

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL

August 18, 2025

**A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois, was held
Monday, August 18, 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 Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

Others Present: Deputy Clerk Brent Bader, Finance Director John Duncan, Economic Development Director Curt Bedei, City Engineer Brian Brown, Police Chief Mike Smudzinski, 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.

Michelle Mathia of 325 Fifth Street expressed concern over speeding along Fifth Street. Previously there had been an issue there with high school students parking, often blocking driveways and interfering with garbage pickup. That has improved; however, with the new school year starting adult drivers often speed by despite the school zone sign.

Jake Palmiter reiterated his and his wife Alyssa Salas' interest in the 500 Second Street building. He reviewed his qualifications, experience, community commitment, financing, and developing business plan.

Alyssa Salas discussed plans for coordinating their ownership of 111 Bucklin and potential ownership of 500 Second Street. Plans include creating a multi-use facility with a kitchen, event space, parking, facades, windows, arcade, Airbnbs, etc. all within a two-year period.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Demes to accept and place on file minutes of the Regular City Council meeting held August 4, 2025. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PETITIONS

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Crane to approve the Request from Bradley Gruenwald for a Special Event Permit for a street closure on 27th Street from St. Vincent's Avenue to Hennepin Street from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, September 6, 2025, to host an annual car show and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0-0

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve Request from Lynn Cawley for a Special Event Permit to allow an extension of hours for outdoor music and increase of allowed decibel readings at 1203 First Street from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, August 23, 2025, for a 45th Anniversary party and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0-1

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the request from Correct Digital Displays, Inc., on behalf of the La Salle Public Library to replace the existing sign at 305 Marquette Street with an illuminated, double-facing message sign and related matters.

Alderman Jeppson clarified that the brick sign which was donated by a family will remain in place.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0-0

Moved by Alderman Thompson and seconded by Alderman Herndon to approve the Petitions for Annexation, Rezoning, and a Special Use Permit of Mark Voss of MAV Restoration, LLC and related matters (premises commonly known as 753 N. 3029th Road, Utica, Illinois).

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept the Treasurer's Report for July 2025 showing total cash balances in La Salle State Bank of \$8,361,739.57 and in Hometown National Bank of \$8,223,461.12.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Demes to accept the Building Inspector's Report for July 2025 showing total fees collected of \$5,144.45 with total value of construction of \$1,085,764.93.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept the Illinois Department of Revenue report showing sales tax collected for June 2025 of \$111,990.42 and Home Rule Sales Tax of \$95,190.02 for a total of \$207,180.44.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

BIDS

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

Alderman Thompson asked with the Patrolman Eligibility List expires. Chief Smudzinski indicated it would expire in another year. The purpose of approving two hires is to fill a current opening and bring someone in in anticipation of an upcoming retirement.

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the request to hire two candidates for the position of Patrolman from the Patrolman Eligibility List per the recommendation of the Police and Fire Commissioners for the City of La Salle and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0-0

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the appointment of Larry Happ as chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

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 to renew annual membership with the Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce at a cost of \$3,000 and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0-0

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys & Traffic Committee that a double-sided sign on one post indicating the presence of an autistic child be placed in front of 427 Fifth Street and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0-0

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

OLD BUSINESS

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to authorize payment of Pay Request #25 from Vissering Construction Company totaling \$125,411.16 for work completed to date on Aerobic Digester Conversion project and related matters.

ROLL CALL

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0-0

Alderman Demes indicated he and Alderman Thompson discovered a rental property in their ward disguised as an Airbnb with nine people living there for more than 30 days. Alderman Demes indicated he would like this topic to be a future agenda item. Attorney McPhedran responded that this had been an issue in the past and would be looked into again.

City Engineer Brian Brown reviewed the status of the road project. Completion is anticipated by the end of the week. Brown indicated he has completed a design for a water main replacement from Eleventh Street to Chartres.

Economic Development Director Curt Bedei provided an update on the Federal EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) initiative called GLO (Get the Lead Out). GLO representatives recently knocked on local doors to ask residents about their service lines and to recruit volunteers to provide water samples.

