City of Pekin

PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PEKIN, ILLINOIS,
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL
111 S. CAPITOL ST
ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2024 AT 5:30 PM
MAYOR MARY J. BURRESS PRESIDING

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Abel.

Call to Order

City Clerk, Ms. Sue McMillan, confirmed all Council Members were physically present and logged in.

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Rick Hilst	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM
Karen Hohimer	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM
Dave Nutter	City of Pekin	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	5:30 PM
Mary Burress	City of Pekin	Mayor	Present	5:30 PM
Lloyd Orrick	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM
John P Abel	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM
Chris Onken	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM

Approve Agenda

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Approval of Minutes

4.1. City Council - Regular Meeting Minutes - February 12, 2024

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick

SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Public Input

Terri Gambetti, representing Pekin Downtown Main Street and accompanied by Vice President Vikki Barker, presented signatures from downtown business owners in support of vacating Elizabeth Street. Ms. Gambetti emphasized the importance of this closure for the growth of the county and the enhancement of downtown's appearance.

Mr. Roy Miller addressed the rezoning of a property portion on 7th Street, highlighting the church's proposal for a parish center and the community support behind it.

Mr. Matthew Johnson expressed expectations regarding an agenda item concerning the new business "Freshwater Select" presentation, stressing the need for information on how fish will be processed and brought into the plant. Mr Johnson also inquired about the aftermath of acquiring more properties on Court Street and the plans for sidewalk expansion following demolition. He also sought clarification regarding property ownership post-demolition. Mr. Johnson also raised concerns about technology failures during previous meetings and urged council members to avoid social media during sessions.

Mr. John McNish questioned the ownership of 220 Margaret Street and the vacation. Mr. McNish also expressed concerns about New Business Item 9.1 Ordinance No. 4164-23/24 Amending City Code Chapter 5, Article IV, Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Property, to Add Regulations Governing the Vacation of Public Rights-of-Way, and felt that it did not need to be changed and stated that the Mayor should abstain from the vote.

Mr. Michael Deluhery, Tazewell County Administrator, voiced support for vacating Elizabeth Street, emphasizing its potential for future downtown investments and would allow a direct connection between the jail and the Justice Center.

Mr. Bill Fleming, representing St. Joseph Church, highlighted efforts to accommodate neighbors and secure approval for their building plans.

Ms. Bailey Gambetti expressed support fort he vacating of Elizabeth Street and the addition of St. Joseph Church, emphasizing the positive impact on the community.

City Manager, Mr. John Dossey, addressed the technical issues with the meeting equipment and highlighted efforts to ensure transparency through live streaming.

Consent Agenda

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**

MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Council Member Hilst requested that Consent Agenda Items 6.8 Ordinance No. 4158-23/24 A Rezoning Map Amendment Request Submitted by St. Joseph's Church from R-4 Single Family Residential to P-1 Vehicular Parking District, 6.10 Ordinance No. 4160-23/24 A Variance Request Submitted by St. Joseph's Church to Seek Alternative Compliance for Off-Street Parking Lot Screening and Landscape Placement and 6.11 Ordinance No. 4161-23/24 Site Plan Approval for St. Joseph's Church to Allow for the Construction of a Building Addition and Parking Lot at 303 South 7th Street be pulled and moved to New Business. City Clerk Sue McMillan confirmed that those items were placed under New Business.

6.1. Accounts Payable To Be Paid Proof List thru January 26 2024

6.2. Financial Reports January 2024

6.3. Resolution No. 101-23/24 Approving the Selection of Josh Wray as the City of Pekin's Representative to the Southern Tazewell Enterprise Zone Administrative Board

6.4. Resolution No. 102-23/24 Approving the Mayor's Appointment of Robert Grogan to the City of Pekin Police Pension Board of Trustees

6.5. Resolution No. 103-23/24 Approving the Mayor's Appointment of Josh Wray as Chairperson of the Riverway Business Park Review Committee

6.6. Ordinance No. 4156-23/24 Approving a First Amendment to the Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Agreement with Heidi Edwards

6.7. Ordinance No. 4157-23/24 A Rezoning Map Amendment Request Submitted by St. Joseph's Church from B-3 General Business to RM-3-Multiple Family Residential District for the Vacant Property Located at 700 Court Street

6.9. Ordinance No. 4159-23/24 A Variance Request Submitted by St. Joseph's Church for the Property Located at 303 South 7th Street to Reduce the Minimum Property Line Setbacks

6.12. Ordinance No. 4162-23/24 A Special Use Request Submitted by Civic Digital Displays, LLC for the Installation and Use of a Digital Billboard at 1610 Broadway Street

6.13. Ordinance No 4163-23/24 A Special Use Request Submitted by Civic Digital Displays, LLC for the Installation and Use of a Digital Billboard at 3601 Court Street

6.14. Receive & File Bids for 2024 Sidewalk Improvements

6.15. Receive & File Bids for 2024 Downtown Improvements

6.16. Receive & File Bids for 220 Margaret Steet Parking & Alley

Presentation By New Business "Freshwater Select"

Mayor Burress introduced a presentation by the new business "Freshwater Select," presented by Jarod Vogel and Matt Schekowski. Mr. Vogel, representing the company, provided an overview of their operations, focusing on processing Asian carp from the Illinois River and other freshwater sources. He emphasized their commitment to the blue economy, utilizing waterways ethically and sustainably. Their objective is not only to target Asian carp but also to process and deliver various freshwater fish to customers. Mr. Vogel highlighted the desirability of wild-caught Asian carp, which ranks second only to salmon in demand globally. He discussed the challenges of scaling up operations and the collaborative efforts with agricultural cooperatives to address them.

