

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL
September 18, 2023**

A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held, Tuesday, September 18, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Jeff Grove presiding with proper notices being duly and continuously posted.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present - Mayor Grove, Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

Absent – NONE

A quorum was present.

Others Present: Deputy Clerk Brent Bader, City Attorney Jim McPhedran, Econ. Dev. Director Curt Bedei, Police Chief Mike Smudzinski, City Treasurer Virginia Kochanowski, Building Inspector Andy Bacidore, City Engineer Brian Brown

COMMENTS

Mary Hales, supervisor at the Post office for 35 years, spoke of her concerns for sidewalks on Chartres St. The city did a lot to update Chartres Street and she stated that there are always kids running up and down Chartres. She was concerned also because the traffic does not go the speed limit of 30mph on that road. She also suggested a speed limit change during sporting events when the LP complex is in use. She is afraid someone will get hurt if sidewalks or the speed limit does not get addressed.

Mayor Grove stated that Chartres Street project was not completely done with one more layer of asphalt to be added.

Jamie Hicks mentioned his concerns for Northwest School pickup and drop off. He would like to see more policing at the school during these times. He parks a block and a half away and there are still others that show up late to drop off or pick up and park right where the yellow curbs are located for "No Parking." There is an officer and no one gets ticketed.

Chief Smudzinski stated that the officers are trying to help out with the flow of traffic. He will address his officers this concern of parking by the yellow curbs.

Alderman Jeppson stated that there is constant discussion in regards to pick up and drop off options. They are still currently exploring more ideas with construction that will be continuing throughout the year.

Hicks stated that he has heard this story for over 20 years in regards to the parking. He stated the school has taken parking away when they changed the one road to one way. He said that they cannot just drop off their kids. They need to get out of the car to get them to school.

Alderman Jeppson stated that the school is talking about maybe a circular pattern, not necessarily a drop off.

Hicks is concerned with this because he believes there is not enough sidewalks for this. He stated that the city worries about the downtown sidewalks, not the places where they walk their kids.

Hicks also mentioned his concern with the discharge pipe from Carus into the Little Vermillion. He stated that he has drone footage of this from a while ago. Carus was aware of this and has not done anything to fix this. He stated that Carus made an attempt to go out and fix it and they did not resolve the issue. There is still water leaking out of the embankment. He is concerned that when this levee breaks, where is all the containment material sitting in the bottom of the pond going. He believes that all the heaving metals are laying in the bottom of this pond. Carus is stating that it is a condensation pond, but Hicks said that it is a sediment pond, where all the heavy metal is laying. Hicks believes that the city needs to be calling the EPA on this and turning someone in regards to this matter. He stated that everyone claims to be checking in on these issues but they are not and they just keep producing their product. Hicks stated that his concrete is going to get replaced by Carus Chemical. Hicks asked who is doing the checks and balances. He also asked if any council member read the permit he previously discussed at another meeting. Hicks also questioned the accountability of the city. He claims that the city only enforces the ordinances that they want to enforce, the ones that are convenient for the city.

Dawn Hicks asked about the update on the air monitor. Alderman Jeppson stated that he spoke with Shelly from Carus. The part is currently on backorder. Jeppson stated that it should be in the next couple weeks. Hicks asked if the city could just order a new one. Jeppson said that they could but the hardware is all set up at Rotary Park ready to go. Jeppson is in charge of replacing the part when it comes in. He said he thought it would be more work to take it all apart, order new one, ship it back and then set up new one, then to just wait for the part to come in.

Dawn Hicks also stated her concerns with the sidewalk at the 800 block of Ninth Street. She had almost a bad fall outside of Bill and Dorothy Bradford's house. She stated that the sidewalk, about three to four yards, is completely busted up. She mentioned that there were several senior citizens on that block and is hoping the city could do something fairly quickly to take care of this hazard.

Alderman Crane stated that the city has a "Safe Route to School" grant that they can use on sidewalks and can be used based on complaints from residents. He didn't know however how soon they would be able to get to it if it is under this grant.

Alderman Reynolds stated that there is a work order in place for this sidewalk already.

Deputy Clerk Bader was unaware of a timeline on this work order and was unaware of a work order being out for this project.

Mayor Grove stated that there are many sidewalks in town that are in this same condition and that there is no priority as to which ones the city can get to first. Mayor Grove did state that any sidewalk can be removed and replaced at the homeowner's cost. Mayor also stated that the sidewalks that qualify under the "Safe Route to School" grant do have to be ones near or around a school or bus stop.

Alderman Reynolds claims that there is a work order in already to remove this portion of sidewalk on the 800 Block of Ninth Street. He is unable to give Hicks a timeline on this work order because Patrick Watson was unable to attend the meeting and he would be the one that would know the specifics.

Resident Bill Bradner did ask why it is at the cost of the homeowner to replace a sidewalk. Mayor Grove stated that the homeowners would be asked to pay for it if they wanted it replace immediately and not wait until it falls under a grant project. Mayor Grove stated that with the city's finances they are currently focusing on the city roads and curbs. He also mentioned that the downtown sidewalk around 1st, 2nd, and 3rd St. are all being done with TIF funds. The TIF money cannot be used on neighborhoods.

