

Galesburg City Council Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, Illinois
December 5, 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 Gerald C. Smith (via telephone), Interim City Attorney Paul Mangieri, and City Clerk Kelli Bennewitz.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Bonnie Ericson gave the invocation.

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Wallace, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting from November 21, 2022.

Roll Call #2:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, and Cox, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA #2022-23

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

22-3044

Approve the bid from Hawkins Inc. in the amount of \$2,094 per ton for the 2023 annual supply of liquid chlorine.

22-3045

Approve the bid from Brown Excavating & Demolition in the amount of \$79,991 for the demolition and cleanup of six properties.

22-3046

Approve the bid from Neidig Trucking & Excavating in the amount of \$9,000 for the demolition and cleanup of the Lake Storey Waterslide.

22-4113

Approve an updated Annual Investment Policy.

22-5016

Receive the Investment Schedule as of September 30, 2022.

22-8022

Approve bills in the amount of \$917,441.25 and advance checks in the amount of \$1,826,918.89.

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Consent Agenda 2022-23.

Roll Call #3:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried by omnibus vote.

22-4119

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve a Minority and/or Woman owned Business Startup Assistance Program and Southside Occupancy Assistance Program incentive for The Lavender Lotus Yoga Studio in the amount of \$7,380 over two years.

Roll Call #4:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-4120

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to approve a Minority and/or Woman owned Business Startup Assistance Program and Southside Occupancy Assistance Program incentive for GYANN, LLC d/b/a Galesburg Selfie Museum in the amount of \$10,000.

Roll Call #5:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-4121

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve a Minority and/or Woman owned Business Startup Assistance Program and Southside Occupancy Assistance Program incentive for Malley Foods, LLC d/b/a Malley Farms in the amount of \$10,000.

Roll Call #6:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, and Davis, 6.

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

22-4122

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve a grant agreement between the City of Galesburg and the Knox County Housing Authority in an amount not to exceed \$76,000 to provide for the operation of a winter warming shelter. It was noted that the shelter will open December 12th and run through March.

Derek Antoine, Knox County Housing Authority, stated that the location is still to be determined but will either be the Salvation Army or the Hawthorne Gym. It was also noted that the utilities are included in the Administrative expenses and that staffing the shelter is not a concern.

Roll Call #7:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, Davis, and Cox, 7.
Nays: None
Absent: None
Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-4123

Council Member Cox moved, seconded by Council Member Wallace, to approve the appeal of the Overall Code Review Commission's decision to deny a variance of Section 902.28 of the International Building Code and the International Fire Code regarding fire sprinkler requirements for the property located 510 North Kellogg Street.

Council Member Smith-Esters asked if there was a different code that allowed no sprinkler system in the shelter when it was located at the Hawthorne Gym. Steve Gugliotta, Community Development Director, stated that the Salvation Army would be a change of use (e.g. sleeping, eating, etc.) and therefore requires sprinklers. The Gym is also under 12,000 square feet, which allows it to not have a sprinkler system.

Director Gugliotta reported that the building will need a shower installed and a floor plan submitted by an architect. Council Member Smith-Esters noted that the Salvation Army would be able to host families as opposed to the Gym's current set up.

Council Member Smith-Esters announced that she would be abstaining from this vote since she is employed by the Salvation Army.

Roll Call #8:

Ayes: Council Members Wallace and Davis, 2.
Nays: Council Members Dennis and White, 2.
Absent: None
Abstain: Council Members Hix, Smith-Esters and Cox, 3.
Chairman declared the motion failed.

22-4124

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve a lease agreement between the City of Galesburg and the Knox County Housing Authority for the use of Hawthorne Gym as a warming shelter.

Council Member Wallace inquired about fire prevention at the Gym. Fire Chief Hovind stated that at this time there is no sprinkler system or smoke detectors; however, it would be likely that detectors would be installed.