Their target species include silver carp, grass carp, bighead carp, and black carp, with fishermen from the Illinois River region bringing their catches to the facility for sorting and processing. Mr. Vogel stressed the efficiency of their operations, with around 16 boats daily delivering fish, sorted quickly without any waste leaving the facility. He underscored the strategic significance of their location in Peoria, Illinois, as a global hub for processed fish, particularly emphasizing the cultural significance of carp in the region.
Moreover, Mr. Vogel outlined their efforts to address safety concerns, collaborating with nonprofits and fishermen to implement safety standards. He assured the Council that information on safety protocols would be made available to interested parties. Their unique business model aims to connect commercial fishermen collectively and promote sustainable practices.

Mr. Vogel concluded by highlighting the economic and environmental benefits of their operation, presenting it as a win-win solution for the community and the industry. He emphasized the pride the community should take in their products, which reach international markets and contribute to sustainability efforts.

Public Hearing

8.1. For the Purpose of Discussing the Adoption of an Ordinance Authorizing the Vacation of the 300 Block of Elizabeth Street

The public hearing for the adoption of Ordinance No. 4164-23/24 authorizing the vacation of the 300 Block of Elizabeth Street was convened by Mayor Burress, opening at 6:10 pm.

City Attorney Kate Swise facilitated public comments, beginning with Economic Development Director Mr. Josh Wray who emphasized the significance of the vacation for Taxwell County's plans, particularly for building a modern facility and accessing the jail.

Mary Ann Landendorf advocated for the collaboration between the city and county, highlighting the benefits of a justice center for downtown businesses.

Council Member Abel expressed support for the closure of Elizabeth Street, citing its minimal traffic and inconvenience.

Council Member Nutter raised concerns about the potential collapse of the street due to the demolition of the Arcade Building and Shipper and Block Building seeking assurance from the City Engineer regarding risk mitigation efforts by the contractor.

Mayor Burress shared historical context, reflecting on past decisions and advocating for a long-term vision, using Illinois Central College as an example, urging cooperation with the county.

Matthew Johnson suggested exploring options for incorporating revenue-generating businesses, like a sandwich shop, into future developments.

Mayor Burress concluded the public hearing at 6:15 pm.

New Business

9.1. Ordinance No. 4164-23/24 Amending City Code Chapter 5, Article IV, Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Property, to Add Regulations Governing the Vacation of Public Rights-of-Way

RESULT:	**PASSED (5 TO 2)**
MOVER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken
NAYS:	Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick

City Manager Mr. John Dossey presented the request stating that in the past, Council had chosen to vacate public rights of ways, provided by State Statute 65 ILCS 5/11-91, which mandates procedures including a public hearing and a three-fourths affirmative vote by the City Council. However, it was noted that as a home rule municipality, the City possesses the autonomy to establish its own regulations. The ordinance presented outlines local regulations for vacating public rights-of-way, specifying the requirement of a public hearing and approval by a majority of the City Council.

City Attorney Ms. Kate Swise provided an overview of the proposed ordinance amendment. She emphasized that the changes would establish procedures for street vacation with a simple majority vote by the Council, aligning with existing general approvals under city ordinances. She also stated that the ordinance provides for a public hearing prior to any street vacation and specifies that it could be before the Zoning Board of Appeals before City Council.

Council Member Hilst raised concerns regarding the motives behind revisiting the issue, questioning the ethics of altering the ordinance to secure a favorable outcome and wanting advise from Brad Cole at the Illinois Municipal League.

Mayor Burress intervened, expressing frustration with the prolonged deliberations and emphasizing the that the city needs to progress.

Council Member Orrick expressed a preference for a gym over the proposed development, citing concerns about tax revenue and the county's actions.

Council Member Nutter voiced support for moving forward with the development despite reservations about the voting requirements.

The discussion by Council also touched on parking concerns and the potential impact on local businesses.

Council Member Abel highlighted the importance of supporting existing establishments.

9.2. Ordinance No. 4165-23/24 Approving the Vacation of the Portion of Elizabeth Street between Capitol Street and 3rd Street

RESULT:	**PASSED (5 TO 2)**
MOVER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

NAYS:	Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick

City Manager Mr. John Dossey introduced Ordinance No. 4165-23/24, which pertains to the vacation of a portion of Elizabeth Street between Capitol Street and 3rd Street. Mr. Dossey outlined the rationale behind the ordinance, highlighting Tazewell County's intention to build a new facility for criminal court proceedings, necessitating the vacation of the mentioned street portion. This proposal comes in the wake of a previous decision by the City Council to vacate a different block of St. Mary Street to accommodate the construction of the Justice Center in 2001.

