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, JANUARY 13, 2025 AT 5:30 PM
MAYOR MARY J. BURRESS PRESIDING

Pledge of Allegiance Led By Terri Gambetti and Gary Gillis

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Terri Gambetti and Gary Gillis.

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	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	5:30 PM
Dave Nutter	City of Pekin	Council Member	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:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Approval of Minutes

4.1. City Council - Regular Meeting - December 9, 2024 5:30 PM

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer

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

Public Input

Matthew Johnson expressed concerns about the City's approach to managing and selling assets, urging adherence to fair market value and warning against symbolic sales, such as selling properties for $1. He emphasized the importance of resolving delayed financial audits, as these are critical for informed discussions and fiscal responsibility, particularly with budget season approaching. Mr. Johnson discussed past concerns regarding spending on luxury items and stressed the need for careful financial planning. Regarding the Luttickens property, he questioned the legality of actions taken, noting that the City does not yet own the property and still requires loans and Council approval. He raised concerns about a survey being approved for the property last year despite the lack of ownership and inquired whether a letter of intent exists to formalize any agreements.

Jacob Force of Force Masonry raised significant concerns about the treatment of small businesses in Pekin, particularly by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and city employees. He expressed frustration with overregulation and lack of support, citing his experience developing a property on Veterans Drive. Mr. Force explained that after completing a required 100-foot apron, additional costly requirements—including a second apron ($40,000), ADA compliance, and a fire hydrant installation ($75,000)—were imposed without prior notice, making it difficult to budget effectively. He emphasized that the City, as a subject matter expert, should have flagged these requirements earlier and criticized a ZBA member's comment implying that his financial planning was inadequate, and argued that these unexpected costs were largely due to the City's lack of clear communication. Mr. Force warned that they hinder business growth and economic development in Pekin. He noted that despite his investment of over $3.7 million in the property, he might cease development due to these unreasonable demands. Additionally, he shared his decision to forgo TIF funding, emphasizing that he does not seek taxpayer money but instead asks for fair treatment and collaboration. Mr. Force also pointed out the economic loss Pekin could face if businesses like his are forced to relocate, citing potential reductions in sales tax, fuel tax, and property tax revenue. He argued that such barriers discourage development and urged the city to re-evaluate its codes and approach to supporting small businesses.

Motion to exend Mr. Force an additional 5 minutes to speak.

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

Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Mr. Force also addressed a separate issue involving a city employee who made baseless claims about a potential landslide on a project for a city council member. This prompted the client to hire a third-party engineer, whose findings aligned with Force’s original calculations, disproving the city employee’s assertions. Mr. Force criticized the unprofessional behavior and lack of factual basis, further eroding his trust in city operations. Concluding, Mr. Force urged the city to reassess its policies and practices, warning that failure to do so would lead to a decline in economic growth and community development, likening Pekin’s trajectory to struggling cities like Decatur or Galesburg.

John McNish thanked the council for fixing the ADA ramp lighting but criticized their decision to limit public input to five minutes. He accused Councilmembers Abel, Hohimer, Nutter, and Mayor Burress of raising taxes and fees while neglecting public interests. Mr. McNish called out Councilmember Onken’s absence during a tied vote on a 1% grocery tax referendum, implying it was deliberate to avoid campaign repercussions.He listed grievances, including creating TIF districts, increasing utility and property taxes, approving unbalanced budgets, and relocating the homeless to the South Side without clear planning. Mr. McNish criticized costly property purchases, overdue audits, and delays in maintaining city facilities, such as the ADA ramp lighting.

Charles Curto addressed concerns about code enforcement in Pekin, highlighting issues of unfair treatment and excessive fines. He claimed the department unfairly targets property owners, using selective photos to justify fines as high as $2,000 without discussing issues or understanding the context. Mr. Curto expressed frustration over perceived pressure to tear down homes, despite one property being a well-maintained house he purchased with a clean title.He recounted challenges, such as hiring licensed electricians for work that was later blocked by code enforcement, preventing utilities like electricity and water from being activated. Additionally, garbage services refused to collect from his property due to alleged code issues but continued charging fees. Mr. Curto emphasized that these actions discourage investment in Pekin, stating he would no longer purchase or rehabilitate properties in the city. He urged the council to investigate the department.