Director Gugliotta noted that Transit would be providing service up until 6 p.m. and that staff is working on bus passes at this time. The shelter will be open 6 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Mayor Schwartzman applauded the Knox County Housing Authority for staffing the shelter and is pleased that the transportation issues are being addressed. The Gym will once again be a short-term solution for the winter, but he hopes that talks will begin again in the spring for a more permanent solution.

Roll Call #9:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, and Davis, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: Council Member Cox, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**22-1035**

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve Special Ordinance 22-616 on final reading 2022 Property Tax Levy in the amount of \$9,707,763, which is an increase of zero percent compared to the 2021 tax levy extension.

Roll Call #10:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-1036

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Ordinance 22-3688 on final reading granting a new nonexclusive franchise agreement with Comcast for a ten-year period.

Roll Call #11:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-1037

Ordinance on first reading increasing the Home Rule Sales Tax rate from 1.00% to 1.25%. The tax would become effective July 1, 2023. It is estimated that the .25% would generate approximately \$950,000 annually.

City Manager Smith stated that the funds generated from the tax would be used for capital infrastructure improvements and a community center; the majority of which would go towards streets and roads, which is a priority for residents via the City's recent public survey. He did note that it would be up to the Council to decide on the scale and scope of those projects.

Council Member Hix inquired about bonding and noted that at this time, the City would pay a large amount in interest. He would be in favor of using the revenue for street and roads projects first.

Council Member Smith-Esters asked about a bond rate and would the home rule tax be a better avenue. Finance Director Gloria Osborn stated that the credit rating company and bond company would get involved if it was decided to issue bonds. If there was a decrease to the Food & Beverage tax, it would have a negative impact on the City's General Fund, specifically public safety.

Council Member Davis stated that bonds would have to be seriously considered due to the high interest rates. Director Osborn did state that the City has been successful in refinancing bonds in the past, but that there is typically a wait time of seven years before that is done, and only if it saves money.

Discussion was held on the current schedule of maintenance for roads and the gas tax, and it was noted that after twenty years there would still likely be a shortage of approximately \$55 million to bring the list of roads up to standard. Public Works Director Wayne Carl gave a brief overview of some of the recent road projects and costs.

City Manager Smith stated that communities are usually always playing catch-up with roads and that the solution needs to be that we grow ourselves out of the problem by marketing our community and bringing in more sales tax.

Council Member Cox stated that he would like to see an agenda item at the December 19th meeting for an advisory referendum on the proposed sales tax increase. Council Members Hix and Dennis agreed and would like to request the item be brought to the Council for a vote.

Council Member Wallace stated that many jobs have been lost in our community and in order to regain them, we need to rebrand ourselves. We have much to offer in the way of quality of life, including a possible new community center.

Council Member White stated that he is a lifelong resident and has talked to many residents about the streets and a community center. He believes that the City needs to spend money to improve and revitalize our community. The needs of the youth in Galesburg are important and

we need to show we care. He hopes that the Council can come to a consensus so that our community can grow and attract people.

Council Member Hix stated that a lot of people are in attendance for the sales tax issue and that all the Council Members received correspondence from the community, mostly against the increase. He stated that he will be voting no and believes this is poor timing, especially with inflation on the rise and everyone getting hit with higher costs. He agrees that things need to get done, but that our residents are taxed enough. He further noted his appreciation to the people who have reached out with their comments.

Council Member Dennis reported that he has received many calls and emails -- forty-seven are against a sales tax increase and three were in favor of it. He further added that the former Carver Center would be a great location for a community center, and that he wonders what happened to the insurance money Carver received from the fire.

Council Member White stated that Carver was a private entity and was mainly for the African American population who couldn't go to the YMCA. The City did not help with maintenance of the Carver Center. He reiterated that the youth are our future and that he has talked to kids at the high school about a community center and encouraged others to do the same. He believes a community center will be a place for kids to be mentored, others can help influence them in the right path, and help in stopping the fighting.

Council Member White stated that he understands funding is an issue and that he is also on a fixed income, but that he still wants to spend this money on a community center for the next generation. People will pay the sales tax and it may hurt, but the investment will be worth it.

