

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL

December 27, 2023

A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held, Wednesday, December 27, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. with Alderman Ptak presiding as Pro-Tem Mayor 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 - Aldermen Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

Excused Absence – Alderman Herndon

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to allow Alderman Ptak to preside as Mayor Pro-Tem for the duration of the meeting and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

A quorum was present.

Others Present: Finance Director John Duncan, City Attorney Jim McPhedran, Econ. Dev. Director Curt Bedei, City Engineer Brian Brown, Police Chief Mike Smudzinski, Supt. Of Public Works Kevin Fay, Building Inspector Andy Bacidore, Fire Chief Jerry Janick

COMMENTS

Resident Dawn Hicks asked Alderman Jeppson if he had checked the air monitor recently. He has not looked at it in a couple weeks. She stated that it has not worked since last night at 11pm and not recorded anything since. She asked who they could ask about this. Alderman Jeppson stated that he would look into this. She then asked who received the call from Carus about the Dec. 20th Spill. The paper stated the city but she was unsure as to who received the call. Finance Director Duncan believed that Brent received that call and then contacted the Mayor.

She was concerned because they had stated that this recent one was nonhazardous but were photographed and videotaped using the exact same spray bottles that they used in February and in March when they had two other spills that they admitted was filled with potassium permanganate. Her concern is that Carus is not forthcoming to the City. She

questioned if anyone from the city verified that it didn't spill onto the streets. She asked if the City could verify with Carus after the next spill because she said that this recent one did end up on the streets. Alderman Lavieri stated that both the Mayor and Brent were not in attendance tonight and they're the two most likely to know the outcome from that last spill. After the last meeting, when Hicks heard from the lady from La Salle that had her water tested and that there was cyanide or arsenic and it was four times the level, Hicks did a preliminary test through the Home Depot. She received a result call back today. Hicks mentioned how hard water is due to impurities in the water and that a safe and normal number would be somewhere between zero and three. She stated that she lives four and a half blocks from Carus on 7th St. She stated that her results came back at a 58. The gentleman that she had spoken to about the results has done this job for several years and was genuinely surprised and did not realize that she lived in a town with city water. He expected her water to be well water from the country.

Alderman Lavieri did ask Hicks what the 58 number was for, either a chemical or hardness. She stated it was a preliminary test for hardness.

Hicks stated that she is having a professional that will be coming to her house tomorrow. He will be testing the water and going through all the different types of chemicals that are found in water. She will be sharing those results at the next meeting.

Alderman Lavieri did state that most of the hardness in the water in La Salle is due to calcium and manganese and why many have water softeners in their homes.

Hicks understood but stated that there was other stuff in the city water that shouldn't be there. She has a hard with Mayor Grove saying that the city water is fine and there is nothing wrong with it when you can smell the chlorine coming from it like it's a swimming pool or it is not the color of water should be.

Alderman Jeppson did thank Hicks for bringing up the issue with the air monitor. He did look and notice that it is not even on the map and he will look into this issue right away.

Jamie Hicks, Fourth Ward, stated that he was surprised that the Mayor and Brent were both not in attendance tonight due to the circumstances. He stated that he was the one that recorded the spill at Carus. He believes Carus to be hiding the spill. He stated there was a group of people with spray bottles hiding behind a fence and he stated that they claimed to have called the City. Hicks pointed to Fire Chief Jerry Janick and stated that Carus should have called him and 911 because that was a hazard. Hicks referenced ERG2020 in terms of how the spill should have been cleaned up. He stated that they should have soaked it up with sand, put it into 55-gallon drums and hauled it away as hazardous waste. He said that this was another way for Carus Chemical to get away with not paying what they need to pay and do what they need to do, according to the law. He plans on catching them every time. He brought up the permit that is outdated and expired and asked what the city is going to do about it. He also stated that he believes there seems to be something going on in the Apollo building. He heard that the rumor was that they want to knock it down. He believes that someone here knows more than he does.

about it because he saw that they were putting locates on it, along with guys coming out to chip at 8am. He questions what they would need to locate and for what reason. He does not know who else to blame at the City other than the Mayor. He believes it to be a failed government because no one is enforcing the laws that are put into place. He believes that the Mayor is putting people's lives in jeopardy and putting politics over people's safety. Hicks stated that he respects Chief Janick and the job that he does, but no one should be thrown into a situation like Carus fire. Hicks believes that they should be running scenarios. Hicks continued by saying that the water is another disgrace of the city and a failure of violations. He said that the EPA and Attorney General says it puts people's lives in danger. He believes that all emergency responses need to be informed. Hicks shared his opinion that "somebody's on the take". Hicks continued by stating that he is "pretty perturbed" that after 26 years with the City of LaSalle is retired and his name has yet to be brought up in these Council Chambers. He asked why the City seems to be unable to keep police officers. He stated how the city gave raises but yet the city is still losing officers. He asked if there was a reason for this.