Kevin Bresnahan spoke about owning property next to Jake Force on Veterans Drive, expressing support for Force's points and ideas, and commending him as a good neighbor. Mr. Bresnahan stated he intends to maintain his property as it is. He also recognized Chief Building Official Nic Maquet and City Engineer Josie Esker for being fair and cooperative, noting his positive experiences with them.Another taxpayer raised concerns about the 1% food tax and questioned the city’s decision to loan $5 million for the Bergner's property to the Cullinans. They voiced opposition, stating they do not grant permission for such financial actions and encouraged the council to explore alternative financial plans.

Consent Agenda

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

City Manager John Dossey provided an update on Item 6.11, regarding the emergency purchase and installation of radios for the public safety radio system. The radios were needed after the system began failing on the police side during the summer, requiring them to switch to alternative communications. The fire department was later informed by the NTSB about concerns regarding a potential catastrophic failure of the old system, prompting the emergency installation. Though initially planned, the installation had to be expedited. The policy authorizing the emergency purchase required a follow-up report, which was delayed due to the absence of Fire Chief Reeise. The updated invoice, presented at the meeting, revealed that the cost ended up being lower than initially estimated.

Council Member Hilst made a request to pull Item 6.2 Accounts Payable Report off Consent Agenda and move to the end of New Business to be voted on separately.

6.1. Financial Reports November 2024

6.3. Pekin Fire Department Monthly Incidents December 2024

6.4. Police Department Monthly Statistics-November 2024

6.5. Police Department Monthly Statistics-December 2024

6.6. Building Department Permit Report December 2024

6.7. Receive and File Traffic Safety Committee November 2024 Meeting Minutes

6.8. Receive and File Submittals for the RFP for the Acquisition and Development of the 57 Acre City Owned Property on Hanna Drive

6.9. Receive and File Bids for Airport Fuel Tank Replacement

6.10. Receive and File Submittals for RFP for Wage Compensation Study

6.11. Receive and File Payment to Supreme Radio Communications, Inc. for

Installation of Emergency Communication Equipment.

Communications, Petitions, Reports

7.1. City of Pekin Bicentennial - Terri Gambetti and Gary Gillis

Gary Gillis and Terri Gambetti, co-chairs of the Pekin Bicentennial Committee, provided an overview of the events that marked the community's 200th anniversary. The committee, formed in 2022, envisioned multiple celebrations reflecting Pekin's history and growth. These included a variety of community-led events throughout 2024, such as the State of the City address, German fest, downtown street fair, historical tours, and performances like the Bicentennial Chorus and “Journey into the Vale.”Mr. Gillis shared the extensive history-focused efforts, such as podcasts, history columns, and a bicentennial book, emphasizing how they brought the Pekin story to life. He highlighted the creation of a monthly publication, "Hometown Voice," a bicentennial website, and a time capsule as lasting legacies.
Ms. Terri Gambetti acknowledged the contributions of committee members and volunteers, listing names of those who played key roles in making the celebration a success. She also encouraged others to document their own personal histories, sharing a family history book written by her late father as inspiration. Gary Gillis concluded by thanking the city council, administration, the Chamber of Commerce, and the community for their support throughout the year-long celebration.

Mayor Burress expressed immense gratitude to Gary Gillis and Terri Gambetti for their dedication and time in organizing the Pekin Bicentennial celebrations.

The Mayor announced that on January 28 at 7:00 AM, a State of the City address would take place at the Pekin Library, where Congressman Darin LaHood would present a proclamation honoring the Bicentennial.

Executive Session 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 6. The Setting of a Price for Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body

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

Council moved into Executive Session to discuss 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 6. The Setting of a Price for Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body at 6:42 PM.

New Business

9.1. Ordinance No. 4262-24/25 Approving an Option and Sale Agreement with Ambient Fuels for the Sale and Development of City-Owned Property at 300 Hanna Drive

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

The City Council is considering Ordinance No. 4262-24/25, which would approve an option and sale agreement with Ambient Fuels for the sale and development of 47 acres of city-owned property at 300 Hanna Drive in the Riverway Business Park. Ambient Fuels, a green energy developer, plans to build a methanol plant with an estimated value of $550 million.

The proposed agreement includes a two-year option for Ambient Fuels to purchase the property for $1 million, with quarterly payments starting at $7,500 per quarter in the first year and increasing to $16,750 in the second year. The city will retain 10 acres of the property for future development.

Ambient Fuels intends to utilize a carbon dioxide transmission line for their process, which will be inbound into the plant, not sequestered or emitted into the ground. One crucial element in this project is the use of carbon dioxide (CO_2), but it’s essential to clarify that this is not a CO_2 pipeline project as some might think. Unlike traditional CO_2 pipelines, which are typically used for transporting CO_2 out of plants, Ambient Fuels intends to use CO_2 as an input into their production process. This project is expected to generate substantial tax revenue, with an estimated $16.5 million in real estate taxes annually post-development. Additionally, it is expected to create 25 permanent full-time jobs and 5,200 temporary construction jobs.

The city will enter into the two-year option with Ambient Fuels, during which the company will conduct further due diligence. If all conditions are met, Ambient will proceed with the purchase and begin the development process. The project is set to be developed over an estimated six and a half years, and the city will need to approve a separate TIF agreement and zoning requests in the future. Staff recommends approval of the option and sale agreement, which will help spur industrial development and enhance the desirability of the Riverway Business Park.

Council Member Nutter acknowledged emails from concerned citizens, stating this is only a purchase option approval and further questions will be addressed later.

Council Member Orrick asked if Ambient Fuels is the broker or developer. Emily Wolf, a representative of Ambient Fuel on the phone line, confirmed Ambient will own and operate the facility, potentially with a co-development partner for methanol technology. Council Member Orrick also clarified that all CO_2 would be imported via a small-diameter, low-pressure pipeline, with no CO_2 generation on-site.

Council Member Abel inquired about potential partnerships with local suppliers like Alto Ingredients for CO_2 and asked about job salary ranges. Ms. Wolf confirmed discussions with Alto and noted jobs would be high-paying, head-of-household positions.

Council Member Hohimer raised concerns about the project exceeding "light industrial" zoning. Chief Building Official Nic Maquet clarified that the property was rezoned to general industrial in 2023.

Council Member Hilst asked about water supply and wastewater management. Ms. Wolf mentioned they are evaluating water wells or the Illinois Water Authority and will likely connect to the city's wastewater system, with minimal environmental impact expected.

9.2. Resolution No. 224-24/25 Adopting Policy No. 29, Hotel Incentive Policy

RESULT:	**PASSED (6 TO 1)**
MOVER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken
NAYS:	Council Member Hilst

Economic Development Director Josh Wray introduced the policy, explaining its goal to help local hotels compete for larger events by offering rebates to offset third-party housing commissions. Mr. Wray explained that this policy is funded solely by the Tourism Fund, which is supported by hotel tax revenue.

Cindy Galyean, General Manager of the Hampton Inn in Pekin, provided an overview, emphasizing the importance of keeping room rates competitive to attract larger groups. She explained that third-party housing entities charge commissions, requiring rebates to secure bids. She cited an example where Pekin's rates need to remain in the $149-$159 range to compete with Peoria's average of $199. Ms. Galyean emphasized that without support, Pekin hotels may not bid on larger events due to third-party housing commissions, which can range from $10 to $27 per room.

Council Member Orrick clarified that the policy would not require hotels to raise rates unnecessarily. Ms. Galyean confirmed, emphasizing its goal to keep rates competitive.

Council Member Hohimer mentioned a prior instance where Pekin lost an event to another community due to rate increases for rebates. Ms. Galyean confirmed that tournaments in Pekin often face challenges with third-party housing commissions.

Mayor Burress noted large bowling tournaments in the city, and Council Member Abel recalled recurring paintball tournaments, which generate local economic activity.

Council Member Onken mentioned the Pekin Holiday Tournament as another example of impactful events.

Council Member Nutter inquired about the rise of third-party housing commissions and how bids advertise Pekin. Ms. Galyean explained that these entities promote hotel availability and rates to event planners.

Council Member Orrick asked about the role of PAVCB (Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau). Ms. Galyean acknowledged their involvement but suggested their support for Pekin has diminished over time.

Mr. Wray outlined key policy provisions, proposing a rebate of up to $15 per room per night after commissions, with stipulations that hotels must not be in poor standing and no single hotel can claim more than 50% of the funds annually. Events must book at least 10 room nights to qualify. He estimated $125,000 would be allocated for the program.

Council Member Orrick noted that downtown street events are not typically overnight tourism drivers, while Mr. Wray clarified that state law encourages funds to focus on events promoting overnight stays.

Council Member Nutter questioned the potential burden of the policy on Ms. Galyean's workload. Mr. Wray acknowledged a balance would be required.