In support of the ordinance, Economic Development Director Mr. Josh Wray, assured the Council that there were no public safety issues associated with the closure of the street, emphasizing its minimal traffic flow and the absence of significant impact on emergency vehicle routes. Additionally, Mr. Wray emphasized that the approval of the vacation does not constitute permission to commence construction but rather signals the City's willingness to move forward with the project pending further review and approval.

Council Member Nutter inquired about the ownership and status of infrastructure located beneath the street. City Engineer, Ms. Josie Esker confirmed the presence of a sewer line beneath the street and discussed potential plans for relocating it to accommodate the proposed development. Furthermore, Ms. Esker mentioned similar infrastructure considerations regarding the parallel alley north of Elizabeth Street, suggesting that relocation efforts may be necessary in that area as well.

Staff recommended the approval of the ordinance, citing the economic importance of the Courthouse to downtown vitality and the significance of maintaining positive intergovernmental relations with Tazewell County. It was emphasized that failure to approve the ordinance could jeopardize the City's relationships and economic prospects. All aspects of the proposed project, including permitting and site planning, will undergo thorough review and approval processes by the Council and staff members.

9.3. Ordinance No. 4166-23/24 Declaring Surplus Funding in the Southern Industrial Park Conservation Area Tax Increment Financing District for Tax Year 2022

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Economic Development Director, Mr. Josh Wray read the request regarding

Ordinance No. 4166-23/24, which pertains to declaring surplus funding in the Southern Industrial Park Conservation Area Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for Tax Year 2022. The ordinance follows intergovernmental agreements with other taxing bodies, stipulating the declaration of a surplus each year equivalent to 25% of the total incremental real estate tax revenue received by the Southern Industrial Park.

Based on the tax revenue received by the Southern Industrial Park TIF amounting to $233,380.66, staff has prepared a surplus declaration totaling $58,345.17, which will be sent to the County Treasurer upon approval. Additionally, Mr. Wray noted that similar agreements exist for the Central Business District TIF and the Court Street TIF but only with the school districts, and payments for those agreements are automatic and will be made concurrently with the payments from the Southern Industrial Park TIF.

Staff recommended the approval of the attached ordinance, emphasizing its alignment with existing agreements and financial procedures.

9.4. Resolution No. 104-23/24 Award 2024 Sidewalk Improvement Project to Cut Rock LLC

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
SECONDER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

During the Council meeting, City Engineer Ms. Josie Esker addressed Resolution No. 104-23/24, which pertains to awarding the 2024 Sidewalk Improvement Project contract to Cut Rock LLC. Ms. Esker informed the Council that the City recently conducted a bid opening, receiving four bids, with Cut Rock submitting the lowest bid of $169,598.00. Staff reviewed the bids and had discussions with the contractor, noting that although Cut Rock is a newer contractor, they are familiar with the crew.

Council Member Orrick sought clarification on whether this project aligns with the city's ADA plan. Ms. Esker confirmed that the project would contribute to meeting the financial requirements outlined in the ADA plan.

Council Member Orrick expressed concern about the lack of specific location information regarding the sidewalk repairs. Ms. Esker clarified that the locations are outlined in the contract, with some addressing areas identified in the Consent Decree and others targeting large trip hazards.

The bid amount was deemed reasonable and responsible, being 20% below the Engineer's estimate. Additionally, staff requested a $25,000 contingency for the project to address any additional sidewalk repairs needed at lower-than-average unit prices.

9.5. Resolution No. 105-23/24 Award 2024 Downtown Improvement Project to RA Cullinan

RESULT:	**FAILED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
NAYS:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

City Manager Mr. John Dossey addressed Resolution No. 105-23/24, which pertains to awarding the 2024 Downtown Improvement Project contract to RA Cullinan. The project involves the removal and replacement of all ADA ramps in the downtown area, miscellaneous sidewalk and curb replacement, and mill and overlay work.

City Engineer, Ms. Josie Esker provided details on the project, highlighting specific locations such as the triangular area on Broadway and Court Street, as well as a section of Court Street near the railroad tracks to the river. Despite receiving only one bid for the project, the bid of $6,189,729 was significantly above the Engineer's estimate of $3,518,286. Due to the higher-than-expected pricing, staff recommended rejecting the bid and dividing the project into smaller segments to attract more bidders. This approach may result in a longer duration for the project, potentially pushing back the asphalt work to 2025.

Council Member Nutter inquired about the timeline for splitting the project. Ms. Esker explained that they plan to start looking into splitting the project right away, with the possibility of initiating some portions of the project in the current fiscal year and continuing into the next fiscal year.

Council Member Orrick raised concerns about the feasibility of splitting the project into three separate projects. Ms. Esker clarified that they are considering splitting the project into three concrete projects and one asphalt project. The goal is to attract more bidders and keep prices low by breaking down the project into manageable segments.