Finance Director John Duncan stated that Mr. Hicks was at five minutes. Hicks believes that there is something going on in the city.

Crystal Loughran wanted to inform the council that she is running for the House of Representatives in the 76th District. She had stated that she had put her press releases out in the newspaper on July 4, but Shaw Media has yet to publish them. She is going around to various meetings to introduce herself. She is a grassroots Republican, conservative candidate. She said that she can be found on Facebook and would be willing to speak with anyone after the meeting.

Marty Schneider spoke next and was hoping to ask Boo some questions because he is the Manager at Illinois Cement but was not in attendance at the meeting tonight. Schneider asked the Council why they are not willing to record the meetings and stream them live. He asked why the Mayor is the only say in this discussion and why the Council couldn't do a straw vote right now in regards to this. Schneider asked if any were interested in having others hear what is said at the meetings instead of finding out about things like the grants from social media. He feels that it should not be up to Mayor Grove and the Council should vote on it right now. Duncan had to remind the audience two times that only one speaker at a time, and it is currently Schneider's time to talk. Alderman Ptak stated that they would be willing to look into what it would take and what it would cost. There was discussion of streaming it to the city website or to YouTube. The alderman agreed that they will have a serious discussion about this video streaming topic and it will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Schneider knew that the Mayor was not in attendance and could not answer the questions he had in regards to the other two violations that the city hasn't been reporting. He didn't know if someone was available to answer about the two violations and how the city has not been reporting to the state what they are discharged into the Illinois River and the phosphorus levels.

Alderman Lavieri thought that this was discussed last time. Schneider said that it was not. He said that one violation was discussed but there were two others. Alderman Lavieri thought they were the same violations but different years. He stated that someone did drop the ball on reporting for a few years.

Schneider did ask how the City didn't report it but how the city did test for it. He stated that the City sent in backlogs and sent in three years' worth of test results in one lump sum. He continued by stating that reports were the same number, same amount every time, which seems to be literally impossible. Alderman Lavieri did ask Schneider of the number he was referring to. He was unable to recall what number for sure, he thought maybe 8 or 18. Lavieri thought he could have seen something like TMTC, too numerous to count, which could be all over the place, but still well over this threshold. Schneider then asked why the rest would not have been filled out. Schneider was very confused about the whole thing because it doesn't make sense as to where it all came from all of a sudden after three years of not reporting anything. But yet this year, it reports that there has been no discharge at all.

Schneider wanted to end his time tonight by finishing his letter that he wrote to the Attorney General, Pollution Board, and the EPA.

“The City of La Salle has failed to report their waste discharge and also the levels of phosphorus discharge into the river from 2019 to 2022. These are very serious violations that need and should be addressed in a public hearing. We hope you will reconsider the penalty of fining the city \$5,700, as it will only hurt the taxpayers, it does nothing to hold the city responsible. There are three very serious violations and this should be handled individually and the penalties more severe than just a small fine. The city has downplayed the violations as being a single violation. And just a one-time occurrence caused by a storm. This has gone on for three years and there was no telling how much damage it's done to the environment we live in. Footage from a drone fly over of the town resembles a warzone. The land and water here are contaminated and the cancer and dementia rates are near the highest in the country. The mayor has recently approved the expansion of Illinois Cement and Carus to run 24 hours a day. It's come to our attention that these companies are polluting the air and water in the middle of the night when people are sleeping. Clouds of dust and smoke can be seen for miles while the town sleeps and nobody notices. We're asking you to look into this and the city for allowing this to take place.”

Duncan stated that Schneider was at his time. Alderman Crane motioned to allow Schneider to finish reading his letter. Schneider continued.

“Holding a hearing is very important to our community and environment. The city must be forced to answer questions about the violations. I have called the city to get answers and no one responded to the first violation. Two other

residents besides myself voiced their concerns and ask questions at city council this past Monday. The mayor sat there and just stared at us and would not answer any questions. Please help.”