Mayor Schwartzman stated that he posted information on the sales tax on his Facebook page for full transparency. He does not take raising taxes lightly and it is rarely done. For perspective, he noted that .25% would amount to three cents on a \$12 purchase and 25 cents on a \$100 purchase.

The Mayor stated that he recently completed an analysis of city sales taxes in 48 other Illinois cities with similar populations to Galesburg, ranging from 25,000-40,000 residents. He discovered that this incremental tax of 0.25% would keep our City at rates that are comparable to what other cities are charging. He noted that these nearby (similarly sized) cities have a sales tax above Galesburg: Pekin (1.75%), Rock Island (1.25%), Quincy (1.50%), East Peoria (1.75%), Moline (1.25%).

22-1038

Special Ordinance on first reading approving the 2022 tax levy for the Special Service Area #1 (downtown) in the amount of \$141,569.

22-2072

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Resolution 22-62 authorizing the purchase of a portion of a property commonly known as 849

South Henderson Street in the amount of \$60,000, with a letter acknowledging assessed value of the land for partial donation of the property from Knox County Ventures, LLC.

Roll Call #12:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-2073

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Wallace, to approve Resolution 22-63 approving a 401(a) Money Purchase Plan Adoption Agreement and Trust Agreement.

Roll Call #13:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

22-3047

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve the bid from Bob Ridings, Inc. in the amount of \$63,966 for the purchase of two pickup trucks for the Water Division.

Roll Call #14:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council Member Davis left the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Evan Miller, Ward Three, addressed the Council opposing the sales tax increase and stated that residents cannot afford this increase. He also opposes Churchill and believes that a bond issue would be a burden for years to come. He suggested that the Council look at using the soon-to-be former Library as a community center, which will cost less money. He hopes the Council reconsiders this and listens to the taxpayers. He proposes that this item should be put on the ballot as a reference and let the taxpayers decide.

Ms. Tate addressed the Council and stated that she has fifteen grandchildren who complain that there is nothing to do in Galesburg. She feels that our City needs a ferris wheel in our community, as well as a place with batting cages, a trampoline park, rock wall, or a sports complex.

Council Member Davis returned to the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Ms. Tate further stated that the Council needs to think about what the kids want and expressed her concern over the high drug addiction in our community.

Dale Jacobs addressed the Council and believes the problem is not that there is no community center, but instead that there are no churches involved with our youth. He does not want to see an increase in the tax, and noted that fifteen years ago he ran the Dream Center in Galesburg and would visit the housing complexes in town with church volunteers. These individuals would help kids learn skills and a trade, as well as teach them about faith. He feels there are too many unknowns with a community center right now and doesn't feel that the City Council should be taxing people. He stressed that people could help fund an organized effort and that it should be faith based.

Connie Dennis, Ward Two, addressed the Council and thanked the Council for their time. She has lived in Galesburg most of her life and was married to Bobby Dennis, a Galesburg Police Officer. She stated that she has corresponded with the City Council and some have responded back to her. She knows that the Council is divided on the location of a community center, and noted that she is opposed to the Churchill building also. Ms. Dennis stated that there are too many questions that need to be answered and that there are other location options for individuals and teens that need to be gathered (i.e. the Oaks, restaurant meeting rooms, the parks, and the new Library). She feels all these locations are underutilized.

Ms. Dennis inquired if the youth have been asked what they want and need, and that the City needs to find this out before any money is spent. She questioned what happened to the Carver Center and why it isn't being looked into as a center. She noted that Carver always provided transportation and utilized Knox College students as tutors. She implored the Council to talk to CUSD 205 about the past maintenance of the Churchill building and added that the economy is very fragile right now and no one wants a tax increase. She stated that a community center will not bring people to our community, but jobs will.