Council Member Hilst inquired about the status of engineering fees. Ms. Esker explained that any engineering fees under $10,000 will proceed as planned, but for larger fees, they may handle them internally to control costs.

9.6. Resolution No. 106-23/24 Award 220 Margaret Street Parking & Alley Project to Miller & Son

RESULT:	**PASSED (6 TO 1)**

MOVER:	Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Nutter
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken
NAYS:	Council Member Hilst

City Manager Mr. John Dossey requested City Engineer Ms. Josie Esker to speak regarding Resolution No. 106-23/24, which concerns awarding the 220 Margaret Street Parking & Alley project contract to Miller & Son. The project entails the removal and replacement of the alley between Margaret and Court Street, the installation of a new inlet and pipe in the alley, and the creation of a new parking lot between the Union Mission and Ariel Athletics, along with various associated sidewalk and curb work.

Ms. Esker explained the scope of the project and highlighted that the City received three bids. The low bid of $355,275.50 was 30% below the Engineer’s estimate, making it significantly more favorable than the bid received for the same project last fall, which was rejected. Considering the potential for encountering unknowns during construction, such as digging in an old area with uncertain conditions, staff recommended including a $40,000 contingency to address any unforeseen circumstances without needing to return to the Council for approval.

The Mayor inquired about the previous bid for the same project last year and questioned the rationale for proceeding now. Ms. Esker clarified that a bid was received last fall, but it was considerably higher at $660,000, leading to the decision to reject it. Despite the potential for delays, the City aims to prioritize cost-saving measures for taxpayers.

Council Member Orrick raised a question about the number of parking spaces that would be available after the completion of the project. Ms. Esker responded that while the project would only create 8 to 10 parking spaces, it would significantly improve the aesthetics of the area by removing an eyesore of an empty lot. Additionally, it was noted that a new alley had previously been poured further up on Margaret Street.

9.7. Ordinance No. 4167-23/24 Approve Purchase of Property at 7 Kenmore Court

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Nutter
SECONDER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

City Manager Mr. John Dossey introduced Ordinance No. 4167-23/24, which pertains to approving the purchase of property at 7 Kenmore Court. The City required a strip of land along Court Street to construct wider sidewalks along this corridor. Since the house on the property was very close to the existing sidewalks, it was proposed for demolition. An appraisal valued the land at $62,000.00, and the City offered this amount, which the owner accepted. The ordinance is presented before the Council because the purchase exceeds the spending authority of the City Engineer for land purchases on this project, and staff recommends approval.

Council Member Orrick inquired about the appraisal process and whether there was a possibility to leave the building intact. Ms. Esker confirmed that the $62,000 valuation came from a state-approved appraiser and explained that according to IDOT processes, structures within 10 feet of proposed sidewalks were typically slated for removal. Council Member Orrick suggested exploring options such as donating the house to a nonprofit organization to address homelessness, which could potentially save demolition costs. Ms. Esker estimated the demolition cost at around $20,000 and expressed openness to the Council's direction on the matter, noting that retaining the structure would require revisiting the process if additional right-of-way was needed in the future. Furthermore, Ms. Esker mentioned the possibility of selling a portion of the land to neighboring property owners.

Council Member Nutter addressed Mr. Johnson's concerns and clarified that the property would become city-owned, with the possibility of selling portions to neighboring property owners.

9.8. Ordinance No. 4168-23/24 Approve Purchase of Property at 1 Kenmore Court

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Rick Hilst
SECONDER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

City Manager Mr. John Dossey presented Ordinance No. 4168-23/24, which sought approval for the purchase of property at 1 Kenmore Court. The City required a strip of land along Court Street to facilitate the construction of wider sidewalks along this corridor. Due to the property's proximity to the existing sidewalks, the house was being proposed for demolition. An appraisal valued the land at $78,000.00. The City initially offered this amount, but the owner countered at $80,400.00, citing their decision to refrain from re-renting the property for several months, which saves the City money in tenant relocation costs. The ordinance was presented to the Council because the purchase exceeds the spending authority of the City Engineer for land purchases on this project, and staff recommended approval.

9.9. Ordinance No. 4169-23/24 Third Amendment to the FY24 Operational and Capital Budget

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Rick Hilst
SECONDER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Ordinance No. 4169-23/24, regarding the Third Amendment to the FY24 Operational and Capital Budget, was discussed. The ordinance addresses the need to pass a separate spending plan for the Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) Fund, which was inadvertently overlooked during the budget approval process for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

Finance Consultant Mr. Bob Grogan explained that the MFT Fund was typically used for certain maintenance items such as salt, electricity for streetlights, and other essential expenses. However, due to the oversight, no resolution was passed for general maintenance items for FY24, resulting in no authorized spending for these crucial items from the MFT Fund. As a result, there is a need to adjust the budget to cover the incurred or planned expenditures.

To rectify this issue, the proposed amendment reduces the budgeted amounts in the MFT fund and increases them in the Street Department budget within the General Fund. This adjustment ensures that essential expenses are covered without losing any funds, as the money will still be available for expenditure in the next fiscal year. Additionally, Mr. Grogan mentioned that when spending money through the MFT fund, the city typically utilizes state bids for efficiency and convenience.