Council Member Abel emphasized the policy’s focus on generating economic activity through “beds in heads” and clarified that it does not involve taxpayer funds directly.

9.3. Resolution No. 225-24/25 Approving a Service Agreement with MGT of America Consulting, LLC (formerly GovHR) to Perform a Wage Compensation Study

RESULT:	**PASSED (4 TO 3)**
MOVER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken
NAYS:	Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick

City Manager John Dossey introduced the resolution, explaining that an RFP was issued on October 11, 2024, to conduct a wage compensation study for 42 non-bargained positions within the City. Eight proposals were received, ranging from $24,500 to $48,800. The study’s deliverables include updated or new job descriptions, salary range recommendations based on market data, and the development of a compensation policy that incorporates a salary schedule, comparable community data, and pay practices aligned with the City's goals. The City recommended MGT of America Consulting, LLC (formerly GovHR) due to its experience with the public sector, competitive cost, and comprehensive deliverables. The cost of the project is $28,830, subject to adjustments based on the final number of job descriptions, which are priced at $250 each. MGT will also provide support at no additional cost for one year following contract execution.

HR Director Shelly Costa emphasized the importance of the study, noting that the last salary study was conducted in 2015 and that best practices suggest performing such studies every seven years. She stated that this project would help establish a process for maintaining compensation practices in the future.

Council Member Hilst raised questions about the budget allocation, particularly the categorization of expenses under "Other Contractual Services." Finance Director Eric Dubrowski clarified that the budget was built at the category level, with $50,000 allocated for this purpose. Ms. Costa added that this category also includes costs for recruiting services and pre-employment screening. Finance Consultant Bob Grogan confirmed that the $30,000 for the wage study would come from this line item.

Council Member Nutter questioned the reliance on external consultants for job descriptions and raised concerns about the contract's three-year term and automatic renewal clause.

Shelly Costa explained that MGT specializes in municipality-specific services in Illinois and possesses the tools and expertise necessary to ensure accurate and detailed job descriptions.

City Attorney Jim Vasselli clarified that while the agreement includes an automatic renewal clause, the City could approve the contract as amended and send a letter of intent to prevent renewal if desired.

Council Member Onken inquired about the feasibility of completing the study in-house as proposed by Council Member Nutter and questioned what that process would look like. Ms. Costa explained that the process would require approximately 18 weeks for MGT, and completing it internally would be highly time-consuming and lack the necessary tools and resources. Mr. Dossey added that ensuring the study's accuracy is essential to avoid potential legal issues in the future.

9.4. Ordinance No 4263-24/25 Approving Lease Agreement with State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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

City Manager John Dossey explained that the ordinance represents a renewal of the lease agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for the property where the "Welcome to Pekin" signs are located on Route 29. Mr. Dossey noted that there is no fee associated with this agreement, and it is simply a continuation of the existing arrangement.

Council Member Hilst asked if the City maintains the property by hiring contractors to mow it. Mr. Dossey confirmed that this is correct, stating that the maintenance is done in exchange for the ability to utilize the property for the signs.

9.5. Ordinance No. 4264-24/25 Approving a Pekin Court Street Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District Redevelopment Agreement with Robert J. and Kimberly Stanley

RESULT:	**PASSED (6 TO 1)**
MOVER:	Council Member Dave Nutter
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken
NAYS:	Council Member Hilst

City Manager John Dossey presented the redevelopment agreement with Robert and Kimberly Stanley, who recently closed on the property at 1919 Velde Drive. The Stanleys are seeking incentives under the residential TIF policy for the construction of a new home with a total investment of $390,895, including $40,000 of TIF-eligible expenses. Under the policy, the Stanleys may receive up to $40,000 in property tax increment rebates over a maximum of 10 years, depending on their eligible expenses and the new property assessment after project completion.

Council Member Orrick raised a concern about the impact on all real estate taxing bodies, noting they would lose income if the property were not included in the TIF district.

Economic Development Director Josh Wray clarified that if the house were built without the TIF, collectively $39,000 would go to taxing bodies over time, but under the TIF agreement, those funds would instead be rebated to the property owner.

Finance Consultant Bob Grogan explained that without the TIF, schools and other entities do not receive additional funds from new developments because levies are capped, and TIF simply reallocates the increment.

Council Member Orrick reiterated that taxpayers ultimately bear the burden of the TIF incentives.

Mr. Wray emphasized that the additional $39,000 generated through the TIF would not be available for additional levies if the property were outside the TIF district.

9.6. Ordinance No. 4265-24/25 Approving Purchase of Property at 1013 Court Street

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, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken

City Manager John Dossey explained that the ordinance seeks approval to purchase a portion of the property at 1013 Court Street, owned by McDonald's, as part of the Court Street construction project. The City requires this strip of land to construct wider sidewalks along the corridor. An appraisal valued the land and easements at $22,195, which the City offered and the owner accepted. The purchase requires Council approval as it exceeds the City Engineer's spending authority for land acquisitions related to this project. Staff recommends approval.

City Engineer Josie Esker provided updates, stating that after this purchase is finalized, the remaining acquisition in this section involves CVS. For the section from 10th Street to Stadium Drive, there are a few outstanding properties that may be addressed during executive discussions.

Council Member Orrick inquired about how permanent easement prices are determined. Ms. Esker explained that a qualified, IDOT-certified appraiser determines the valuation, and the City offers at least the appraised amount. Donations are requested when possible, as with the Park District and the hospital. However, larger entities like McDonald's typically incur comparable costs in legal review.

Council Member Abel questioned the necessity of replacing the sidewalk in front of McDonald's, noting its relatively new condition and ADA compliance. Ms. Esker clarified that the existing sidewalk is 5 feet wide, meeting ADA requirements. However, IDOT standards for federally funded projects mandate 6-foot-wide sidewalks. Compliance with these standards is required to avoid liability issues when using IDOT funding.

9.7. Resolution No. ~~426-24/25~~ 226-24/25 Updating Policy No. 7 City of Pekin Policy for Funding the Fire Pension Fund & Policy No. 14 - City of Pekin Policy for Funding the Police Pension Fund

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

City Finance Director Eric Dubrowski presented updates with a Power Point presentation to Policy No. 7 (Fire Pension Fund) and Policy No. 14 (Police Pension Fund) to clarify funding practices and improve council oversight. The proposed changes ensure pension contributions align with actuarial recommendations, eliminating ambiguities in the current policies. Historical data from valuation years 2015 to 2024 highlighted trends in pension funding, including instances where contributions fell short of actuarial recommendations. The fire pension fund remains underfunded at 46.2% as of FY24, while the police pension fund is in better shape at 69.7% as of FY21. Mr. Durbrowski detailed the inherent two-year lag between fiscal valuation and fund contributions, emphasizing the importance of transparency and clear language to guide council decisions. The updated policies require staff to present the full actuarial recommendation, alternative minimum contribution figures, and a percentage above the alternative minimum (105% for Fire, 103% for Police) during budget preparation, allowing council discretion to adjust contributions.

Council Member Hilst sought clarification on the revised policies, asking whether they would still allow council flexibility in adjusting contributions. Mr. Durbrowski confirmed that the updated policies preserve council authority to increase or decrease contributions but ensure the full actuarial recommendation is the baseline for discussion.

Council Member Hilst expressed concern about funding sources if council opts to increase contributions beyond current allocations from the tax levy, cannabis tax, and other revenues. Mr. Dubrowski acknowledged this challenge, explaining that such adjustments might necessitate using reserves or reducing other expenditures to create capacity.

Council Member Hilst also noted that raising the tax levy may limit flexibility in sourcing additional pension funding. Mr. Dubrowski affirmed that while the levy provides significant funding, it does not cover all pension contributions, which are supplemented by other revenue streams.

Bob Grogan, a finance consultant, provided context for the revisions, explaining that previous policy language left room for misinterpretation. For example, contributions were calculated as a percentage of the minimum required funding rather than the recommended funding. The updated policies eliminate this ambiguity by specifying the recommended contribution as the baseline for percentages, ensuring alignment with actuarial advice and preventing future misunderstandings.

Council Member Hilst expressed support for the revisions, emphasizing the importance of council discretion while addressing the potential funding challenges posed by increasing contributions.

9.8. Ordinance No. 4266-24/25 Rejecting All Bids Submitted for the Airport Fuel Tank Replacement Project

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

Ordinance No. 4266-24/25 proposes rejecting all bids for the Airport Fuel Tank Replacement Project due to significantly higher costs than the original engineering estimates. Interim Airport Manager Mike Cruce explained that the bids exceeded expectations based on comparable projects. Staff intends to clarify any misunderstandings with the sole bidder, separate the project into two components—installation of a new fuel tank and removal of the old one—and solicit additional bids.