Adam Vitale, Ward Five, addressed the Council and stated that he is concerned about the real and material impact this increase would have at this time. We are currently in line with many other cities our size in Illinois at 8.75%. He noted that his concern is that in 2007, the Council approved a 2% Prepared Food & Beverage tax which layers on top of the current sales tax for a total of 10.75%. In his research, the only place that has a higher tax is the Chicago Metropolitan area. These are restaurants mainly located on Navy Pier, the Gold Coast area, and along the lakefront. These additional taxes in this area are reinvested into that zone. In Galesburg, the Food & Beverage Tax goes directly to the General Fund. The average household income in Chicago is \$62,000 and in Galesburg it is roughly \$37,000. He asked the Council to proceed cautiously and consider the impact this will have on the City's food and beverage establishments, their employees, and most importantly to anyone wanting to start a new business in our community.

Mr. Vitale stated that he enjoys living in Galesburg and believes that one of our best amenities is our local food and beverage establishments, and that we have more than many of the

surrounding communities. Our goal should be to make things easier for these businesses to succeed in our community.

Corine Andersen, Ward Four, addressed the Council and stated that her husband was in economics and that she believes the sales tax being discussed is not big and would be received from many sources spread across the board. Her big concern is the idea that the City may issue bonds for a community center when the actual costs are still unknown. She stated that salaries, ongoing maintenance and other added costs need to be thought out. She feels that there are a lot of opportunities in our community that have not been utilized or organized, and that the City needs to use what we already have.

Ms. Andersen suggested that a Boys & Girls Club be reinstated and possibly put back at the Carver Center location, which the City could support financially. Bonding is wrong at this time and should be postponed until real costs can be known.

Andrew Jowers, Ward Six, addressed the Council and stated that he attended a town hall meeting held by the school district where a lot of data was presented.

Council Member Hix left the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

He stated that the data does not paint a good picture of our community and that kids are having issues at every level. He feels that this is a bleak time for our kids, who have no amenities. He does not understand where the opposition for a community center is coming from and that the community needs to be aware of the school issues that need to be addressed.

Brad Bernardi addressed the Council and understands the need for a community center, but stated that the big issue for him is the increase in sales tax. He stated that if the question of a total increase of the Food & Beverage Tax to 11% was done by referendum, which is in line with Chicago, he wondered if Council thought that it would pass. He doesn't see it happening, but with this recommendation they are disproportionately affecting a certain industry. That tax would come right out of the bottom line of the businesses, and many would have to raise their prices in order to compensate. There needs to be a compromise. He feels the City needs to "tighten their belt" and do a better job of budgeting.

Council Member Hix returned to the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Jim Jacobs, Ward Two, addressed the Council and stated that he will continue to eat out and that people won't stop with a .25% increase. He appreciates what everyone has said, but disagrees with all of them. He supports the renovation of Churchill as a community center and doesn't think putting into the building is too ambitious and believes it's time something bold is done. A community center could host concerts, musicals, a chess club, dances, etc. The youth have come out and said they will use such a building and it's time to sit down with them and develop a plan with the Council's vision. He noted that the City has promised a community center and has demanded it is time. He believes Galesburg and its people are worth it.

Robert Cain addressed the Council and stated that he is not in favor of increasing taxes and doesn't understand why the whole Churchill building has to be renovated before it could be used, and suggested remodeling a little at a time. He stated that people have less income than ever, but that the Council should move forward and take a chance.

Delores addressed the Council and stated that she moved to Galesburg about eight years ago from Peoria. She has two grandchildren who tell her that there is nothing to do here. She believes the Council needs to think of the kids in the future and that they need to make an investment. She doesn't feel that the location matters and there shouldn't be a price on our children.

Mike Spinks addressed the Council and stated that he appreciates the tough job the Council has to do. He added that he will be reopening the former skating rink as a place for kids to go for birthday parties, other events, and a weekly free day. He hopes to offer after school activities with tutoring.

Pippi Ardennia Leahy addressed the Council and stated that she is new to the community, but agrees that we need to show kids we care and that they are valuable to the community. She stated that we need a paradigm shift and look at the new world and beautiful and amazing town we have. She implored the Council to move forward and get the community center done.

