

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL

April 28, 2025

**A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois, was held
Monday, April 28, 2025, 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.

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

Mayor Grove thanked outgoing City Clerk Amy Quinn for her dedicated service to the City over the past four years. He also thanked outgoing First Ward Alderman Jim Bacidore for 16 years of service as an alderman and his commitment to the City as a longtime business owner. Alderman Bacidore thanked his supporters and colleagues for their efforts during his tenure.

OATHS OF OFFICE AND SEATING OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Judge Todd L. Martin swore in Mayor Jeff Grove, City Clerk Liz Bishop, Treasurer Virginia Kochanowski, First Ward Alderman James “Diz” Demes, Second Ward Alderman Tom Ptak, Third Ward Alderman John “Doc” Lavieri, and Fourth Ward Alderman T. “Boo” Herndon.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Jeff Grove, Aldermen Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

Absent: None

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

A quorum was present.

COMMENTS

Mayor Grove opened the floor for public comment, allowing residents to share their thoughts and concerns.

Brianne Hicks congratulated each of the newly elected officials and thanked Building Inspector Dennis Hocking for responding to her concern about garbage along the fence line on Sterling Street north of Eleventh Street; in addition, city workers cleared away nearby brush.

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 April 14, 2025. Each and every alderman has a copy. Alderman Thompson noted that one alderman was not listed in the minutes for a vote; Deputy Clerk Bader acknowledged the omission and indicated he would correct it prior to online publication.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 8 - 0 - 0

DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PETITIONS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the request from Bethany Coleman to install a non-illuminated, single-facing wall sign at 822 First Street with the potential to be illuminated at a date to be determined and related matters.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Demes

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 8 - 0 - 0

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the request from Lisa Manijak of La Salle VFW Post 4668 for a Special Event Permit to close a portion of Donahue Street, north of Edwards Avenue, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, May 26 for a car show and related matters.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Demes, Thompson

NAYS: NONE **Absent: NONE** **Abstain: NONE**

MOTION CARRIED: 8 - 0 - 0

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Crane to approve the request from David and Karen Safranski for a variance and waiver from the requirement of providing a sewer ejector pump pursuant to Ordinance 2157 for premises being constructed at 395 Ator Avenue and related matters.

Attorney McPhedran noted the ordinance would be subject to the Safranskis entering into an agreement with the City. Attorney McPhedran asked City Engineer Brian Brown if he was OK with the request, and he answered in the affirmative.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Reynolds, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Demes, Thompson, Ptak

NAYS: NONE **Absent: NONE** **Abstain: Alderman Lavieri**

MOTION CARRIED: 7 - 0 - 1

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

COMMUNICATIONS

BIDS

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

Police Chief Mike Smudzinski praised Officer Ray Gatza for his work ethic, fiscal responsibility, and contributions, specifically his work integrating body cameras into the department, grant procurement, scheduling, and managing other IT needs.

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the recommendation of the Police Chief and the Board of Fire and Police Commission to promote Officer Ray Gatza to the position of Sergeant from the Sergeant's Eligibility List and related matters.

ROLL CALL

Aldermen Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri

NAYS: NONE **Absent: NONE** **Abstain: NONE**

MOTION CARRIED: 8 – 0 - 0

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve Mayor Grove's recommendations to retain current appointments/assignments on various City

committees and related matters, with Alderman Demes assuming former Alderman Bacidore's positions on various of those committees.

ROLL CALL

Aldermen Herndon, Crane, Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 8 – 0 - 0

STANDING COMMITTEES

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding a request from Steven Michelini for a Redevelopment Incentive Program grant totaling \$12,500 for premises located at 2968 St. Vincent Avenue and related matters.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

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

MOTION CARRIED: 7 - 0 - 1

Finance Committee Chairman Ptak explained that the request for the purchase of a sponsorship from the La Salle Business Association (LBA) had been sent in error and is withdrawn by the LBA. The LBA is appreciative of the City's support for various projects throughout the year.

No further action was taken in this matter.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee to enter a one-year renewal for Global Site Location Industries (GSLI) for economic development consulting services and related matters at a cost of \$26,000.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Demes, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAYS: Aldermen Thompson, Crane **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 6 - 2 - 0

The Streets, Alleys and Traffic Committee agreed more information was needed before making a recommendation regarding addressing parking concerns in the 800 block of Chartres Street and the nearby alley and related matters. Deputy City Clerk Bader will

coordinate efforts with Police Chief Smudzinski to clarify the origin of no parking signs posted in the alley and to make a plan to resolve the issue satisfactorily for the concerned citizen.

