unused 95% of the time. Council Member White stated that it's too expensive for most to use. He also noted that there was no referendum when the old community center was sold but that it was used a lot, including by his church, and was priced right for poor and economically challenged people. He will continue to fight for the Fourth Ward and things near his ward.

Council Member White noted several programs and rentals through the City that cost a lot of money and stated that people in housing don't have the money to participate. He challenged anyone to go to a housing complex, get on a bus, ride to the Hawthorne Center, spend time there, and then get back on the bus. He doubts anyone would ever do it again. He stated some are making assumptions and not thinking about others. He feels that the City will figure out how to get the money and believes that waiting until November is a stall tactic and that the School District will sell it to someone else.

Council Member Dennis stated that he understands what Council Member White is saying but that Burlington has a huge sports complex that they built for \$3.5 million dollars. Council Member Smith-Esters believes that it was too long ago and that costs have only risen. He agrees with some Council Members that the people of Galesburg have the right to express their opinion. If the public agrees to move forward with Churchill, then the City should proceed.

Ray Pickrel addressed the Council and stated that a community center should not hold teens and seniors together. He also reminded the Council that the skating rink closed because it wasn't being used.

James Jacobs addressed the Council and stated that he resented the comment that two of the Council Members were appointed and believes they have as much standing as anyone else and that their votes count just as much. He has lived in the City for 72 years and we have been in dire need of someplace where kids could go and believes Churchill presents the community with a real opportunity. He noted that the library is not suitable and does not have a kitchen or a gym. He believes that the south side of town and its poor kids, black kids and brown kids have always gotten the short end of the stick. He believes that the question of the referendum is a subterfuge and is really a ruse to frustrate the attempts of the new Mayor and some progressive thinking members of the Council to move our City forward. He stated that apparently people think progress is being stranded in the status quo and he doesn't believe it is. He noted that Churchill may not be the ideal place in the long run but that we need to dream. The City could have classes for people who want to learn Spanish, Swahili, senior classes, basketball, dancing lessons, an area for video games, and as time and interests change, have a youth board that tries to address the different interests of teens.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he would be willing to have his taxes increased and would give the City \$1,000 up front to do this project. He asserted that we need this in our community and should move forward or stay stranded in the cement of the status quo, which will only send the community backwards.

Laura Porter addressed the Council and stated that there are many empty buildings and schools that could be used for classes and feels that programs offered for outside activities are needed.

Jeannette Chernin addressed the Council and read a statement from Darla Krejic regarding turning Churchill into a community center. She feels that the project is revolving around money and that most have a vision of a community center as a meeting space for seniors and youth, a kitchen area, and mostly what the former community center consisted of. She shared her vision of a community center as a public location where people can gather, have group activities, meeting and office space for nonprofits, auditorium/performing space, a gym, cafeteria and kitchen, and outside space for gardening and walking. Most of these elements are already included in Churchill and that the City should invest in this building. She noted statistics from the Mary Davis Home where it costs approximately \$3,500 per month to house a juvenile.

Roll Call #10:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, and Cox, 3.

Nays: Council Members Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, and Davis, 4.

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion failed.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

22-3015

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Wallace, to approve the bid submitted by GovHR in the amount of \$24,500, plus any consultant travel needed, for executive recruitment services for City Manager candidates. The estimated timeline for the search process is 14 weeks.

City Manager Thompson stated that GovHR is a public management consulting firm, headquartered in Northbrook, Illinois, and offers customized executive recruitment services. They have conducted over 900 recruitments for cities, counties, and government entities of all sizes throughout the country. They have professionals that have held leadership positions within local government, providing an in-depth understanding of the functions and needs of municipalities. Mark Peterson is the project manager that will be assigned to the City of Galesburg's recruitment project. He has extensive local government experience, serving the City of Normal, Illinois for 30 years.

Roll Call #11:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kendall Bolen addressed the Council regarding his recommendation to allow side-by-side vehicles in the City limits and stressed that they would have the same rules as a car. The City could provide an annual sticker and inspection. The Mayor stated that someone would be reaching out to Mr. Bolen.

Molly Miller addressed the Council and stated that despite the tension she believes that everyone is on the same team and wants the community to thrive. She feels that getting a community or activity center will take time but encouraged Council to provide clear concrete plans of the center to the public. It would be helpful to see and hear what \$10 million would look like towards the project, as well as a timeline. She believes that a community center needs to draw people to town and would encourage Council to work with each other as they all represent the entire community.

Laura Porter addressed the Council regarding domestic violence and the issues she has personally endured. She feels that there are no programs or places to go for assistance locally and would like to see the City get a facility to help people.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Traffic Advisory Committee Report for April 2022.

City Manager Thompson noted that a request was made by Galesburg High School to consider installing a mid-block crosswalk on Fremont Street in front of the school. The school district acquired the building at 940 W. Fremont Street and will be utilizing it for classes. Students travel from the main high school building to the newly acquired building at different times throughout the day for classes. Currently, there is a marked crosswalk at the signalized intersection at Hawkinson and Fremont for the students to cross; however, the school district is concerned that students will take a more direct route between the new buildings and cross Fremont Street where there is currently no striped crosswalk.