Candy Webb addressed the Council regarding the sale of the former community center seven years ago. She is not opposed to a new one, but is opposed to the cost. The community was told back then that the proceeds from the sale would be held in a special fund to earn interest. She would like an accounting of what happened to those funds.

Ms. Webb also asked what would be in the building, what would the costs be, and is there a big difference between building a new center and renovating Churchill. She feels that this is all smoke and mirrors and doesn't understand why the City has to spend more. She encouraged the Council to do their due diligence and let the public understand what the increase in the sales tax would be used for.

Kit Wilcox addressed the Council as a property and business owner in the community. He stated that he is not against a community center or the importance of one. As a business owner, he has to have a budget, balance expenses, and look at what the competition is offering. He added that it appears an increase in the sales tax is not appropriate at this time and that the City's sales tax is high enough. He feels that these are two separate issues (community center vs. sales tax) that is dividing the community and the Council.

Mark Thomas addressed the Council and stated that he lives in Ward Seven and his business is in Ward One. He has lived in Galesburg most of his life and believes that no one is opposed to children or a community center, but instead the swift movement of the project without a business model. In order to borrow money, he feels that a plan or model needs to be in place. Dreaming big is fantastic but there is no plan in place for operation or to carry a debt load. He loves Galesburg, but is concerned this increase would be the straw that breaks the community.

Mr. Thomas stated that the community needs to see an accounting of funds and also believes the proposed increase for a community center vs. streets and roads are two different issues. He implored the Council to start small and grow and expand over time, and not to do the entire project all at once.

Dick Lindstrom addressed the Council and talked about Joann Harris, former Human Services Director for the City. Her offices were housed in the former Community Center. He asked the City to reach out to her regarding the former use and costs. He also noted the community room the Library will be building for \$6 million, as well as other rooms for teens and youth.

Greg Saul, Ward Five, addressed the Council. He stated that he has lived in Galesburg his entire life and it used to be that kids either played outside or were hanging out with friends. He feels that there is plenty to do in our community if people just look. Mr. Sauls stated that he has a foster daughter and has had to teach her to have fun, draw, and be outside. His concern is that parents have failed and have put work and the almighty dollar ahead of their children. He noted that as a graduate of Leadership Greater Galesburg, his class tried to put together a community center but was burdened by the expenses of insurance, staffing, and maintenance. He hopes the churches are asked to be involved.

Bonnie Ericson addressed the Council and stated that she taught Bible studies at the Mary Davis Home and the Knox County Jail. She understands there is a need for a community center for all ages, but feels that we need to make use of what we already have. She mentioned the skating rink, Lakeside, disc golf, etc. She added that the OAKS has a lot to offer in terms of mentoring by people who have the desire to give their time and energy.

Council Member White left the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Council Member Davis left the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (Agreements, Approvals, Etc.)

Council Member White returned to the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

22-4114

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Cox, to approve the December 31, 2023, annual budget as follows:

Total Revenues: \$66,732,850

Total Use of Fund Balance and/or Other Financial Resources: \$8,805,610

Total Expenditures: \$73,977,775

General Fund Revenue Total: \$26,686,945

General Fund Expenditure Total: \$28,022,330

General Fund Use of Fund Balance: \$1,335,385

Call #15:

Ayes: Council Members Hix, Dennis, Wallace, White, Smith-Esters, and Cox, 6.

Nays: None

Absent: Council Member Davis, 1.

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Council Member Davis returned to the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

22-4115

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Wallace, to approve the selection of the former Churchill Junior High as the location of the proposed community center at an estimated cost of \$6 million.

Elizabeth Varner, Parks & Recreation Director, stated that the budget of \$500,000 to \$600,000 annually is all speculation and is mostly based on fixed costs. Varner gave no set estimates on revenues such as fees or rentals.

Council Member Hix stated that there is still no plan for a community center and unknown costs. He doesn't understand what the hurry is and would like to table the item until more information and costs are known, especially if a bond issuance will take place, which will obligate the citizens of Galesburg for 20 years.