No action was taken by the council on this matter.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

OLD BUSINESS

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Crane to confirm and ratify the straw vote regarding letters of support for the Community Project Funding Program for Congresswoman Lauren Underwood to assist with funding for a road/bike path to Rotary Park and Sewer Infrastructure Rehabilitation project and related matters.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Demes to authorize payment to VJF Contracting Corporation totaling \$12,960 for work completed to date on Rotary Park Phase IV – Pickleball Lighting and related matters.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Demes

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 8 - 0 - 0

Economic Development Director Bedei updated the Council on the NCICG Housing Program. The deadline for filing applications was last Friday, April 25, 2025. Ten local homes will be chosen to participate in the program with an additional five in reserve in the event any of the ten is unable to participate. Some applicants have already received letters indicating their applications do not qualify for the program, leading to some confusion over the process. The standards used to evaluate the applications are set by HUD. Applications are evaluated on a point system. In the event the program is available in the future, applicants who did not qualify this time will be encouraged to reapply. Over 40 local residents applied for the grants, and that level of participation is appreciated.

Alderman Thompson requested an update on the status of fiber optics with Geneseo Communications. Mayor Grove said he's heard from residents about this and believes Geneseo Communication is checking with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) who is conducting city-wide remediation to ensure their work meets the remediation guidelines. Mayor Grove did note that other companies have been doing work without issues. He notified Economic Development Director Bedei to reach out and ask for an

update. Mayor Grove said if the company is getting “cold feet” we may need to reach out to another company to speed up the process for residents.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Crane indicated he would be working with Attorney McPhedran to draft a proposed ordinance with language that would clarify the roles of bidders and contractors working on City projects. He cited ordinances in Peru and Ottawa that are similar to what he would like the Council to consider. Alderman Lavieri asked for additional details of the proposed ordinance prior to incurring the cost of drafting it. Attorney McPhedran explained the purpose of the proposed language is to provide a stronger basis for ensuring compliance with state statutes and regulations by responsible bidders. One specific item the new language would address would be the need for certified payroll so that invoices are appropriately detailed. Mayor Grove asked Engineer Brown how he currently handles this and Brown said he typically requests final waiver of liens and certified payroll unless it involves roads. Alderman Crane said if any aldermen have questions they can contact him prior to the next meeting.

Mayor Grove discussed gaming ordinances. La Salle licensees are allowed up to six machines. After obtaining approval from the City for the machines, State approval is required. It was recently discovered that some licensees were able to bypass City approval and obtain State approval, thereby avoiding payment of fees to the City. The Mayor’s office is reviewing machines throughout the City to determine which ones are not City approved and sending billing notices where necessary. Machines are tracked by serial number.

City Engineer Brian Brown discussed the sanitary sewer under the Route 6 bridge over the Little Vermilion River. Wednesday, April 16, 2025, the City was notified the sewer line had failed and fallen. Thursday morning, the flow through the line over the Little Vermilion was stopped and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the EPA, and the Emergency Management Agency were notified and consulted. A new design is being developed. The failure was caused by salt spray from the bridge pooling in the insulation causing the supports to rust and give way. The State Bridge Department inspects bridges every two years and had not seen any indication of the impending failure. IDOT understands the urgency of the project, and a fast-track permit is being sought to expedite repairs. The intention is to use most if not all of the existing pipe to limit costs of the project. In the meantime, tankers being used to hold the waste must be cleared 4-6 times per day. The I-39 bridge is also being inspected.

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

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Crane to authorize the Resolution for Maintenance Under the Illinois Highway Code and related matters.

AYES: Aldermen Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 8 - 0 - 0

Finance Director John Duncan explained that the grocery sales tax ordinance needs to be passed by October 25, 2025, to retain the 1% grocery sales tax the City currently receives; the Illinois Department of Revenue will continue to collect this tax for the City. Attorney McPhedran further explained that this tax is the tax currently in place and is not an additional tax to be paid by taxpayers.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Demes to authorize the ordinance amending Chapter 34 of La Salle Code of Ordinances – Municipal Grocery Retailers’ Occupation Tax and Municipal Grocery Service Occupation Tax and related matters.

AYES: Aldermen Herndon, Crane, Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 8 - 0 - 0

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Crane to accept the ordinance fixing wages for employees of the City of La Salle, Illinois, commencing May 1, 2025, and ending April 30, 2026, and related matters.

AYES: Aldermen Crane, Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** NONE **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8 – 0 - 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 April 14, 2025: Total Submitted: \$703,728.24 (Total Payroll \$232,133.84, Bills to be Paid \$391,082.67, Total Bills Paid \$80,511.73).

AYES: Aldermen Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAYS: NONE **Absent: NONE** **Abstain: None**

MOTION CARRIED: 8 - 0 - 0

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

ADJOURNED 7:30 p.m.

Liz Bishop

Liz Bishop, City Clerk