City Engineer Ms. Josie Esker acknowledged the oversight and took responsibility for not passing a general maintenance resolution for the MFT fund. However, she reassured the Council that no money was lost, and the amendment simply involved a "switcharoo" to rectify the situation.

Council Member Hilst sought clarification on the bidding process for MFT fund expenditures. Mr. Grogan explained that for items like salt, the city can utilize state bids, which streamline the procurement process and alleviate the need for municipalities to conduct their own bidding.

The amendment was recommended for passage by City Staff, and it required a 2/3 majority vote for approval.

9.10. Resolution No. 107-23/24 Approve Down Payment to Fire Trucks Unlimited for the Refurbishment of the 2000 Pierce Tower Ladder Fire Apparatus

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Chris Onken
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Resolution No. 107-23/24 was discussed, which sought approval for a $10,000 earnest money payment to Fire Trucks Unlimited for the refurbishment of a 2000 Pierce Tower Ladder Fire Apparatus.

Fire Chief Trent Reeise presented the resolution, explaining that the $10,000 earnest money serves as a non-refundable down payment for the refurbishment project. Fire Trucks Unlimited was the sole vendor capable of providing comprehensive refurbishment services for fire and emergency service vehicles. The refurbishment process involves upgrading, repairing, and refinishing components of the fire apparatus to ensure it meets modern specifications and standards. The refurbishment is expected to extend the apparatus' operational lifespan significantly.

Council Member Orrick inquired about the size and usage history of the apparatus. Chief Reeise described it as a large bucket truck primarily used for high-rise firefighting and estimated its mileage at around 100,000. He also mentioned that the refurbishment was scheduled to begin in September of the current year, with an estimated cost of $750,000 for the full refurbishment.

Council Member Onken sought clarification on the financing and approval process, to which Chief Reeise explained that the $10,000 down payment secures a spot for the refurbishment, with the full contract to be brought before the Council once the FY25 budget and funding are available.

Council Member Nutter emphasized the importance of securing the spot with the earnest money and requested inclusion of transportation charges in the contract.

Finance Consultant Mr. Bob Grogan provided additional context, mentioning the availability of funding from the SLERF (State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds) and CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) criteria for capital investments like this. He highlighted the significant cost savings compared to purchasing a new apparatus, which could cost between $2.2 to $2.6 million and have a four-year wait time.

Council Member Hilst raised concerns about the budgeting and financing aspects of the refurbishment project. Mr. Grogan clarified that the expenditure would likely be categorized under capital projects in the general fund and explained the availability of SLERF and CDBG funds to cover the costs.

9.11. Resolution No. 108-23/24 Approving the FY25 Enterprise Lease Agreements for Police Vehicles

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Chris Onken
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Resolution No. 108-23/24 was passed, approving the FY25 Enterprise Lease Agreements for Police Vehicles. The police department sought approval for lease agreements with Enterprise Fleet Management to secure ten vehicles, comprised of four marked squad cars, four marked pickup trucks for patrol command officers, and two investigation vehicles. These leases were part of an ongoing fleet program with Enterprise aimed at reducing overall fleet costs for the department. The total cost of the lease for FY25 amounted to $91,177.44.

Chief Seth Ranney addressed the Council, emphasizing the utilization of fleet management to address the department's vehicle needs. He clarified that the cost mentioned is not entirely a new expenditure but rather involves replacing existing vehicles in the fleet, with some dating back to 2016. Chief Ranney highlighted a budget presentation issue concerning hail-damaged vehicles and expressed gratitude for securing additional state-offered vehicles, which would reduce the waiting period from 7-8 months. He explained the necessity of securing funds for the next year to cover existing leases with newer ones due to the city's budget timeline misalignment.

Council Member Nutter questioned the use of various vehicle brands, to which Chief Ranney responded that consistency was maintained with Dodge Durangos due to guaranteed delivery and the vehicles' suitability for police use. He justified the selection of Chevy Silverados for patrol pickups based on their resilience in transporting property, including bicycles, and their higher resale value. Chief Ranney further elaborated on the blending-in strategy for investigation vehicles, aiming to ensure surveillance effectiveness.

Council Member Orrick sought clarification on the deployment of patrol command officers and investigation units. Chief Ranney clarified that three patrol command officers are assigned per shift, with two assigned per vehicle to allow for an 8-hour rest period. Regarding investigations, Chief Ranney confirmed that detectives utilize some of the pickups, with eight supervisors involved, and vehicles being taken home as needed.

Consent Agenda Items 6.8, 6.10 and 6.11

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Nutter
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Council Member Hilst raised concerns regarding parking for a proposed dining hall addition within St. Joseph Church, specifically questioning the location and adequacy of parking spaces, including the use of the playground for parking which is not part of the site plan. Chief Building Official Mr. Nic Maquet addressed the issue, stating that the new parking lots accommodate the additional parking needs, but the specific number of spaces in the playground area was uncertain.

Council Member Hilst also discussed the zoning of certain parcels for parking, expressing dissatisfaction with the idea of rezoning green spaces as parking lots. Mr. Maquet clarified that the zoning for off-street parking doesn't necessitate rezoning the playground area.

Additionally, Council Member Hilst raised concerns about the screening around the parking lot, suggesting that shrubs should be taller than the recommended 2-3 feet to adequately screen headlights, although Mr. Maquet indicated that the plants would grow taller over time.

The Mayor and others discussed the feasibility of taller shrubs and potential issues with salt damage during winter. Ultimately, Council Member Hilst opted to leave the matter as is, acknowledging the requirement for replacement and maintenance if necessary.

6.8. Ordinance No. 4158-23/24 A Rezoning Map Amendment Request Submitted by St. Joseph's Church from R-4 Single Family Residential to P-1 Vehicular Parking District

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Nutter
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

6.10. Ordinance No. 4160-23/24 A Variance Request Submitted by St. Joseph's Church to Seek Alternative Compliance for Off-Street Parking Lot Screening and Landscape Placement

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Nutter
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

6.11. Ordinance No. 4161-23/24 Site Plan Approval for St. Joseph's Church to Allow for the Construction of a Building Addition and Parking Lot at 303 South 7th Street

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Nutter
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Any Other Business To Come Before The Council

Council Member Hilst informed the Council Members and staff about a meeting regarding changes in the CO_2 pipeline, indicating that it could potentially impact the City Council's jurisdiction if it extended into the city limits. Mr. Schneider mentioned that Wolf withdrew their permit with the State of Illinois, and discussions revolved around the alterations in the CO_2 pipeline plans, with Deputy Fire Chief Tony Rendleman specifying adjustments to its proposed corridor.

Council Member Orrick mentioned the Bicentennial year plans, expressing interest in the Chamber's activities, and the Mayor mentioned the Bicentennial website.

City Manager Mr. Dossey brought up the July 4th time capsule event, seeking Council direction for its handling, which the Mayor agreed to discuss further with Council.

Council Member Abel shared details about the upcoming Super Cruise event featuring a celebrity guest.

Fire Chief Trent Reeise warned about severe weather conditions expected the following day.

10.1. Budget Presentations: Bus, Airport, Administration, Clerk, Legal, Finance, Insurance, Vehicle Maintenance Fund, General Fund, Human Resources, and IT

Finance Consultant, Mr. Robert Grogan began with introducing the Bus department's presentation. All budget presentations were presented with slides.

Bus Department Budget Presentation:

Ms. Saskia provided a comprehensive overview, stating that the department services approximately 3,677 students daily across 28 schools in four districts, utilizing 79 buses. She highlighted recent achievements, including the replacement of bus radios, increased revenue through bus pass sales, and efforts to enhance employee appreciation and recruitment. Ms. Courtney outlined plans for the upcoming year, including the replacement of two passenger vehicles and contract negotiations. Long-term goals included improving GPS systems and routing software for efficiency.

Council Member Hohimer expressed concerns about student behavior on buses and suggested holding parents accountable. Ms. Courtney clarified disciplinary procedures, noting that while students cannot be expelled from buses by law, consequences vary based on district policies.

Council Member Orrick inquired about vehicle ownership and leasing options, particularly regarding electric buses. Ms. Courtney confirmed the ownership of vans and discussed exploring leasing options.

Council Member Nutter requested a cost analysis of utility bills for the Bus department, prompting further discussion about contract negotiations and billing calculations with school districts.

Airport Presentation:

Public Works Director Mr. Dean Schneider reviewed the fiscal year 2025 budget, highlighting progress made in 2020, notably the construction of new T-hangar units costing $1.38 million, expected to finish by August 2024 pending a crucial transformer from Ameren. Despite delays, the city anticipates recovering costs through rental fees over three years. Terminal and main hangar upgrades, including sandblasting and painting, were completed. The Airport Manager remains on forced active duty until September 2024, impacting budget rollovers, including T-hangar construction funds and upcoming projects like fuel tank replacements and pavement work. A new hangar lease agreement will cover utilities, and maintenance issues for existing hangars and roofs are planned.

Council Member Hilst appreciated the improvements, while discussions regarding Mr. Cruce's contract and restructuring the Airport Fund into operations and capital expenditure departments were raised. Mr. Grogan emphasized addressing the historical deficit transparently, proposing a subsidy from the general fund. Concerns arose about tracking the Airport's debt to the City.

Vehicle Maintenance Fund:

Public Works Director Mr. Schneider provided an overview of the proposed budget impacts for the Vehicle Maintenance Fund for the fiscal year 2025. He highlighted the importance of this fund and expressed appreciation for the mechanics who play a crucial role in maintaining the city's diverse fleet of vehicles. Mr. Schneider emphasized the efficiency and expertise of the mechanics, noting their positive reputation among colleagues and the satisfaction with their work.

Mr. Schneider outlined the maintenance programs for city vehicles, including requests for new tire-changing and tire-balancing machines. These additions were described as minimal costs that would not significantly impact the budget, which is expected to remain largely unchanged from fiscal year 2024.

Finance Consultant Mr. Grogran added that there were past issues with negative balances in the Vehicle Maintenance Fund, as identified in the 2020 Audit. He explained that these deficits stemmed from a failure to reallocate losses among departments at the end of the fiscal year. To rectify this, an assessment was conducted in the 2021 Audit, reallocating losses to the respective departments involved. Moving forward, this process will be integrated into the annual budgeting cycle to ensure proper accounting and prevent similar issues from arising in the future.

City Council and City Manager's Office:

Mr. Grogan discussed the City Council and City Manager's Office explaining that this budget primarily consists of salaries for Council Members and City Managers. Mr. Grogran mentioned the allocation of these salaries to various funds, depending on the involvement of city personnel in different departments.

A notable change discussed was the re-evaluation of staffing positions, particularly regarding the Assistant City Manager and Executive Assistant roles. There was a discrepancy in the 2024 budget regarding these positions, leading to confusion about the intended staffing structure. However, efforts were being made to clarify and adjust those positions to meet the city's needs effectively.

Additionally, Mr. Grogan mentioned a potential adjustment in the salary allocation for the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Program Manager. To comply with federal funding regulations, a portion of the Program Manager's salary might be allocated to the general fund, reflecting the time spent on tasks unrelated to CDBG.

Mr. Grogan discussed the Legal Department's budget. He highlighted cost-saving measures implemented to manage legal expenses more efficiently. These measures included refining the billing process for external legal services rather than hiring additional in-house attorneys. However, he acknowledged ongoing challenges, such as legal costs incurred due to FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) appeals to the Public Access Counselor.

Councilman Hilst raised questions about the staffing plans, seeking clarification on the positions of Assistant City Manager and Executive Assistant. Mr. Dossey confirmed that these positions were indeed being considered for full-time roles within the department.

Insurance Fund:

Mr. Grogan provided an overview of the Insurance Fund. This fund covers various liabilities such as health insurance, workman's compensation, liability insurance, and flex spending. Mr. Grogran outlined the current participation in health insurance, including 215 active employees, 41 retirees, and three others. He also discussed the expenditure trends, highlighting the increase from 3.2 million in 2010 to 7.6 million in 2023. Similarly, he addressed the coverage for workman's compensation, which has seen an increase from half a million in 2010 to 1.1 million in 2023, covering 339 employees. Regarding liability insurance, Mr. Grogran noted a relatively stable percentage of coverage compared to other insurance costs. The discussion also touched upon a cash deficit of $5.5 million accumulated over the years, prompting a reassessment in 2021 that brought in an additional $3.2 million. This deficit was attributed to deviations from the Min/Max purchasing strategy, with the Council opting to abandon it in favor of a more straightforward approach to insurance procurement.

Finance Department:

Mr. Grogan elaborated on the staffing, operational volumes, and progress on audits within the Finance Department. The Finance Department comprises seven full-time staff members, excluding three dedicated to Utility Billing. Two positions remain vacant, including the Finance Director and a full-time payroll position. The complexity of departmental operations was described, with mention of managing 18 bank accounts, processing thousands of journal entries and invoices annually, and handling payroll intricacies, particularly regarding military leave and public safety compensations.

Progress on audits was also discussed, with the draft for the 2021 Audit currently under review and expected to be finalized by the end of the first quarter. Plans for upcoming audits were outlined, with fieldwork tentatively scheduled to commence in May. Mr. Grogran commended the team's efforts in enhancing departmental efficiency, attributing much of the progress to the addition of an extra accountant, Gunjan, and expressing gratitude to the City Council for approving the position.

General Operations Budget:

Mr. Grogran delved into the General Operations Budget, a catchall within the General Fund, encompassing most major revenues not directly tied to specific departments. Sales tax revenue was scrutinized, with Use Tax noted as slightly low and PPR in line with predictions following state notices. Interest earnings were highlighted as notably higher than budgeted, but unsustainable long-term. Discussion turned to the potential impact of Governor Pritzker's proposal to eliminate the 1% food sales tax, estimated to cost the City approximately $1.4 million annually, a significant portion of sales tax revenue. The Illinois Municipal League's opposition to the proposal was mentioned, prompting plans to draft a letter expressing the City's opposition to state representatives. The contingency line item within the budget, traditionally set aside for unforeseen expenses, saw a decrease in 2024, signaling a shift towards a more conservative approach. Mr. Grogran hinted at potential changes for the FY25 budget, emphasizing the City Council's role in allocating contingency funds. Concerns were raised regarding fluctuations in revenue, with the Department of Revenue's recalibration cited as a contributing factor.

City Clerk Budget Presentation:

City Clerk Ms. Sue McMillan delivered a comprehensive presentation on the City Clerk's Office budget. Ms. McMillan provided detailed insights into the workload and responsibilities managed by the office's two full-time staff members. She highlighted the considerable time and resources dedicated to handling Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, with 125 individuals making requests, with a total of 256 responses fulfilled. Notably, two individuals were responsible for 56 of these responses.