Traffic in the 300 block of Fifth Street was discussed. Chief Smudzinski indicated he has officers in the area and asked Ms. Mathia to stay briefly after the meeting to provide more information to assist in their efforts.

The Chief reported efforts at Fifth and Bucklin to monitor traffic appear to have been effective.

Alderman Herndon asked for an update on the status of the Internet project. Mayor Grove stated conversations are continuing with SURF and Geneseo Communications.

Alderman Thompson asked for an update on the well project. City Engineer Brown indicated the project is progressing smoothly with rock formations as hoped. They are currently at about 1,100 feet and need to get to 3,000 feet. It will be in the same aquifer as Peru's well so the volume is anticipated to be comparable to Peru's.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Grove reviewed the history of the public works building at 500 Second Street which was appraised at \$275,000. Initially no one was interested in it. Then the Council decided to go through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. No parties were able to offer a complete RFP application, with Mayor Grove noting the evidence of financing for proposed projects was an important component needed. Then, a proposal came from Mr. Nathan Watson; it was reviewed by a subcommittee of Finance Director John Duncan, Economic Development Director Curt Bedei, and Deputy Clerk Brent Bader. It was then moved forward to the Council. During that time the Council remained open to other proposals and today one was brought forward, although it is incomplete at this time. The Mayor expressed the opinion that Mr. Watson's proposal is a viable project, ready to go, and should be considered.

Attorney McPhedran stated that from a legal perspective the Council has the discretion to take whatever action it deems just and appropriate, pursuant to consult with the City's TIF counsel Attorney Herb Klein, that is in the best interests of the City of La Salle and the public at large, whether that to be to move forward tonight with the Ordinance or to wait longer. McPhedran explained it is Attorney Klein's opinion that pursuant to the TIF Act this action must be passed as an Ordinance by the corporate authorities of the municipality. The ordinance should receive a majority vote including the Mayor and the Aldermen. The more votes there are in favor of it, the stronger the legal foundation for it.

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

Alderman Thompson requested clarification on a 50/50 split. Attorney McPhedran responded that the developer would not be seeking those types of TIF benefits with regard to this development. The TIF benefit in this agreement is for the acquisition of property and if the developer completes the project in a timely manner the price does not need to be paid. There is no other TIF benefit promised. Attorney McPhedran asked Mr. Duncan and Mr. Bedei if they concurred with that interpretation and they agreed.

Further discussion clarified there is a 50/50 split on the Environmental Phase II inspection. Under the agreement, the City will pay half of the inspection cost up to \$5,500. If the transaction proceeds to closing, the City will be reimbursed for the cost. However, if there is no closing the City would retain the right to the information contained in the inspection report. Investing in the inspection report provides the City with the ability to be transparent going forward.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Ptak to approve an Ordinance approving and authorizing the execution of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Redevelopment Agreement, including, but not limited to, the transfer of City Real Estate by and between the City of La Salle and Glenstone Redevelopment, LLC and Nathan L. Watson. (Involves Real Estate at 500 Second Street)

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane, Mayor Grove

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

MOTION CARRIED: 7-2-0

Mayor Grove thanked everyone for their efforts on this project.

Deputy City Clerk Bader indicated Alderman Demes had spoken to him about the nuisance ordinances and violation fees associated with it and stated there may be review of this in the future. Attorney McPhedran explained there may be limits of \$750 or \$1,000 on fines; however, for each day of violations there may be a separate fine. In addition, each section of the ordinance may be considered an independent violation. Continuing violations can add up. Alderman Demes stated fines do not appear to be a deterrent and should be reviewed.

Attorney McPhedran asked that it be included in the record that Jake Palmiter and Alyssa Salas who were interested in presenting a proposal for the 500 Second Street building, as well as Nathan Watson of Glenstone Development, were present for the entire discussion during tonight's meeting.

Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Bill Zens was also present for discussion amongst the Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Grove stated there was no need for an executive session.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept, pay, and file the bills: Total Submitted: \$1,577,534.81 (Total Payroll \$247,560.66, Bills to be Paid \$425,199.18, Total Bills Paid \$904,774.97).

ROLL CALL

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

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 7:19 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Bishop". The signature is written in a cursive, fluid style.

Liz Bishop, City Clerk