He reported that TAC agreed that a crosswalk should be installed to allow students to safely cross between buildings. Since it is a mid-block crossing, measures should be taken to ensure the crosswalk is visible to motorists. It is recommended that flashing warning signs and radar feedback signs be used and in-street pedestrian crossing signs be purchased and installed. City personnel will stripe the crosswalk, install the signage, and install the curb ramps for the crossing.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (Agreements, Approvals, Etc.)

22-4042

Council Member Wallace moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to approve an amended 2022 Classification and Salary Schedule to upgrade a Community Service Officer position to a supervisor position.

Roll Call #12:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

22-4043

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve Budget Adjustment #3 for the year ended December 31, 2021.

Roll Call #13:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to sit as the Town Board. The motion carried.

TOWN BUSINESS

22-9009

Trustee Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Trustee Cox, to approve Town bills and warrants be drawn in payment of same.

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$6,608.33
General Assistance Fund	\$4,983.59
IMRF Fund	\$1,735.82
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$2,083.38
Liability Fund	\$516.66
Audit Fund	
Total	\$15,927.78

Roll Call #14:

Ayes: Trustees Hix, Dennis, Wallace, Smith-Esters, White, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to resume as the City Council. The motion carried.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White announced that he had the privilege to go on an Honor Flight as a Vietnam Veteran and thanked those who sent cards to him. He had the opportunity to see the Vietnam Veteran Memorial Wall. He also reminded people that agent orange killed more than

300,000 people and that ten times more African Americans died in World War II than others. He added that many are still fighting in our nation to vote and are still giving their lives. He's proud of his service but has mixed feelings.

Council Member White gave a shout out hello to Diane Caldwell in Moon Towers. He also stated that he recently saw a billboard for the teen center in Monmouth and it encouraged him to believe we need one here. He thanked Aaron Gavin for his help with a constituent who called and said that he was pleasant to talk to and grateful for his assistance.

Council Member Smith-Esters applauded the City on a successful Easter Egg Hunt and noted that there are several upcoming events such as volunteer trail cleaning on May 7th and 14th at the Lakeside Nature Center, Touch-A-Truck on May 4th at the Pavilion, and the annual Fishing Derby on May 15th at Lincoln Park. She also noted that this is the last week for Cleanup Days.

Council Member Sarah Davis stated that as a CPA she was glad that tax season is finally over. She also thanked those who attended the meeting and spoke on issues to make Galesburg a better place to live.

Council Member Cox stated that while last year's City budget turned out positive, our national economy is not in great shape with inflation up to 8%, the worst in forty years. He noted that some economists are predicting a recession soon while our national debt has increased by more than \$7 trillion dollars in less than two years (over \$91,000 for each person in the United States).

Council Member Cox stated that there is potential that future budgets will be challenging, especially if inflation stays high and the unions request a high cost of living increase. He doesn't feel that it's a great time for Galesburg to go into further debt on large expenditures.

Council Member Hix thanked Blick Art Materials for being a great employer in our community and was recently able to tour their facility. He thanked their management and leadership team for inviting the Council.

Council Member Dennis agreed with Council Member White on the Vietnam Veteran Wall and encouraged everyone to go see it if they can.

Council Member Wallace thanked everyone for attending and adding their input. He also noted that he has met with Director Gugliotta on a property in his ward (Michigan and Grand Avenues) and that it is being addressed and moving forward.

Council Member Wallace also stated that he has worked in the field of domestic abuse, many clients who were kids. He agreed that we needed a place for people to get help and that he would reach out to Ms. Porter.

He also added that he worked at Dick Blick in 1985 and that it was a positive experience for him. He noted that his father was a veteran of the Korean Conflict and understands that many people

face trauma from their service and hopes that people reach out for help from many of the area programs available.

Council Member Wallace also noted that he and his children have been offered many opportunities in Galesburg and that he loves this community, which has been his home since 1984.

Mayor Schwartzman read his Mayoral Award in honor of Fred Foster and his service to the City of Galesburg Police Department. He also announced that April 22nd will be the 53rd annual Earth Day. He hopes everyone has a chance to take part in many of the area events, including those at Knox College.

The Mayor announced that he will be hosting a Lake Storey Day on Saturday, April 30th, 1-5 p.m. They will be gathering to clean up around the Lake while taking tours of various areas (Nature Center, bike/walking paths, playground, beach, etc.). Afterwards, people will be encouraged to talk about ways to improve the Lake.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that over the last few days, he has had several of his friends go to the emergency room with various illnesses (not COVID related). He encouraged the community as a whole to get to know their neighbors.

Council Member White added that there will be a clean up day for the south side of town on Saturday, April 23rd, 9 a.m., starting at the United Way office on Monmouth Boulevard.

There being no further business, Council Member White, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Roll Call #15:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

Peter D. Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk