Galesburg City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes

DATE:	October 19, 2026, 6:00 p.m.
PLACE:	City Council Chambers, 55 West Tompkins Street, Galesburg, IL
COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:	Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Wendel Hunigan, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman.
COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:	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 Mayor Schwartzman at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call #1: Present: Mayor Peter Schwartzman, Council Members Wendel Hunigan, Dwight White, Heather Acerra, Greg Saul, and Steve Cheesman, 6.

Mayor Schwartzman declared a quorum present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Semenya McCord gave the invocation.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Acerra, to approve the minutes of the City Council's regular meeting of October 5, 2026.
Roll Call #2:
Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CONSENT AGENDA #2026-19

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

26-2024
Approve MFT Resolution 26-2024 for 2027 material purchases.

26-2025
Approve Resolution 26-36 authorizing the City to opt into participating in four additional PFAS litigation settlements.

26-3034
Approve the use of the 2026-2027 State of Illinois bid for bulk rock salt from Morton Salt, Inc., at $103.43 per ton.

26-4063
Approve the special event application for Lincoln Park Lights Drive-Through Christmas Light Display at Lincoln Park from November 27 through December 31, 2026.

26-8018
Approve bills in the amount of $1,599,693.35 and advance checks in the amount of $864,352.87.

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Hunigan, to approve Consent Agenda 2026-19.
Roll Call #3:
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

26-1018
Ordinance on first reading amending Appendix F of Chapter 76 of the Galesburg Municipal Code designating Robertson Avenue at Michigan Avenue a yield intersection.

26-2027
Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve Resolution 26-37 authorizing a grant submission to the Illinois Department of Transportation for capital projects for Galesburg Public Transportation.
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.

26-2027
Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve Resolution 26-38 approving an agreement to the National Railroad Hall of Fame that grants a leasehold mortgage to secure a loan from Tompkins State Bank to finance construction of the facility.

Council Member Acerra noted the community's excitement about the long-awaited project and requested additional details regarding financial projections. Specifically, she inquired whether the materials previously submitted for Council consideration included estimated revenues, operating costs, and related financial documentation, noting that similar detailed information was provided during past project reviews submitted to Council, noting the YMCA's project.

City Manager Hanson stated that discussion with the Hall of Fame focused primarily on the lease agreement and corresponding action items involving the City. He noted that Representatives from the Hall of Fame were present and available to address specific questions at the Council's discretion.

Council Member Acerra asked that given that much of this financing relies on received pledges, she would like to clarify the contingency plan for the loan should the pledge payments fall short of expectations over the coming years. City Attorney Dan Alcorn clarified that the agenda contains two distinct items, the leasehold mortgage consent and the grant agreement. Regarding mortgage consent, the City's sole role is consenting to the bank taking a security interest in the Hall of Fame's leasehold interest in the real estate, involving no transfer of funds by the City. He noted that evidence of significant financial pledges to repay the bank had been provided and indicated that further details regarding the grant agreement would be addressed during discussion of the next agenda item.

Roll Call #5:
Ayes: Council Members Hunigan, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 4.
Nays: None
Absent: Council Members Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.
Abstain: Council Member White, 1.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-2028
Council Member Acerra moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to approve Resolution 26-39 approving a grant agreement authorizing a $1 million donation to the National Railroad Hall of Fame for the purpose of construction of the National Railroad Hall of Fame.

Council Member Acerra stated that she remembered naming rights for the Hall of Fame being discussed in the past. City Manager Hanson noted that a provision discussed during the 2022 timeline allows the City the opportunity to participate depending on final project layout and plans and that this remains a component of the City's contribution.

Council Member Acerra stated that the assumption would be that the naming rights would be commensurate with the donation amount and asked if an updated schedule of available naming opportunities had been provided. City Attorney Alcorn noted that naming rights will generally be commensurate with the overall size and value of the contribution, though specific rights are subject to discretion and negotiation as there is no fixed matrix in the agreement. It would be expected that the City Council would participate in the process and have the opportunity to provide input, with a formal recommendation regarding naming rights coming to the Council for review.

Council Member Acerra stated for clarification that in 2022, the City Council approved a resolution declaring its intent to proceed with the grant. This resolution formally establishes the Council's commitment, fulfills the administrative process, and aligns with funds allocated in the budget.

City Manager Hanson clarified that the funding source for the contribution is Fund 24, the Economic Development Fund, which is supported by the Economic Development Sales Tax and has been used for past projects such as Western Smokehouse, the Logistics Park, and other local businesses. Per the approved resolution, the remaining allocation will be used from the General Fund. He added that while the timing was previously uncertain, this commitment has been planned since the approval of the resolution in 2022. Payment will be made in two equal disbursements, the first installment will be this fall, and the second will be paid once a substantial completion certificate has been received.

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.

BIDS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

26-3035
Council Member Cheesman moved, seconded by Council Member Saul, to waive normal purchasing policies and approve the bid from JensenIT in the amount of $40,859.88 for a three-year renewal of Microsoft Software Assurance licensing.
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.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

The City Manager provided an update regarding the annual Treat Street event, noting that although the event has been held for many years, a new organizing group was needed. This

year, the Parks & Recreation Department and Galesburg Gives Committee have assumed responsibility for planning and managing the event. He expressed his appreciation to employees for their leadership, staffing, and volunteer efforts in support of the event, which is scheduled for October 31st from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the downtown area. He also added that downtown businesses interested in participating can still register through Thursday of this week.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (AGREEMENTS, APPROVALS, ETC.)

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

TOWN BUSINESS

26-9020
Trustee Hunigan moved, seconded by Trustee Saul, to approve Resolution 26-01 determining the 2026 Property Tax Levy at no more than 105% of $531,000. Because the increase does not exceed 105 percent, a truth in taxation public hearing is not required.
Roll Call #8:
Ayes: Trustees Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.
Nays: None
Absent: Trustees Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

26-9021
Trustee Saul moved, seconded by Trustee Acerra, to approve Town bills and warrants to be drawn in payment of same.

Fund Title	Amount
Town Fund	$9,699.10
General Assistance Fund	$5,863.39
IMRF Fund	
Social Security/Medicare Fund	
Liability Fund	
Audit Fund	
Total	$15,562.49

Roll Call #9:
Ayes: Trustees Hunigan, White, Acerra, Saul, and Cheesman, 5.
Nays: None
Absent: Trustees Mangieri and Reynolds, 2.
Chairman declared the motion carried.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

Council Member White reported that he attended the NAACP gala and noted that it was a successful event and featured a dynamic keynote speaker. During the event, Fire Chief Randy Hovind was formally recognized for dedicated service to the city over many years. Council Member White personally thanked Chief Hovind for his valuable contributions to the community.

Council Member Acerra acknowledged the upcoming opening of the Hall of Fame Museum on Seminary Street and commended the volunteers and dedicated individuals who have worked on the project for many years. She also expressed her appreciation for the Pritchard family for their decades of commitment to maintaining locally owned and focused media at Galesburg Broadcasting, along with well wishes for the stations during their pending transition to Civic Media. She noted the upcoming Lincoln Park lights display and its potential to attract visitors to the community during the fall and winter season.

Council Member Saul stated that he has worked at FM 95 & WGIL since 1987 and expressed gratitude toward the Pritchard family for their meaningful contributions and support in establishing the annual balloon race. He also thanked the City for hosting recent events at the Orpheum Theatre.

Council Member Cheesman congratulated the National Railroad Hall of Fame Museum, noting its positive regional and national impact. Regarding recent ownership changes at WGIL, he expressed his appreciation for local journalism, along with his hope that local media, such as Jay Redfern, would remain. He added his appreciation to the residents and volunteers for their ongoing contributions to the community and emphasized that community involvement remains vital to addressing local challenges, and he remains committed to work collaboratively and listen to constituents to support Galesburg's continued progress.

Mayor Schwartzman also highlighted the ongoing progress on the Railroad Hall of Fame initiative, referencing Carl Sandburg's quote regarding the importance of vision in long-term community projects. He added that he has been promoting Galesburg during his recent travels as well. He noted that he participated as a panel speaker alongside Dr. Asplund at the Illinois Renewable Energy Conference, which addressed municipal and school district energy sustainability initiatives and cost savings to an audience of approximately 150 municipal and industry representatives. He emphasized the continued need to inform the public regarding these environmental and financial achievements.

The Mayor noted the upcoming Galesburg football game in La Salle-Peru, marking the team’s first playoff game since 2016. He also encouraged community participation in local autumn events, including the Walk of the Dead.

There being no further business, Council Member Saul moved, seconded by Council Member Cheesman, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:32 p.m.
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.

Peter D. Schwartzman, Mayor

Kelli R. Bennewitz, City Clerk