

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL
October 30, 2023**

A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held, Monday, October 30, 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 6:30 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, Finance Director John Duncan, 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

Residents Dawn Hicks asked about the update on the air monitor. Alderman Jeppson stated that the replacement hardware has come in and has been put together. The city is hoping to have the monitor up and running this weekend. Once up and running it will be published under the IQ air website. Jeppson said that at the next meeting he will explain the app. Brent Bader will post it to the city's website once it is up and running. The app is called AirVisual.

Dawn Hicks also asked who monitors the City of LaSalle's Facebook page. She suggested having a little more information when there are incidents within the city. She mentioned how many learned of the last two shootings from the City of Peru's Facebook page. Deputy Clerk Brent Bader mentioned that he does do his best to share as soon as he hears of something. He usually would share City of LaSalle's Police Departments Facebook page when they post the information. He stated he will certainly try to communicate and try to find another way to communicate clearer and more streamlined information. Hicks also suggested posting or placing Code Reds about the control burns for those with asthma

Hicks questioned the mayor in regards to a quote from September 18th when he mentioned that the burn pile was “not intentionally set” and the city “did not light it”. Mayor does remember saying this and he mentioned that this occurred over the weekend prior to a Monday meeting, and he did not have time to go through the videos. He mentioned that the old burn pile ash was still warm and when added to another pile, it smoldered, and it started the fire. Hicks stated that the mayor mentioned three times that it was not the city guys that lit it. He said he was unaware of the situation at the time of the meeting. He stated that it was his mistake. Hicks played a voice recording of the call in to dispatch about the fire. Hicks did not know how dispatch knew that someone was out there but the Mayor did not know. Mayor disagrees that dispatch knew who set it. They just knew that someone was out there at the scene.

Alderman Lavieri stated that the main point was that fire was not intentional. Dawn Hicks stated that she is liable if she set a bonfire in her backyard and it got out of hand. She stated many are not part of “Believe in LaSalle” anymore with little lies that may be turning into bigger lies.

Resident Jamie Hicks stated that he wanted to start with where Dawn Hicks left off. He was the one that placed the call with Dispatch in regards to the fire and also has seen the video of the fire. He was able to only able to view the 24hr. video in a 7 min fast forward video. Hicks stated that he noticed a hose laying out in the video. He also stated that the city had trucks prepped and being used a “wind deflector”. The city was unable to give Hicks the video. He was only able to watch the video with Chief Smudzinski and the fast forward version. Mayor stated that there was nothing premeditated. Hicks disagrees and stated that he saw the smolder part get pile up on the dry pile.

Hicks asked the Mayor the intent for Sunstrand Rd since the Mayor passed a \$60,000 straw vote. Mayor Grove mentioned that road was in very bad shape. The city does have an annexation back there also. Mayor did state that their work to the road may help with future development to the Mertel Property. There are not new owners to this property that the mayor is aware of.

Hicks continued to ask about the \$9,000 valve that was purchased for Carus’ pump. Duncan confirmed that the city paid for that. Hicks doesn’t understand how Carus can pay less than a penny a gallon that they misuse and discharge, but the city pays the maintenance on their valve.

Hicks also left a copy of the permit that he wanted the council to read through.

Hicks wanted to then discuss the Carus Committee. He stated how the paperwork that the city is sharing from Carus is not a safety plan or evacuation plan. Hicks said the plan doesn’t list a specific radio station or TV channel to tune to. Mayor Grove deferred to Alderman Crane who was on the committee who said he didn’t have concerns with the plan. Crane said he wasn’t in charge of the committee and didn’t write the plan and said it is a suggestion of what to do in an emergency. Finance Director John Duncan said Hicks’ five minutes for public comment were up.

Hicks continued to speak and said he regretted sharing Crane's name to get him in office and said the lies "that have been coming out of your mouth have been bullshit" and that he would talk to Crane later about that. Hicks began to walk away. Hicks was notified again his five minutes were up. Alderman Crane said Hicks can call him at anytime. Hicks turned around and began walking toward Alderman Crane's seat and shouted that this is a "City problem." Alderman Crane said he is not Carus' spokesperson. Police Chief Mike Smudzinski walked Mr. Hicks' out of the Council Chambers as he continued to shout.

Resident Bill Bradner talked about his recently replaced sidewalk. He said once it was finished pouring, it wasn't set properly because some kids had been on the wet cement. He said he had the police visited and took pictures of the damage. Mayor Grove asked if there was video of the damage occurring and there was not. Mayor Grove said he would speak with the police department and see if any nearby homes had camera footage of the incident.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the Minutes of the Regular City Council meeting held October 16, 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 Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to grant request from Ameren Illinois to break ground at 853 9th Street to retire gas service.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Ptak to approve the request from Rogas Properties, LCC on behalf of Mariscos Los Koritas to remodel an existing illuminated, double-facing sign and install associated banners at 1001 8th Street.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the request from Jennifer Ebner for a 2023 Raffle License for Abundant Life Fellowship.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Alderman Lavieri mentioned that he will have some trouble approving this next request from Maria Magana in regards to placing signs on city property. He feels that many businesses will be wanting to do the same if they approved this one tonight. Alderman Thompson asked if anyone was present in regards to this request. No one was present. Deputy Clerk Bader stated that she informed Mrs. Magana to be present if available because the council could ask a few more questions to Mrs. Magana directly. Alderman Thompson suggested the opportunity for advertisement at each of the city's ball parks.