Additionally, Ms. McMillan outlined the office's involvement in processing licenses and fees, managing agendas, and overseeing business agenda items for approval. Ms. McMillan also highlighted that the Clerk’s office collects over $325,000 in license fee revenue. She discussed the implementation of three new software packages, that included CivicClerk, GovPilot and JustFOIA, aimed at enhancing efficiency and streamlining processes.

Ms. McMillan raised awareness regarding stagnant fee amounts with some being unchanged since 1995. Ms. McMillan emphasized the need for a fee study to assess and potentially adjust fee structures through a comparison and analysis before proposing fee increases.

Building Department:

Chief Building Official, Mr. Nic Maquet presented the Building Departments budget, highlighting various aspects of the department's operations and future plans. Mr. Maquet began by discussing the staffing structure, noting the roles of the Building Official, Building Inspector, and the upcoming addition of a full-time Permit Technician. He mentioned the vacancy in the Zoning Admin position, which he has absorbed due to previous staff departures.

The presentation then delved into the department's activities in FY24, including an increase in inspections and plan reviews due to a larger volume of permits being issued. Mr. Maquet emphasized the proactive approach to inspections, collaborating with Code Enforcement and the Fire Department to ensure community safety. The department also participated in programs like SmartStart with the Chamber of Commerce and worked on making code requirements more accessible to the public through website updates.

Looking ahead to FY25, the department plans to hire an additional inspector to handle the growing permit volume, particularly with anticipated commercial work at the Pekin mall. They will also cease outsourcing permit technician services, resulting in cost savings. Plans include acquiring a new truck, investing in equipment and technology for inspections, and continuing staff training and certification.

Mr. Maqwut highlighted the need to update the City's permit fee schedule, which has not been revised since 2003, and to adopt the most current building codes to improve the City's ISO rating. A lower ISO rating would lead to reduced homeowners' insurance rates.

The City Council Members expressed their appreciation for the department's efforts and discussed priorities such as updating fees, exploring options for the Solid Waste Program, and addressing recycling concerns.

Human Resources Budget Presentation:

Ms. Shelly Costa, the HR Director, provided an overview of the HR department's operations and future plans. She outlined the current composition of the HR Team, highlighting the efforts of Shannon and Adrian, who have been instrumental in managing HR responsibilities during a period of transition. Ms. Costa emphasized the complexity of managing a workforce of 380 employees across various departments and bargaining agreements.

She discussed the HR team's role in facilitating communication with over 20 service providers and ensuring compliance with regulations and policies. Ms. Costa also addressed the importance of improving communication within the organization and enhancing employee engagement and retention efforts. Notably, the HR department plans to conduct safety meetings and participate in job fairs, such as the upcoming event at the prison targeting eterans for recruitment as corrections officers.

Additionally, Ms. Costa highlighted initiatives to update job descriptions, conduct compensation reviews, and develop a comprehensive compensation strategy. She stressed the significance of recognizing and valuing employees, enhancing leader development, revising the employee handbook, and optimizing HR systems for efficiency and risk management. Ms. Costa also mentioned the upcoming implementation of a new employee assistance program and ongoing evaluations of benefit plans.

Finally, Ms. Costa emphasized the importance of continuous training and professional development to support employees in their roles effectively.

Information Technology Budget Presentation:

Mr. David Hess provided a comprehensive overview of the IT department's responsibilities and challenges. He began by detailing the hardware and software infrastructure across various city locations, highlighting the extensive network of servers, workstations, and other devices. Mr. Hess emphasized the department's role in maintaining operational efficiency and addressing emergent threats such as viruses and malware.

He discussed the staffing situation, stating that the department currently operates with only two personnel, which he highlighted as a significant challenge due to the high workload and potential for burnout. Mr. Hess proposed the addition of another staff member to alleviate these issues and bring the department closer to industry standards for staffing ratios.

Furthermore, he addressed the increasing threat landscape faced by government entities, including cyberattacks targeting critical infrastructure. Mr. Hess highlighted the potential for AI-driven malware and emphasized the importance of proactive security measures to mitigate such risks. He also discussed the need for ongoing user education and training to prevent security breaches caused by human error.

Mr. Hess concluded his presentation by highlighting the department's success in improving security awareness among city employees through training programs and testing initiatives. He expressed confidence in the department's ability to effectively manage cybersecurity threats but emphasized the ongoing need for vigilance and investment in technology and personnel.

Executive Session 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 11. Litigation and 6. The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the Public Body

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Chris Onken
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem

	Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

A motion was made by Council Member Onken seconded by Council Member Hohimer to move into Executive Session to discuss 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 11. Litigation and 6. The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the Public Body at 9:09PM. On roll call vote all presented voted Aye. Motion passed. Mayor Burress announced that no other business would take place after Executive Session.

Adjourn

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Nutter
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro-Tem Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Seeing no further business of the Council, a motion was made by Council Member Orrick seconded by Council Member Nutter to adjourn. Motion carried viva voice vote. Mayor Burress adjourned the meeting at 9:58PM.