Lisa Dyas spoke next in regards to asking the city for guidance in regards to who to talk to about the curbing at the foot of their driveway. It was done recently and it is pitting and crumbling and looks terrible. Engineer Brian Brown asked for Mrs. Dyas address. Her address is 1713 Zinc Street. Jamie Hicks asked for Brown to take a look at his also, 1409 Porter Ave.

Attorney McPhedran spoke in regard to a request filed for a hearing referenced earlier. “The city respects that and the city respects the residents' interest and concern,” he said. McPhedran does not plan on commenting on that today and will be commenting at the appropriate time, other than in regard to procedure on the ordinance authorizing and approving that stipulation for settlement was on the agenda prior to the meeting. There was an opportunity for comment even before the agenda item was discussed. It was mentioned after there was a full roll call vote on the proposed settlement. The proposed settlement also was approved by the EPA, the Council, and the Attorney General's Office subject to approval by the pollution control board. I believe it was believed by the Council at the time of approval that the settlement was fair and just. It was also mentioned at the time there was a fine involved at the initial October 2 meeting.” He further stated that “anyone who would like a copy of the agenda regarding the October 2 meeting, minutes regarding the meeting and also the tape will certainly be provided.” McPhedran also mentioned that it was commented on at a later meeting by resident Jamie Hicks raising again the point of the fine at the next meeting. McPhedran did again mention that there was a fine involved. McPhedran stated all that disclosure was in the spirit of transparency, so if anyone else wanted further comment or to further question the city, the city respects that of all residents and of Mr. Hicks' comments at the time of the meeting. There may be further appropriate comments at the time of the proceedings.

PUBLIC HEARING

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Crane to open the public hearing in regards to the submittal of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Grant otherwise known as housing rehabilitation grant. **(6:53pm)**

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Alderman Ptak stated how this public hearing is to provide interested parties an opportunity to express their views and proposed federal funded opportunity block grant project. The program is funded by Title One of the Federal Housing Community Development Act of 1974 as amended. These funds are being used for community developed projects that will include the following activities: rehabilitation of a 10-owner-occupied, single-family homes, housing inspections within the city limits of La Salle with the total amount of the CDBG funds to be requested is \$650,000. The city is also putting in \$20,000, coming out of the general fund, which is NON- CDBG funds.

Alderman Crane clarified that the \$20,000 was a one-time amount that will total \$670,000 if the grant amount is awarded to the city.

Finance Director John Duncan wanted to remind everyone who is here that because this is a public hearing, there is a sign in sheet that is being circulated around and for all to please sign in legibly with their name and address.

Shug Grosenbach, from North Central Council of Governments, began the discussion in regards to the housing rehabilitation grant. She stated how along with her office and the City of La Salle, they are writing the application for the city of La Salle. There are three categories for this project: minor, moderate and major, depending on the amount of work that the home needs, that is what they apply for. She stated how they did max out that grant for \$650,000 and the \$20,000 from the city. She continued by stating that no residents will be displaced over this and the city does have on file an anti-displacement and relocation assistance plan. This year's proposed funding will be complemented by the money from the city and additional funds will be added directly for the first rehabilitation of the home. The city will be working specifically also with an advisory committee. Grosenbach's office will work with an advisory committee to decide on the homes that will be part of this grant. Many present tonight were probably residents that filled out applications or surveys which benefited this application process. The city had to have at least 30 surveys completed by residents to at least apply to get 10 homes. She informed the residents that if this application does get accepted and the funding becomes available for the city, the application process will start over for those to then try to be part of the 10 homes that will be rehabilitated. She stated how it is a 20-month period from the grant award, with 24 months that they are allowed to do the housing, with them usually doing it in groups of three. The Department of Commerce allocates \$7 million dollars for this program and the ceiling granted on this is \$650,000. That will take care of the residents for \$60,000, up to \$60,000 a home. The activity delivery, which is the Grant administration, who takes care of everything from beginning to end is through her office and everything that is needed for the inspector of the home is also included in that amount. She explained that in the low-moderate benefit in order to apply for these grants, the city has to have low to moderate income residents in their town. 100% of the people that will get funding will be those that will be those that have low to moderate incomes. This is a major qualifier for this and the city of La Salle did a great job getting surveys to meet that. She continued with the discussion of the community development and housing needs. She listed things that were needed around the city of La Salle: water main replacements located on Malcolm, Seventh, Todd and First Streets due to failing mains, that's for \$500,000; the city's current wastewater status electronic system, needs major upgrade for the safety of the residents, is \$747,500; construction of a new high producing well near the water treatment plan to have a high production well outside the floodplain since all the current wells are in the floodplain is \$2 million; reconstruction of First Street from Bucklin Street to Railroad crossing to Creve Coeur St., due to significant failure of the truck route, that's \$800,000; rehabilitation of retaining wall at the historic train depot, is \$120,000; additional separation projects as part of the long term control to continue to work utilizing combined sewer overflows into the Vermillions, is \$800,000; additional storm sewers were sent to the city's first excess lagoon requiring a larger contact tank and building, \$675,000; and replacement of water service lead lines, \$2,000,200.00. With a total being \$7,845,500.00.

Grosenbach did mention that the money comes from the housing and urban development on the federal side, it is given to the State of Illinois, and then it turns into a competitive application at that point in time. The city looks to get every point that is possible since the grant is based on the

point system and they're very competitive. She said that they had good success last year, they applied for six and got six.

One resident asked Grosenbach who the contractors would be on the houses. She stated that if the grant is awarded, they have contractors that have been through lead certification and have been certified with the community. The work is based on exactly what the inspector says has to get done. She said how health and safety is a big part of these projects. They look at the need for roofing and electricity, not just the cosmetic things that people would love done in a home, ex. Countertops and cabinets. She also mentioned that Age in Place is an important factor.

Dawn Hicks asked if there would be any report back to residents, after their home is looked at, of their problems that may lie in the home. Hicks also asked if a contractor would report back if they notice the same problems in homes. Grosenbach was asking for further explanation. Hicks stated how many homes are built over mines and may be sinking or the damage done to homes from the Carus Chemical Fire that dropped potassium permanganate on homes. She asked if any sort of reporting would go back to the city or EPA with any city-wide concerns. Grosenbach stated that she has done 60 homes and has not had that issue.

Alderman Crane asked if the contractors that she had spoken of were local contractors. Grosenbach stated that they are local contractors that have to be registered with the City of La Salle. Crane also asked if they had 2 or 3 different contractor groups that work on the different homes or would it be just one contractor for the whole city project. Grosenbach said it would not be just one. She would put out to the contractors that they currently work with; they have been using four different ones, that there is a mandatory bid opening at 123 South Street. If that contractor wants to go on that project, they would have to go and walkthrough with the inspector. The lowest bidder gets the job.

A resident asked if they do background checks on the contractors. This resident had a crooked contractor recently and lost a few \$1,000s. Grosenbach stated that they have not had any problems and all have been local. These contractors have to go through a lot to be able to be part of this program. They have to be lead certified and registered through SAM.

Building Inspector Andy Bacidore wanted to clarify with Grosenbach the inspector used for this project is not anyone through the city. Grosenbach did confirm and state that the inspector used is one that they have used through Barnett Construction. She also said that he has worked with them since the beginning of this project.

Jamie Hicks asked about if the people that filled out the survey needed to be at this meeting tonight. Grosenbach stated that they were supposed to be at this meeting. The sign in sheet was going around and that will get points for those being there. However, it is not a guarantee for this grant for everyone. Hicks also asked about the relevance of all the items Grosenbach listed that the city needed done. She stated that if a community is asking for money, those needs to be proven that are in need in that community.

Grosenbach stated that she plans on having the application in on January 12, absolutely no later than five o'clock on January 18, or one cannot apply. Once the application goes in, it will go to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity in Springfield and they will go through them page by page. The surveys that were done are part of the application and get submitted with the application also. A city needs 30 surveys in order to apply for assistance with 10 homes. Once and If the application is awarded, there will then be a completely different process, the public

will be invited, and then will go through the application process for each homeowner. Grosenbach stated that the community will be informed if their community gets awarded this grant.

Dawn Hicks stated that many were unaware of this and they shared the information to some of their fellow residents. She also knew many that couldn't get down for the meeting or the survey so some residents volunteered to come get them and drop them off for people who are disabled or were unable to get down to the city due to work hours.

One Resident mentioned that he works 60 hours/week and was not able to get down to fill out a survey. He was hoping it was not too late for him to be part of this program. Grosenbach stated that he is not late but it is not necessary for him to fill out a survey now. The city received enough surveys to apply for the grant. He will be able to go through the process of applying for his home to possibly be rehabilitated if the grant is awarded to the city. Grosenbach stated that If it's awarded, they will start all over again and allow anyone within the city limits to apply. In order to qualify, one will have to have a low to moderate income in order to be even considered.

Economic Development Director Curt Bedei stated that he did not want anyone to be discouraged. If one did not fill out a survey, he reminded them to not be concerned that you won't qualify

Alderman Crane asked if the Economic Development Committee in Springfield selects the homes or the city that is awarded. Grosenbach stated that Springfield selects the city that is awarded. She stated that once the city gets word if they are awarded, the applications will go out to all residents. She mentioned that the city set up categories that will give residents points based on their application. The residence/application with the highest points will be part of the first 10 homes that will get rehabbed. The city will have their own committee formed to help with the final selection process. Grosenbach will put all the residents' applications together with their points accumulated and bring them to the committee, with the committee having the final decision.

This grant has been out there in the past but LaSalle has never applied for it before. This is the first year that they are doing so. Grosenbach stated that this program has already done 50 homes. She thought that in the Spring of '24, they may have another 60 homes in different communities throughout the region. She said that this project alone is keeping the contractors busy.

Crystal Loughran asked about what will happen when 100 people need help with their homes, but there's only funding for 10 homes. She also questioned the application and the points system. She questions how these applications will be scored and measured. She also questions the committee that has the final decision and whether or not there will be bias on this committee. She asked who would be willing to help those that have a language barrier or reading difficulty when filling out this application. She hopes that it would not be public meetings that one may need to attend if they have questions with the application. She would like to see a fair process for everyone to participate.

Grosenbach stated that they have set meetings up in village halls or libraries, during the morning, afternoon, or evenings. They also have gone to people's homes. She feels that they have a possible avenue for all in order to get the application done correctly. Grosenbach mentioned Connie Buchanan is spectacular and will work with any individual through this application process. The applications can be mailed to Grosenbach at NCICG or can be dropped at City Hall.

Grosenbach mentioned how NCICG runs two programs and both programs are based on low to moderate incomes. They do not make those rules, they just have to follow those rules.

Marty Schneider asked why this was the first year that the city of LaSalle has applied for this when it has gone one for a few years. Grosenbach is unaware as to why. Bedei stated that he did hear about this program and brought it forward to the mayor and council. He has only been with the city for about a year now. Grosenbach stated that if the city does not get awarded, do not get discouraged, and try again. Bedei mentioned that he believes there to be a lot of grants out there that the city could be applying for and he does not know about them all yet.

A Resident asked when the city should hear whether they received the award or not. Grosenbach said by August they are hoping to hear.

Another resident asked how the city will notify the residents of this. Alderman Ptak thought that the city could put it on the water bill and Attorney McPhedran thought it would be posted on the city's website. Grosenbach mentioned that her office does a press release with every region that they work with and when they get awarded. The communities then decide on which avenue would be best to put the news out there also.

One resident asked if there were higher points based on the items needed to update or improve in your house, ex. Foundations or water systems being higher than another. Grosenbach stated those would not earn a house higher point. Most of the points included categories such as elderly, disabled, low to moderate income, and veterans are some examples that have been used in other communities. She stated that one does not get five points just because they may need a new roof, it does not work like that.

Crystal Loughran asked the city when the committee would be developed or appointed. She asked about the process for this, how many members would be on this committee, and if one would have the opportunity to sit on this committee.

Bedei mentioned that there were already names mentioned to be part of the committee, but this was only in place for the application process. The committee can change once the city has been awarded the grant. The committee will be five local people with various backgrounds.

Alderman Thompson mentioned that in the grant paperwork, Mayor Grove, Brent Bader, Curt Bedei, Andy Bacidore, and Jerry Reynolds, were the original names for the committee. Bedei mentioned that NCICG just used those names as fillers until they formally create a committee.

Crystal Loughran asked if one can just submit their name to Bedei if they are interested in such a committee. He said that he would take those names if need be.

Grosenbach mentioned that the application is available at the City Clerk's office, it was sent electronically to them. It will always be on file at the NCICG office, at 613 Marquette St. Ottawa. They are open Monday through Friday, 8am-4pm. If anyone is interested in viewing the file or discussing the project any further, they can call the NCICG office at 815-433-5830. She said that herself or Connie know the program and would be happy to discuss it with anybody. She will be getting the application in and keep fingers crossed for the city to be awarded the grant.

Bedei wanted to thank everyone that participated in the survey or for reaching out to neighbors.

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Thompson to close public hearing. (7:24pm)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the Minutes of the Regular City Council meeting held December 11, 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 approve the request for a 2024 Raffle License from Cops 4 Cancer. Alderman Thompson asked to abstain from this vote. He is on the board for Cops 4 Cancer.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the request for a 2024 Raffle License from Jennifer Ebner for Abundant Life Fellowship.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to accept, approve, and place on file the Treasurer's Report for November 2023 showing total cash balances in LaSalle State Bank of \$12,618,442.82 and in Hometown National Bank of \$7,639,793.78.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

COMMUNICATIONS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to accept, approve and place on file the Illinois Department of Revenue report showing sales tax collected for September 2023 of \$96,345.05 and Home Rule Sales Tax of \$83,860.68 for a total of \$180,205.73.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson, with regret, to accept the resignation of Officer Casey Wood.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEES

The discussion and potential action on the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding a request from Horizon House for three parking spaces in front of their business at 105 Marquette Street, a stop sign for those exiting the alley near their business, a bollard at the northwest corner of the property, a metal railing on the sidewalk parallel to the building and other related requests was passed over as it did not pertain to any financial cost to the city and was addressed with the Streets, Alley, and Traffic Committee.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding purchase of virtual keypad equipment for Police Station and City Hall for \$14,262.00.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the recommendation of the Streets, Alley, and Traffic Committee regarding a request from Horizon House for three parking spaces in front of their business at 105 Marquette Street (designated spots for Horizon House parking only, M-F 8-4pm), a stop sign for those exiting the alley near their business, a bollard at the northwest corner of the property, a metal railing on the sidewalk parallel to the building, city will stripe a crosswalk at alleyway, move the flower pot closer to fire hydrant, and two benches up against the building. Gary Hammers will be responsible for increasing lighting in the alley and the parking lot.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

OLD BUSINESS

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve authorization of Pay request #15 for Vissering Construction Company totaling

\$119,998.80 for work completed to date on Aerobic Digester Conversion project. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve authorization of Pay Request #10 for Vissering Construction totaling \$226,625.38 for work completed to date on WTP Improvements 2022 project. Each and Every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to approve the authorization of payment for 120 Water totaling \$9,410.00 for mailers and phone call verification for the lead line inventory project. Each and Every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

City Engineer spoke in regards to the next bill for the sewer deep cleaning and televising service. He mentioned that the pipe does go from depot to the plant and the pipe was over 60% full, due to all water main breaks and lack of cleaning over number of years. He plans on doing a 6 month check on that same pipe. He plans on having this on a cleaning schedule rotation so this does not occur again.

Alderman Crane suggested getting training done for workers and the camera van running over wintertime to utilize equipment that the city does have instead of paying for outside services to televise pipes. Crane thought the van was purchased in 2007 and it has sat much since then.

Director of Public Works Kevin Fay said that he would be unable to get any parts for the old setup but he would be willing to look into a new setup and get employees trained on it.

City Engineer Brown stated that it took two weeks to clear out the pipe. He did not think it would have been a job for the city, if they had the right equipment, or even local companies. He mentioned that Illinois Valley Excavating looked at the job and was unable to get it cleaned. Brown does plan on figuring out if this pipe will need a 6-month cleaning or one year cleaning so the city can keep up with it with their equipment. It was cleaned before but it has not been addressed for years. Brown also mentioned that the city was looking into a loan forgiveness so the city can create a grit chamber to put in front of the plant.

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the authorization of payment for Hoerr Construction totaling \$70,373.50 for additional sewer deep cleaning and televising services. Each and Every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

NEW BUSINESS

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to accept the 2024 Schedule of regular meetings of the LaSalle City Council and its committees.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** Alderman Crane

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

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

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve a resolution approving the "2024-2026 Local Administration Policy and Procedures Manual Housing Rehabilitation Plan" (Regarding State of Illinois Community Development Block Grant Program and related matters). Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** Alderman Crane

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve a resolution of support and commitment of Local Funds State of Illinois Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Each and every alderman has a copy.

Economic Development Director Curt Bedei mentioned that this was the \$20,000 of Local Funds that was approved a few months ago that will go toward the first portion of the grant.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Finance Director John Duncan mentioned that this was the new state statute which is getting paid time off to part time employees at the rate of one hour for every 40 hours of work. There is a cap on that of 40 hours. The city will now be compliant with that. This language spells out who is eligible and not and was drafted by the city's labor attorney from Kline, Thorpe & Jenkins. Duncan stated that it will get tricky for the city with employees, like lifeguards, when they come back and repeat a year. One has to have 90 days in of work before one can start taking it. It can roll into the following year for those types of employees. Most of these part time employees are the seasonal employees in the park department. Duncan also stated that he is working with the software company that administers the payroll and they are working on writing some software for the city to be able to track this for those employees.

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve an ordinance affirming paid leave policies for employees of the City of LaSalle. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Finance Director Spoke in regards to the water rate options, in terms of payments, that were given to Carus Corporation. The rates were calculated on a five-year average of Carus' consumption, not including 2023. They used considerably less in 2023. The city did have a 10-year agreement in place in the past with Carus. Carus asked for a 7–10-year agreement. After speaking with a few council members, both Duncan and others were not comfortable going out with more than a 5-year agreement. The rates are set by the revenue that the city needs to produce in order to pay for the infrastructure that they use. Carus water is not treated to drinking level standard and the city is not adding the chemicals. Their rate has always been discounted because of

this and that their infrastructure is running up a couple blocks from pumpstation to Carus. Duncan mentioned that years ago Carus would pay a set amount every month regardless of consumption. Ten years ago, the city decided that they were not going to let Carus do that any longer. The city then made a rate for them and started them at \$1.09 with an escalator and coming up to a higher amount. The city then calculated this same amount of consumption at a static rate or a rate that stayed throughout those 10 years. Duncan did the same thing this year offering them an option of taking it to \$1.31 in 2024, then \$1.38, \$1.46, \$1.53 and \$1.61. He stated that represents a 20% increase in the first year, with a total for that option being 41.35%. The other option he gave them, because they like to hold their rates for a year, they can hold the \$1.09 for a year, but it would then jump up to \$1.50 in 2025. With this option, which they chose, it will be an increase of 37.61%, with a 47.3% increase over the five years. This is an additional revenue for the city of \$61,000. He also advised them and he would like to advise the council, that their meter is about at its life expectancy. With the revenue that the city will be generating in the new rates, the city will be supplying a new meter out there. This will also ensure that the city will be billing them for every gallon that they use. This is the five-year agreement that Duncan is recommending to the council. The hold amount for the first year does not hurt the city any because the rates that the city built into that more than make up for that hold in the first year. This also does not include the 5% utility tax on top of that.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve an ordinance approving agreement regarding water rates with Carus Corporation for 2024 through 2028. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

City Attorney Jim McPhedran asked how Carus reacted to these options. They first did want to negotiate but Duncan informed them that this was not a negotiation and they were given to different options to choose from. Duncan stated that the rates were set by the estimated costs that the city did incur and the city was unable to discount the rates any more. Duncan said that the rates do reflect what the city feels the cost of supplying them with their water. Alderman Ptak just wanted to clarify that the increase will be 47%. Duncan confirmed that by 2028 the increase will be 47.3% from today, with the rate being \$1.65 per 100 cu/ft. Resident Jamie Hicks stated that it would be about over a penny/gallon. Duncan stated that he would have to calculate that and did not have that at this time. Hicks also asked if the city does charge them for discharge just like the residents are charged on their water bill. Duncan stated that Carus is charged for sewer charges on invoices that they have discharged. This city's rate is inclusive of the discharges also.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Crane to accept, pay, and file the bills from December 11, 2023: Total Submitted: \$1,284,595.35 (Total Payroll \$203,228.00, Bills to be Paid \$578,272.46, Total Bills Paid \$503,094.00). Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

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

NAY: None **Absent:** Alderman Herndon **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Finance Director John Duncan stated that he will be passing on to the councilmen a potential contract with TEST. Duncan stated that the LaSalle Water Treatment Plant Operator's last day is tomorrow and TEST will be assuming those duties because they have the proper license to do so until the city is able to find someone or until they find a long-term solution for that license requirement.

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

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

ADJOURNED

7:51

pm

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

Amy Quinn, City Clerk