Jamie Hicks asked how many TIFs are in town. Finance Director Duncan stated that there are eight TIFs, one has expired, so technically seven.

Deanna Hicks asked about if there were any TIFs to replace sidewalks and Duncan stated that only if they are in a TIF zone. TIF zones are determined by areas that are blighted and have to be approved by all the taxing bodies. Territories are picked by whether they would enhance economic development or not.

Resident Gary Hammers stated that someone should come up with a plan for the future to replace sidewalks. He finds it ridiculous that the city would expect the residents to pay for their sidewalk outside their home. He stated that many of the city sidewalks are still bricks. Hammers asked Alderman Jeppson where his mail route was in the city. Jeppson stated from Route 6 to Hennepin to Bucklin up to Maple Rd. He stated that the sidewalks vary in condition throughout his route.

Mayor Grove stated that it would be nice to come up with a sidewalk program but the city is still dealing with a \$150,000 to \$500,000 debt every year, it is hard to focus on such a project. Dawn Hicks suggested fundraising to do such a program. Hammers stated that there are always a lot of ideas but they all seem to get shut down. Hammers also

mentioned that it is an embarrassment to the city for all the weeds growing between curbs and streets.

Jeppson did state that there should be a little of homeowner responsibility with maintaining one's property.

Hicks then asked about where the city street sweeper has been.

Alderman Thompson asked Hammers what the biggest complaint was that he heard from residents when he ran for Alderman. Hammers stated that the biggest complaint was the holes in the alleyways. Thompson agreed and stated that was the same one he heard also. Hammers' biggest personal complaint is to see the weeds growing between the curbs around town.

Alderman Crane stated that he does put a work order in to Brad to spray the weeds twice a year. He stated that the whole town does not get done but the main roads, 11th St., 351, and Rt. 6.

Alderman Reynolds stated that the city has been addressing the alleyways in all the wards. The alleyways are done with Motor Fuel Tax.

Hicks asked about if the city does get a government grant for projects in neighborhoods, if they had to follow DOT rules and what jobs need to include. He stated that the project in his neighborhood has created more standing water and many drains were moved. He also shared a concern of having no sidewalks in his neighborhood.

Hammers recommends that the city comes up with a committee to work on problems such as sidewalk issues and find ways to raise money for such things. He stated that funding could possibly come from donations or even GoFundMe to help out on needed projects. He stated how he ran for Alderman to make the city better and not do anything negative like he and his son has been persecuted for. They want to make the city better and bring in revenue for the city.

Resident Eric Dyas asked about a huge fire last Friday night at the location of the grass clippings areas. Dyas stated that it left ash all over his neighborhood. Mayor Grove stated that it was not set intentionally.

Jamie Hicks stated that he called the police department and they stated that the city was lighting it. He also stated that he went out to the park and he has pictures of the city workers moving equipment around at that time.

Alderman Crane stated that the city did not light this last fire. Hicks stated that he called the police department and the dispatch lady told him that they were out there lighting the fire.

Gary Hammers asked how the city was able to catch the guy with the cardboard box but the city can't catch whoever lit the fire. Hicks stated that he will share the video later.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the Minutes of the Regular City Council meeting held September 5, 2023. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PETITIONS:

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to grant the request for a 2023 Raffle License for La Salle Peru Area Career Center.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the request for a 2023 Raffle License for Cops 4 Cancer.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Deputy Clerk Bader explained that Ezekiel Metalfe of IGS Energy was clear and nothing was prohibiting him from soliciting. There was an earlier solicitor that was caught prior to receiving the application and was fined. The fine has been paid and Ezekeil Metalfe was the second person that came forward wanting the solicitor's permit. His background check was cleared.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the request for a Solicitor's Permit from Ezekiel Metalfe of IGS Energy.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Ptak, Lavieri, Herndon

NAY: Alderman Reynolds, Jeppson, Crane **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-3

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept, approve, and place on file Treasurer's Report for August 2023 showing total cash balances in La Salle State Bank of \$13,874,713.88 and in Hometown National Bank of \$8,522,992.67. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept, approve, and place on file Building Inspector's Report for August 2023 showing total fees collected of \$3,844.00 with total value of construction of \$3,090,258.00.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to approve Illinois Department of Revenue report showing sales tax collected for June 2023 of \$111,774.74 and Home Rules Sales Tax of \$97,756.24 for a total of \$209,530.98.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding floor resurfacing at the La Salle Fire Station.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore

NAY: None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding purchase of a Power Load device for Medic 421 Ambulance.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson

NAY: None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Bacidore to postpone the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys and Traffic Committee regarding the addition of a "No Parking Here to Curb" sign at the intersection of 11th and LaHarpe streets.

Mayor Grove was unable to attend the SAT committee meeting and questioned why this item was to be postponed. Alderman Bacidore stated that Chief Smudzinski planned on discussing this concern with the resident. Alderman Crane also mentioned that it was not just the LaHarpe parking concern. He felt that there was also a concern with the parking right in front of the driveway on 11th St.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys and Traffic Committee regarding the addition of a Children Playing" sign Eastbound on Oconor Avenue.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore to postpone the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys and Traffic Committee regarding a request from Bob and Renee Baker, of 1232

Marquette Street, for "No Parking" signs on Lindberg Road from the alley west to Marquette Street.