Council Member Hix moved, seconded by Council Member Dennis, to table agenda item 22-4115.

Roll Call #16:

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

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

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion failed.

Council Member White inquired about operating costs if there was a different location. Director Varner stated that the costs would be similar. Council Member White added that he agrees with a lot of the residents and understands their concerns, but that they have been working on a community center for a long time. He also understands that a meeting needs to be held to talk about what will be in a community center.

Mayor Schwartzman announced that there is a timeline of discussions and votes for the community center on the City's website.

Council Member Smith-Esters stated that the Council needs to go back to what they are approving in this agenda item, which is the location of a community center. This has been discussed and hashed out and if it keeps being tabled, the project will never get done. She stated that the project will cost money and the Council will find out how much and how to afford it. In order for the City to move forward, a decision needs to be made or the City will stay static.

Council Member Smith-Esters stated that our youth are currently not being valued and that ideas are being discussed from generations past. We need to get out of the past and start asking the youth what their values are, what they want to see in Galesburg, and what would keep them in our community. She noted that it was questioned if experts were asked and that she did ask high school students, the experts, what they wanted to see in their community center and they told her a lot of ideas.

Council Member Smith-Esters understands that the sales tax increase could hit a lot of people and thanked Mr. Vitale for providing information. She will be looking into the tax so that it is equitable for all and not hurting a specific sector.

Council Member Hix asked what meeting was held where the youth were asked about their ideas and if it was one in addition to Council Member White and the Mayor at the high school. Council Member Smith-Esters confirmed that those were the experts she was referring to and that she has also spoken to the senior population. She also noted that residents her age can't be forgotten either and she is very excited about the possibilities that have been discussed for a community center.

Council Member Cox stated that he does not support selling bonds for infrastructure and would rather use the approximate \$900,000 we would receive each year on a sales tax increase. If the City did issue \$10 million in bonds, and they had to be spent within ten years, a lot of money would be spent on consultants, interest, and prices would increase due to the need for contractors for the work.

Council Member White clarified if Council Member Cox would be in support of a sales tax increase for infrastructure. Council Member Cox stated that he would be in favor if the public approved a referendum.

Roll Call #17:

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

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

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-4116

Council Member Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Council Member Davis, to approve a Minor Plat of the Cooke Subdivision.

Roll Call #18:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-4117

Council Member Davis moved, seconded by Council Member Smith-Esters, to waive normal purchasing policies and approve the repairs to bus 1107 in the amount of \$49,092.86.

Roll Call #19:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-4118

Council Member Dennis moved, seconded by Council Member White, to waive normal purchasing policies and approve the purchase of cameras and Wi-Fi capabilities from GSI, Inc. in the amount of \$77,862.61 to complete the build out of onboard cameras for Galesburg Transit's public transportation.

Roll Call #20:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

TOWN BUSINESS

22-9028

Trustee Smith-Esters moved, seconded by Trustee Cox, to approve Ordinance 22-02 on final reading approving the Township Budget and Appropriation for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2023, and ending December 31, 2023, showing the following:

General Town Fund	\$497,224		
Audit Fund	\$20,000		
Liability Fund	\$9,000		
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$34,000		
Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)	\$34,000		
General Assistance Fund	\$455,800		
Total Appropriations			\$1,050,024

Roll Call #21:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-9029

Trustee Dennis moved, seconded by Trustee White, to approve Ordinance 22-03 on final reading approving the 2022 Property Tax Levy for the Town of the City of Galesburg in the amount of \$531,000.

Roll Call #22:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

22-9024

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

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	\$2,955.79
General Assistance Fund	\$3,853.44
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	\$2,203.55
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	\$9,012.78

Roll Call #23:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

City Manager Smith stated that he can have staff investigate a shorter debt service if the Council decides to look at bonding. He estimated that for a community center, a shorter time of five to seven years, instead of twenty years, would incur less interest. He noted that there are many options for funding a community center and capital infrastructure.