Council Member Nutter inquired about the plan to rebid the project. Mr. Cruce responded that the team plans to address misunderstandings with the current bidder and separate the project into two distinct portions to encourage more competitive bidding. While regulations require the old tanks to be removed, this portion will be handled alongside the installation of the new tank.

Council Member Hilst asked for clarification about the separation of the project. Mr. Cruce confirmed that the plan is to treat the installation and removal as distinct components, ensuring compliance with regulations that mandate tank removal. He also noted that the project is under an extension.

Council Member Orrick raised concerns about airport fuel pricing, noting that it is reportedly priced at $0.10 below cost per gallon. Mr. Cruce explained that the pricing strategy aims to maintain competitiveness with other local airports while ensuring a targeted profitable margin based on input costs. Council Member Orrick suggested the need to review the airport's fuel pricing policy to ensure it aligns with strategic objectives and profitability goals. Mr. Cruce agreed, mentioning that policy discussions on this topic occur periodically.

6.2. Accounts Payable Paid Proof List thru January 7, 2025

RESULT:	**PASSED (4 TO 3)**
MOVER:	Council Member Rick Hilst
SECONDER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken
NAYS:	Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick

Council Member Hilst voiced opposition to approving the list, citing disagreement with the payment for the expired mowing contract.

Council Member Nutter pointed out the challenge of receiving AP lists only after payments have already been processed, emphasizing the need for better oversight. He expressed agreement with Council Member Hilst, noting that this specific list contained items warranting further investigation.

Finance Director Eric Dubrowski, confirmed that AP records are reviewed retrospectively.

The Council raised concerns about the need for closer scrutiny of contract expirations and the timing of payments to ensure compliance with agreed terms. Further investigation into the questioned payment was recommended.

Executive Session 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)

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

10.1. 2. Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and Its Employees or Their Representatives, or Deliberations Concerning Salary Schedules for One or More Classes of Employees

A motion was made by Council Member Onken seconded by Council Member Orrick to move into Executive Session to discuss 5 ILCS (c) 2. Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and Its Employees or Their Representatives, or Deliberations Concerning Salary Schedules for One or More Classes of Employees at 8:15 PM. On roll call vote all present voted Aye. Motion carried.

10.2. 5. The Purchase or Lease of Real Property for the Use of the Public Body

A motion was made by Council Member Onken seconded by Council Member Orrick to move into Executive Session to discuss 5 ILCS (c) 5. The Purchase or Lease of Real Property for the Use of the Public Body at 8:15 PM. On roll call vote all present voted Aye. Motion carried.

10.3. 6. The Setting of a Price for Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body

A motion was made by Council Member Onken seconded by Council Member Orrick to move into Executive Session to discuss 5 ILCS (c) 6. The Setting of a Price for Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body at 8:15 PM. On roll call vote all present voted Aye. Motion carried.

Any Other Business To Come Before The Council

Council Member Hilst inquired about the status of traffic lights at Allentown Road and Court. City Engineer Josie Esker clarified that the lights are temporary, as there are no sensors currently installed. Ameren still needs to hook up power at Allentown and Stadium, and the delay is waiting for that connection, which is expected within two weeks.

Council Member Hilst also brought up concerns about Parkway and Court, where Ms. Esker explained there have been complaints related to the lack of crosswalks and adjustments to the green arrow settings to accommodate pedestrian safety.

City Manager Dossey reminded everyone about a firefighter swearing-in ceremony scheduled for 9 a.m. the following day.

Council Member Onken addressed misconceptions from comments made by Mr. McNish in the previous meeting. He explained his absence was due to a work commitment and clarified that his volunteer assistant cannot lead a team independently. He stated he was not instructed to stay away from the meeting and affirmed that he would have voted "No" on the topic under discussion. He clarified that the matter in question was not a new tax but an existing one. Additionally, regarding his campaign, he acknowledged running for office again and encouraged citizens dissatisfied with his performance to vote accordingly.

11.1. Budget Presentations: Fire Department, Foreign Fire Fund, Tourism Fund, City Clerk's Office, and General Budget Discussion.

RESULT:	**TABLED TO JANUARY 27, 2025 COUNCIL MEETING (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Dave Nutter
SECONDER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Onken

Adjourn

There being no further business to come to the Council a motion was made by Council Member Nutter seconded by Council Member Onken to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried viva voce vote. Mayor Burress adjourned the meeting at 9:35 PM.

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