OLD BUSINESS

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to approve Pay Request #1 for John Pohar & Sons, Inc. totaling \$43,961.64 for work completed to date on Pohar Inlet Repairs - 2023 project and related matters.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson, Ptak

NAY: None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve Pay Request for Universal Asphalt & Excavating totaling \$61,306.00 for work completed to date on St. Mary's Ball Diamond & 9th Street Park Parking Lots project and related matters.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds

NAY: None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** Alderman Crane, Alderman Thompson

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Alderman Crane and Alderman Thompson both voted "present" for this last vote but Attorney Hermann asked for City Clerk Quinn to ask each of them if they want to be present on vote or to abstain from vote.

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to approve Pay Request #6 for Vissering Construction Company totaling \$322,915.32 for work completed to date on WTP Improvements 2022 project.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri

NAY: None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve Pay Request #11 for Vissering Construction Company totaling \$176,927.40 for work completed to date on Aerobic Digester Conversion project.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson

NAY: None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Bacidore brought up Nick Hammers request for another set of dates for special event permits. Alderman Bacidore questioned if the request was not in on time for agenda, but Mr. Hammers stated that his request was in on time. Mr. Hammers believed that agenda items needed to be in by 12pm on the Friday prior to the meeting in order to make the agenda. He had his request in at 11:26am that Friday but the agenda was already posted. Deputy Clerk Bader mentioned that he was unaware of any requests that were coming in on Friday. He posted the agenda prior to 12pm because he was unaware of any request forthcoming on that Friday morning, so Bader had agenda and all items collected and ready to post by 10:30am that morning.

Gary Hammers also mentioned that he was informed that any requests or applications had to be in by 12pm on the Friday prior to a city council meeting. He was concerned that if the items were not able to be discussed or voted on then Hammers cannot go back and ask for what they already needed. Alderman Bacidore suggested that the council takes a straw vote on the special event permit for 9/23 and 9/30. The council can then add the other five dates on the agenda for next meeting.

Gary Hammers asked if he has to call every Friday to inform Bader of his request. Bader stated that he does not have to call every Friday but needs to inform Bader that he will be bringing a request in before the posting of the agenda on those Fridays.

Chief Mike Smudzinski recalled a situation with Nick Hammers from September 8th. Smudzinski was informed on that date that Hammers was going to have a band playing 1030pm on that Saturday. Smudzinski asked Hammers if they talked that Friday morning. When he spoke with Hammers that Friday, he asked if he planned on having music that Saturday without a permit and if he would have his music off by 10pm. Hammers acknowledged that he would. Smudzinski stated that he told his officers that he spoke with Hammers and there should be no problems with music past 10pm on Saturday. He did ask his guys to just check in that night to be certain. Smudzinski stated that his officers went by at 1020pm and music was still playing. Hammers stated that fireworks were going off at 10:17pm, but he was the one receiving a ticket for music past 10pm. Hammers stated that they told their band that they had to shut down at 10pm but the fireworks were going off past 10pm so they allowed the band to continue.

Gary Hammers asked Smudzinski how he was even made aware of this band posting that they were playing till 10:30pm. Smudzinski stated that he was tipped off about the timeframe. Nick Hammers stated that it is what it is on this ticket because he has now dealt with this for two years now. Hammers stated that the officers asked him how hard it was and how much it cost to fill out a permit for these events. Hammers stated that it

doesn't cost much and isn't hard to fill out the survey, but he stated that it does cost time taken away from being a coach and missing team pictures for having to be here tonight listening to council complain about music that no one else really cares about other than one person in that neighborhood, Diz Demes.

Mayor Grove reminded Nick Hammers how the council did the last straw vote for his permits because he was unable to attend do to Hammer's having to be gone at a state baseball game. Hammers is aware of the ticket that he may get this weekend if the straw vote doesn't get passed.

Alderman Reynolds stated that all have to follow the rules and if one does not than they have to suffer the consequences. Jamie Hicks said that Reynolds' statement should account for everybody.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Herndon to take a straw vote to allow Nick's on 6 special event permits on September 23 and September 30 to allow extension of music until 11pm on those dates.

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Crane, Bacidore, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAY: Alderman Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-3

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Regarding pending and/or potentially imminent litigation and related matters: Collective bargaining and related matters, and acquisition and/or sale of city real estate and related matters and the employment, discipline, appointment, performance and/or compensation of non-union and/or union personnel and related matters pursuant to the Open Meetings Act including 5-ILCS 120 Section 2(c)1-2,5,6,11 thereof.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept, pay, and file the bills from September 5, 2023: Total Submitted: \$1,233,254.87 (Total Payroll \$201,050.74, Bills to be Paid \$416,757.88, Total Bills Paid \$615,446.25).

ROLL CALL

AYE: Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Crane to adjourn the meeting.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

ADJOURNED

7:17

pm

Amy Quinn