Mayor Grove said she does have the option to advertise her business in front of the actual business.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to deny the request from Maria Magana of La Michoacana to place signs advertising their business at the four corners of First and Gooding Streets and at local parks.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept, approve, and place on file Treasurer's Report for September 2023 showing total cash balances in LaSalle State Bank of \$14,356.897.01 and in Hometown National Bank of \$7,259,590.59. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the request from Michael Turk of Turk Furniture for a Redevelopment Incentive Program grant totaling \$12,500 for the Second Street side of premises located at 212 Joliet Street.

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 from the Finance Committee to approve the request from Michael Turk of Turk Furniture for a Redevelopment Incentive Program grant totaling \$12,500 for the Joliet Street side of premises located at 212 Joliet Street.

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 Ptak and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the purchase of 12 iHydrant infrastructure and program for \$31,320.00

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

City Attorney Jim McPhedran explained to council that Doris Saferite was present if there were any more questions and the petition was passed unanimously with the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding the petition of Dallas and Doris Saferite requesting variances for premises commonly known as 737 8th Street, LaSalle, Illinois related to a 600 square foot addition to a garage on the northwestern corner of the property reducing the sideyard setback variance from 5 feet to 1 foot and reducing the lot size variance from 7,500 square feet to 7,000 square feet.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Grove stated that he had provided the council with a copy of the suggestions that were given out by Carus. Brent Bader also has copies for the public. Alderman Crane stated that was discussed was between the small committee with city officials, residents and Carus and was just a list of suggestions of how to shelter in place. These suggestions were typed up by Carus personnel. This is not something that the city of LaSalle drew up. The city has their own emergency plan. Mayor Grove stated that he will be contacting Carus to see if they could hold one more meeting in hopes to have all in attendance one more time for a discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

City Engineer Brian Brown mentioned that the following is not a pay estimate, it is for work to be done due to an emergency situation. The John Pohar proposal was \$28,295 and Universal's was for \$46,500. He also did ask Gensini Excavating but they were

unable to get this work done in the timeframe. Brown found out that the sewer north of 2nd Street in the Alley between Tonti and Crosat actually flows backwards. This issue has been creating backup into homes. Brown had Kevin from Illinois Valley Excavating give some elevations of depth within that sewer. Brown created a quick plan to make a connection from the center manhole to the sewer on Second Street. Brown spoke with the Mayor and the Mayor also discussed this emergency plan with all alderman.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to authorize of payment of John Pohar and Sons totaling \$28,295.00 for work related to Sanitary Sewer lining in alley north of 2nd Streets between Tonti and Crosat Street.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Alderman Bacidore asked if Brian Brown would be able to look at the sensors at the stoplight at Airport Road. Mayor Grove noticed this already and has already put a call in with Patrick Watson. Brian will touch base with Patrick also and Clegg Perkins to adjust the sensors again. This was probably due to the construction work that was going on the last couple months. Brain Brown also stated that he will look to make sure the speed sign is back up.

DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:

Curt Bedei explained the resolution and agreement with NCICG. The housing rehabilitation grant is an application that the city will go through for housing rehabilitation. The city will be holding a meeting next Monday at 5:30pm in the council chambers. The Economic Development Committee recently committed \$20,000 towards this grant to show that the city is behind and in support of rehabbing homes. This will be in low- and moderate-income areas to help them fix up anything that they need done to their home. NCICG will be administering the grant with the assistance of Curt. Bedei mentioned that Spring Valley, Ottawa, Streator, and Marseilles have all received this grant in the past and it has helped spruce up areas in each of their towns along with helping homeowners that are wanting to do something to their homes but maybe are not financially able to.

Curt Bedei did mention that this grant does have a strict format in the approval and administering of funds. NCICG has been through this grant several times with other communities so they will be very supportive with the City of LaSalle when trying to accomplish this for the residents. Bedei mentioned that there will be a checklist of factors when going through the approval process for applicants.

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve a resolution to enter into an agreement for Application Services for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Rehabilitation Grant on behalf of the City of LaSalle.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve a resolution to accepting a grant from the Illinois Housing Development Authority Strong Communities Program– Round 2.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Ptak to approve an ordinance authorizing variances concerning premises at 727 8th Street (Saferite) within the City of LaSalle.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

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 October 16, 2023: Total Submitted: \$1,381,586.97 (Total Payroll \$191,618.66, Bills to be Paid \$393,715.96, Total Bills Paid \$796,252.35).

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Mayor Grove reminded everyone that Trick or Treat in LaSalle is tomorrow, October 31st from 5-7pm.

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

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

ADJOURNED

7:12

pm

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Quinn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Quinn, City Clerk