

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL

December 9, 2024

A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held, Monday, December 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Jeff Grove 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 Jeff Grove, Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

Excused Absent – Alderman Ptak, Alderman Crane

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to allow Alderman Crane to attend the meeting remotely.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak, Crane **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

ROLL CALL

Present – Mayor Jeff Grove, Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Alderman Crane (remotely via phone call)

Absent – Alderman Ptak

Others Present: Deputy Clerk Brent Bader, Finance Director John Duncan, Economic Development Director Curt Bedei, City Attorney James McPhedran, City Engineer Brian Brown, City Treasurer Virginia Kochanowski, Fire Chief Jerry Janick, Police Chief Mike Smudzinski

A quorum was present.

Mayor Grove reminded all that public comment is their time to speak and he will not talk during this time but hopefully will be able to potentially answer any questions later in the meeting.

COMMENTS

Angel Farmer raised concerns about the deteriorating wood at the Rotary Park playground and questioned the quality of the recent installation. Farmer also criticized the "Live it Up LaSalle" website for misleading information about local accommodations and questions

potential conflicts of interest. Farmer also highlighted issues with air quality and its impact on children with serious conditions, questioning the city's priorities. Farmer did end with positive remarks about the recent Christmas events organized by Ax Church and did request more engaging activities for seniors.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to accept and place on file minutes of the Regular City Council meeting held November 25, 2024. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PETITIONS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS:

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to approve the request from Ameren Illinois to break ground at 343 Civic Road to set a new pole.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the request for a 2025 Raffle License from Keith Boggio Memorial Benefit.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to allow presentation by and on behalf of Utica Solar LLC, regarding proposed commercial solar energy facility on portion of premises having La Salle County PIN, 19-05-401-000, not presently part of any municipality in La Salle County, and also generally located east of the premises commonly known as Operating Engineers Local #150 premises.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

Seth Uphoff, attorney from Peoria, introduced himself and his colleague, Matt Kwitkowski from NExamp, who will provide more detailed information of the presentation. Matt Kwitkowski explains the background of NExamp and the proposed five-megawatt community solar facility in LaSalle County.

NExamp was founded in 2007 by two U.S. Army Veterans. Mr. Kwitkowski details the benefits of community solar, including local grid resilience and subscription-based savings for residents and businesses. He explained how this community solar would allow for an opportunity for local residents to save on one's electric bill, which is a 15% discount. Credits would be applied to one's normal utility bill, without having it on their property or roof. He also described the typical components of a solar facility, including equipment pads, pollinators, and farm fences. Kwitkowski also provided an overview of the project location, the parcel size, and the projected tax benefits for local schools.

Mr. Kwitkowski presents a detailed site plan, including setbacks, internal wiring, and panel heights. He explained the landscape plan, which includes pollinator species and native grasses to reduce storm runoff. Kwitkowski addressed potential concerns about the impact

on wildlife and the environment, citing studies and agreements with state agencies. He described the decommissioning process and the bond agreement with the state to ensure proper disposal of materials. He addressed questions from alderman about the project's impact on local wildlife, the lifespan of the facility, and the maintenance responsibilities. Mr. Witkowksi reassured alderman about the safety and environmental friendliness of solar panels and the project's compliance with local regulations.

Alderman Jeppson asked for more of an explanation of the subscriptions. Witkowksi explained it as a subscription with no fees or cost to sign up and it would basically be a \$85 cost for a credit of \$100.

Attorney McPhedran clarified that the proposed site was on the southern 29 acres within that parcel. He also wanted to double check on the heights of the panels. It was mentioned that the highest point of the panels would reach 12 feet high, usually during early morning, but would generally average about 7-8ft high.

Attorney McPhedran mentioned that there was currently a petition that has been filed with LaSalle County and there is a scheduled hearing on December 18th at 5pm.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve, accept, and place on file the Building Inspector's Report for November 2024 showing total fees collected of \$1,500 with total value of construction of \$70,824.00.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve, accept, and place on file the Monthly Police Income report for November 2024 showing total fees collected of \$12,014.00.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Moved by Alderman Lavieri to postpone for two weeks the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding a request for monetary donation from the Illinois Valley Food Pantry.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore to postpone for two weeks the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys, and Traffic Committee regarding a request for a streetlight on Sterling Street, just north of 11th Street.

OLD BUSINESS

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the authorization of Pay Request #22 for Vissering Construction Company totaling \$36,577.32 for work completed to date on Aerobic Digester Conversion project.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the authorization of Pay Estimate #9 for Otto Baum Compnay, Inc. totaling \$3,308.62 for work completed to date on Masonry Restoration project.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Mayor Grove stated that the past weekend was a very nice weekend and appreciated Ax Church for their efforts in this event, along with the LPAC committee. He thanked Mike Bird for allowing the city to have their Santa Breakfast in the lower level of the Auditorium. And also thanked the Fire Department and Chief Janick for all their help with the fire truck rides too.

Alderman Thompson mentioned that he had requested to place two buildings on the agenda for discussion for next meeting.

Mayor Grove mentioned that the Leaf Vac schedule will be extended another week and the yard waste will stay open till Friday also.

NEW BUSINESS

Deputy Clerk Brent Bader points out an error in the schedule on the new 2025 Calendar for the January 20th (corrected date) and Alderman Lavieri had earlier suggested adding the Streets, Alleys, and Traffic Committee meetings.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the 2025 calendar with suggested changes.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

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

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Herndon to approve a resolution abating principal and interest on \$695,000 Taxable General Obligation Bonds, Series 2010 (Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds), of the City of La Salle, La Salle County, Illinois for the tax year 2024.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Attorney Jim McPhedran mentioned that this statement is done every year by the city. This resolution assures that this will not go on the taxable.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve an ordinance authorizing the City of La Salle, La Salle County, Illinois, to borrow funds from the Public Water Supply Loan Program.

Alderman Lavieri believes that this is a great deal and the new well will be necessary for the city of La Salle.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Finance Director John Duncan mentioned that there were very modest increases in what city is levying for. Duncan provided background on the levy and its impact on the city's finances, including the police and fire pensions.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve an ordinance levying for corporate purposes for the City of La Salle, La Salle County, Illinois for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2024 and ending April 30, 2025.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Herndon, Crane, Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve an ordinance approving modification of agreement in regard to union contract between the City of La Salle and the La Salle Professional Firefighters Local 4760. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Bacidore, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Finance Director Duncan stated that the purpose of the modification to the union contract was to add paramedics and paramedic personnel to the contract with wage rate so the city could potentially have them in house. This would also increase the education requirements for the responders along with hopefully the quality of care that we are giving to the patients in the City of La Salle.

Fire Chief Janick mentioned that this discussion began back in February, and this will hopefully address some of the staffing issues.

Mayor Grove wanted to thank the current team within the Fire Department that has went above and beyond to make adjustments to their schedules to allow for the department to be staffed when it was needed.

Mayor Grove also wanted to mention, in regard to the levy, that the city staff has done a great job to keep the tax down for the residents.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept, pay, and file the bills from December 9, 2024: Total Submitted: \$737,073.20 (Total Payroll \$238,453.60, Bills to be Paid \$244,910.67, Total Bills Paid \$253,708.93). Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Bacidore

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Ptak **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

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

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

ADJOURNED 7:17 pm



Amy Quinn, City Clerk