Council Member White thanked the residents of the Fourth Ward for attending the meeting and thanked Mr. Jacobs for his ideas to involve the churches. He appreciated Ms. Ericson's comments too and does believe that as people get older they get wiser and giving that wisdom to kids would be a win/win for the community. He agrees that the City needs to tell the community what their plans are for a center, and hopes something is put together soon.

Council Member Smith-Esters congratulated the Downtown Community Partnership for their work on a successful Holly Days Parade and the Holly Gays event. She asked everyone to look up the definition of quality of life and to talk to our seniors and youth and how a community

center would impact Galesburg. She feels the City is one step closer to a center and encouraged residents to continue sending comments to the Council.

Council Member Davis thanked everyone for their comments and concerns, and added that there does need to be balance. She hopes that more ideas on a community center and how to support those in need and don't have a voice are lifted up.

Council Member Davis stated that there are many activities happening in December, including with the Chamber of Commerce, Young Professionals of Galesburg, and others. She announced that the Prairie Players Community Theatre will be performing *All Through the House* this week, Thursday through Sunday. She hopes residents take advantage of the many wonderful holiday activities, including the Gift of Lights.

Council Member Cox thanked Mr. Spinks for his work on the former skating rink, as well as Mr. Jacobs comments about getting churches involved. He hopes that churches work with the community to help it grow, and added that there are eleven churches within walking distance of City Hall alone. He added that churches need young people too.

Council Member Hix congratulated Randy Newcomb and the Galesburg Tourism & Visitors Bureau on being awarded the Best Social Media Marketing award at the Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism. He also noted that his wife is in the Prairie Player's production this weekend and hopes people have a chance to check it out. Council Member Hix hopes that other Council Members take into consideration many of the comments that were made at the meeting tonight.

Council Member Dennis congratulated the organizers of a successful Holly Days parade. He also thanked City staff for all their work in providing information on the community center.

Council Member Wallace thanked everyone from Ward Three for attending the meeting and for their comments. He noted that he was not elected to his seat, and instead encouraged to do so, but that he represents the people of his Ward. He thanked everyone for the conversation tonight and hopes that churches can get kids more involved as well.

Mayor Schwartzman sent his best wishes to City Manager Smith and his family, who are dealing with some family matters. He stated that this was an amazing meeting tonight and that there are many items to be celebrated, including three Minority Grant awards. He thanked Ken Springer and his staff for their assistance and vision. The Mayor noted that he hopes everyone had a good Thanksgiving and that he got to spend it with family, particularly his brother and new nephew.

The Mayor announced that he delivered a State of the City address via a recording at the Chamber's Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon. If anyone would like a copy, please contact him to be added to his email list.

Mayor Schwartzman is pleased to see that the warming center will be open soon and reminded the community that they are working tirelessly to eliminate the problem of the unhoused. He also congratulated everyone on the holiday parade.

The Mayor stated that he has been able to buy three houses in his life, and each time took out a loan to do so, and asked the citizens to look at the community and building Galesburg in the same way. The Council passed the budget tonight, which took fortitude, including the financing to add three new firefighters, which the Council was committed to doing. He also added that the City is investing in the Police Department, which is critical for the future. He believes the community center will be critical for the City's future as well.

He noted that he recently had the chance to attend the National League of Cities as a representative of Galesburg in Kansas City. He stated that he heard many amazing speeches and powerful messages from communities who are facing the same challenges as Galesburg. He noted that those with empathy and confidence will thrive. The Mayor reported that he hopes to have meetings in January on what will be in the community center.

Council Member Cox moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adjourn into Executive Session at 8:56 p.m. for the purposes of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees (5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1) and the approval of the executive session minutes from the August 15, August 17, August 24, September 6, and November 14, 2022, meetings (5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(21)

Roll Call #24:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

During the Executive Session, Council Member Smith-Esters, seconded by Council Member Hix, to adjourn the Executive Session at 9:38 p.m.

Roll Call #25:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Peter D. Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk