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, APRIL 14, 2025 AT 5:30 PM
MAYOR MARY J. BURRESS PRESIDING

Pledge of Allegiance - Led by "40 Under 40" Award Recipient Baylee Gambetti

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by "40 Under 40" Award recipient Baylee Gambetti.

Mayor Burress recognized Baylee Gambetti as a recipient of the “40 Under 40” Leadership Award, praising her community involvement, including work with the Marigold Festival and Smart Start. She was commended for her dedication and was presented with the Mayor’s Challenge Coin. Ms. Gambetti expressed gratitude, stating she is proud to continue serving the Pekin communi

Call to Order

City Clerk, Ms. Sue McMillan, confirmed all Council Members were physically present and logged in except for Council Member Onken who was absent.

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	Absent	-:--

Approve Agenda

A motion was made by Council Member Orrick seconded by Council Member Nutter to approve the agenda as amended.

RESULT:	**PASSED (5 TO 1)**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Council Member Dave Nutter
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer

NAYS:	Council Member Hilst
ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

A motion was made by Council Member Hilst seconded by Council Member Nutter to layover 8.4 Approving the Annual FY26 Budget to April 28, 2025. Motion failed.

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

A motion was made by Council Member Hohimer seconded by Council Member Abel to move agenda item 8.9 Resolution No. 269-24/25 Authorizing the Execution of a Professional Services Agreement with Hera Property Registry, LLC to 4.4. City Attorney Jim Vasselli clarified that the item should be moved to a line item prior to Public Input. Mayor Burress announced that the item would be moved to 8.0.

A motion was made Council Member Hohimer seconded Council Member Abel to move agenda item 8.9 to 8.0.

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
SECONDER:	Council Member John Abel
AYES:	Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Council Member Abel, Council Member Hohimer and Mayor Burress
ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

Approval of Minutes

RESULT:	**PASSED (5 TO 0) TO 1**
MOVER:	Council Member Lloyd Orrick
SECONDER:	Council Member Dave Nutter
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer
ABSTAIN:	Council Member Rick Hilst
ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

4.1. City Council - Regular Meeting Minutes - March 24, 2025

4.2. City Council - Special Budget Work Session Meeting Minutes - April 3, 2025

4.3. City Council - Special Meeting Minutes - March 28, 2025

Public Input

Mr. Matthew Johnson spoke in opposition to the proposed moratorium on ground-mounted solar panels under agenda item 8.5. He urged the Council to vote it down or delay it until October, citing the summer season as the ideal time for installation and the rising cost of utilities. He argued residents should have the right to install panels on their property.

Mr. John McNish asked for clarification on the public hearing process. He also raised concerns about agenda item 8.7, questioning additional funding for a property that installed a non-compliant ADA bathroom and needs roof repairs. He expressed frustration over homelessness in his neighborhood and urged the city to take action.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Orrick read the 7 items listed on the Consent Agenda.

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
ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

6.1. Accounts Payable Paid Proof List thru April 4, 2025

6.2. Pekin Fire Department Monthly Incident Report March 2025

6.3. Pekin Police Department Monthly Statistics March 2025

6.4. Building Department Permit Report March 2025

6.5. Receive and File RFP Submittals for the Management of a Vacant and Foreclosed Property Registration Program

6.6. Receive and File City of Pekin, Illinois Single Audit Report for the Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 2022 prepared by Lauterbach & Amen, LLP

6.7. Resolution No. 263-24/25 Approving the Appointment of Simon Grimm as Member to Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) Technical Committee

Public Hearing

7.1. Budget Hearing for Fiscal Year May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026

Mayor Burress opened the budget hearing at 5:53 PM.

A motion was made by Council Member Orrick, seconded by Council Member Nutter, to open the Budget Hearing for Fiscal Year May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026.

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
ABSENT:	Council Member Chris Onken

Finance Director Eric Dubrowski gave an overview of the proposed FY26 budget, noting a shift toward transparency, collaboration, and modernization. He highlighted a reduction in the general fund deficit from $5 million to $140,000 and detailed various fund balances, including special revenue, enterprise, internal service, and fiduciary funds. He introduced four proposed adjustments, including corrections and reallocations, which would result in a slight general fund surplus of $9,557.

Council Member Nutter expressed concern about what appeared to be duplicated street department salaries in the Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) budget and questioned the allocation given a prior resolution dedicating $1.4 million in MFT funds to Court Street. Mr. Wray clarified the MFT allocation process and noted further resolutions would be needed. Mr. Grogan explained the salary breakdowns were estimates based on historical labor divisions and were allowable under state policy.

Council Member Orrick questioned the proposed $200,000 outsourcing for sewer inspections and criticized the lack of visible street maintenance, such as crosswalk painting and road repairs. He asked whether the city had eliminated roadwork funds typically used for local street improvements, expressing concern over the city's deteriorating roads.

Council Member Hilst expressed concerns about the lack of clarity and progress in the Street Department's plans for 2024. He noted that projects from the previous year remained unfinished, and the current budget lacked references to equipment and maintenance plans, such as crack filling, spray patching, or use of the manhole machine. He also questioned the allocation of TIF funds toward the Veterans Drive extension, pointing out that the property involved had not yet been fully annexed into the city.

Economic Development Director Josh Wray responded that about a third of the property is already annexed and within the East Residential TIF district, and the funds in question were designated for engineering costs, with the city covering 20% as part of a grant agreement. He added that if more of the property is annexed and included in a TIF district, additional funding could become available.

Mayor Burress clarified that the shift of funding to Broadway was not a staff decision, but rather a result of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission awarding grant funding based on project scoring, with Broadway receiving a high score. The Mayor emphasized that Derby Street had been included in past grant applications but had scored lower due to its classification as a local road.

Council Member Hilst questioned why, despite Derby being prioritized in past Council discussions, it did not receive grant funding and expressed frustration that ongoing projects like Derby Street are being overlooked in favor of new projects. He pointed out that even as the city continues to pay for engineering expenses related to Derby, no capital funds are being reserved to complete it. Council Member Hilst warned that this could result in Derby Street being indefinitely delayed and eventually forgotten.

Mayor Burress assured Council Member Hilst that Derby Street is not being forgotten. She explained the complexity of grant funding decisions and reinforced that city staff had followed proper procedures in applying for available opportunities.

Council Member Hilst sought clarification on the proposed $12.5 million loan, asking if it was intended to make a single payment to purchase the remainder of the property. Mr. Wray confirmed that was correct.

Council Member Hilst then questioned the unknowns surrounding the loan, including the interest rate and term, noting that while these details hadn't been finalized, any such loan would inevitably come with interest. He expressed concern over the shift from the originally approved four-year, interest-free seller-financed payment plan to a potentially costly bank-financed loan, warning that the result would be increased taxpayer burden. He pointed out the uncertainty of future development or land sales, stating that letters of intent from developers are not guarantees and emphasized that the only certainty would be taxpayers paying more due to interest. He recalled that when the property acquisition was first approved, the Council was told it would not involve a loan and invited correction if his recollection was inaccurate.

Mr. Bob Grogan explained that preliminary discussions had been held with a bank and that estimated loan terms and interest rates had been obtained, although nothing had been finalized. He noted that the first payment on the loan would likely not be due until the following budget cycle, allowing the City to receive the disbursement and make the purchase now. He added that as land is sold, the loan principal would be reduced accordingly. Mr. Wray added that the next scheduled payment on the property was $7 million and that there was no feasible way to absorb that cost within the general fund in the current budget. He clarified that the administration was considering a loan for this reason, but emphasized that Council would ultimately decide whether or not to pursue that borrowing.

Mr. Neil Burks, an audience member, expressed concern about the proposed loan, indicating support for the original seller-financed arrangement. He noted that the original plan was a fiscally responsible approach and questioned the decision to change course, stating that doing so would place an unnecessary financial burden on taxpayers due to added interest. Mr. Burks encouraged the Council to reconsider whether the loan was truly necessary and to be mindful of the long-term financial impact.

The discussion continued with Mr. Dubrowski confirming that $5 million in departmental budget requests had been cut during the budget process and that those cuts were documented online. He expressed confidence in the City's efforts, including its potential $58 million earmark for the Veterans Drive extension, which is currently on a regional planning priority list.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:47 PM.

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
ABSENT:	Council Member Chris Onken

New Business

8.9. Resolution No. 269-24/25 Authorizing the Execution of a Professional Services Agreement with Hera Property Registry, LLC

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Rick Hilst
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
ABSENT:	Council Member Chris Onken

City Manager John Dossey introduced Resolution No. 269-24/25, authorizing execution of a professional services agreement with Hera Property Registry, LLC Mr. Dossey, reminded Council that this agreement is the implementation piece for Ordinance No. 424-24/25, approved in January, which established the registration of vacant and foreclosed properties. He then deferred to Mr. Maquet for details.

Chief Building Official Nic Maquet explained that the City issued an RFP and received two acceptable proposals, with Hera ultimately selected due to higher scoring and strong recommendations from nearby communities, including East Peoria. Under the agreement, property owners will pay a $300 semiannual registration fee for each property, of which Hera retains $125 and remits the balance to the City monthly. Hera will also manage fee collection, maintain a web-based tracking platform accessible to staff, and assist in locating property owners, reducing staff time previously spent on these efforts. The initial term is two years with the option to extend.

Council Member Hohimer and others noted this registry would improve the City's ability to track foreclosures, pursue enforcement or demolition when needed, and shift property maintenance burdens (such as mowing) back to mortgage holders. Mr. Maquet added that the agreement's implementation would support returning properties to the market and the tax rolls.

Mr. Stan Urban from Hera spoke to Council, emphasizing the registry's value, stating Hera functions like adding 20–25 staff members without cost to the City. He shared that Pekin had 298 foreclosures in the past 12 months, compared to only 49 identified earlier, and warned of a further rise after the foreclosure moratorium ends in 2026. He explained that Hera only contacts banks regarding foreclosures, not residents, and that vacancy cases will be handled through cooperation with City staff. He highlighted Hera's 97% foreclosure collection rate and stressed that their services require no payment from the City, only revenue generation.

8.1. Resolution No. 264-24/25 Approving a Cost of Living Adjustment for Non-Union Employees in the FY26 Budget

RESULT:	**FAILED (3 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
NAYS:	Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick
ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

Finance Director Eric Dubrowski presented Resolution No. 264-24/25, authorizing a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for non-union employees for Fiscal Year 2026 in conjunction with the budget process. Mr. Dubrowski explained that the 3% COLA is based on the February 2025 inflation rate and is consistent with recent union contract agreements, including those with Police and Teamsters unions, which also included 3% COLA increases. No merit increases are included in the current budget—only the COLA. Mr. Dubrowski noted that each 1% increase costs approximately $41,367, with the total cost of the 3% COLA at $124,100, spread across the entire city budget.

8.2. Resolution No. 265-24/25 Amending the City Fund Balance and Cash Reserve Policy

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
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 Hilst, Council Member Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer
ABSENT:	Council Member Chris Onken

Council discussed Resolution No. 265-24/25 for fiscal year 2024-2025, updating the City's Fund Balance and Cash Reserve Policy. Mr. Dubrowski explained the importance of distinguishing between fund balance, which reflects total resources including non-spendable items, and cash balance, which is the liquid amount available to pay expenses. He emphasized that while a fund may look healthy on paper, a lack of actual cash can still cause operational issues.

Finance Consultant Bob Grogan explained that the City's previous policy allowed reserves to fall as low as ten percent, which auditors flagged as too low. The new policy sets a stronger standard of twenty-five percent or three months of operating expenses in cash reserves, aligning with professional best practices. If reserves drop below that for a prolonged time, staff must report the issue and potential solutions to Council. Conversely, if cash reserves stay above six months, staff should recommend reallocating excess funds, such as for capital projects.

Mr. Grogan also addressed interfund borrowings, noting that the General Fund appears inflated because it contains IOUs from other funds like sewerage, garbage, and the airport. These borrowings occurred without formal Council approval in the past. Staff plans to return within six months with a repayment strategy for these internal debts.

Council Member Orrick questioned the legitimacy of the garbage fund's debt, citing past forgiveness when the City took over garbage operations. Mr. Grogan confirmed that new debts have accumulated since then due to operational shortfalls. As of February, the garbage fund owed about $2.7 million to the General Fund.

Council Member Nutter asked if future reports would show reserve percentages, which Mr. Grogan confirmed.

Council Member Hilst asked for clarification after noticing differing percentages in the packet. Finance Consultant Bob Grogan explained that while the fund balance is around thirty-five percent, it includes non-liquid assets such as interfund IOUs. The cash balance—money available to pay expenses—is currently about twenty-five percent. The updated policy sets this twenty-five percent as the new minimum target for the General Fund's cash reserve, replacing the previous ten percent standard.

Council Member Hilst continued asking what percentage would trigger recommendations for spending or reallocation. Mr. Grogan said that if the cash balance exceeds fifty percent or six months of expenditures for a sustained period, staff must present options to Council, such as allocating excess to capital projects or paying down debt. He emphasized the need for strong reserves to manage delayed revenues during economic downturns and to provide time to respond with measures like hiring freezes or delaying purchases.

When asked if the twenty-five percent threshold came from the auditors, Mr. Grogan said they required an updated policy tailored to the City's needs but did not mandate a specific percentage.

Finance Director Dubrowski noted that sales tax-dependent communities like Pekin are more vulnerable to economic shifts and benefit from having higher reserves.

Mayor Burress stated the policy ensures Council is informed when reserves trend too high or too low so they can act accordingly. Council Member Nutter asked if this replaced the current policy. Mr. Grogan confirmed it would fully replace the outdated version, which lacked coverage of all fund types.

8.3. Ordinance No. 4290-24/25 Amending Pekin City Code Chapter 7 Taxation, to Modify the Utility Tax Provisions for Natural Gas per Ameren's Request

RESULT:	**FAILED (3 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
NAYS:	Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Orrick

ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

During the discussion of Ordinance No. 4290-24/25, which proposes amending Chapter 7 of the Pekin City Code to modify the utility tax provisions for natural gas, City Manager John Dossey turned the presentation over to Economic Development Director Josh Wray. Mr. Wray explained that the ordinance addresses a gap in the utility tax collection caused by how Ameren bills customers. Specifically, large commercial customers who procure their natural gas from third-party suppliers have not been taxed, even though the gas still flows through Ameren’s infrastructure. Ameren argued that based on state law and other municipal ordinances, they were not obligated to apply the tax unless the city’s ordinance clearly distinguished between supplier types.Mr. Wray stated that the City initially believed its ordinance already covered all distributed gas, but Ameren disagreed, and potential litigation was considered. Ultimately, the City chose to revise the ordinance to align with Ameren’s interpretation. The new ordinance imposes a natural gas use tax of $0.05 per therm—equivalent to the existing 5% tax on other customers—ensuring all users are taxed equitably. The update impacts approximately 116 primarily large commercial customers out of about 13,200 total customers in Pekin. The ordinance retains the existing $250,000 annual cap per user across all utility taxes to prevent undue burden on any single business.

Council Member Orrick raised concerns about the lack of clarity regarding which businesses are affected and questioned the impact on major employers. Mr. Wray estimated that only two or three customers might reach the annual cap and confirmed that those affected are likely large businesses capable of navigating energy procurement markets. He emphasized that the cap remains a business-friendly provision.

Council Member Nutter inquired about customers outside Pekin's corporate limits being taxed. Mr. Wray acknowledged that issue, stating that two such cases have been identified and corrective steps are now in place, including Ameren coordinating with the City to verify new customer addresses. He noted that while reimbursements could be pursued, the process is complex due to how taxes are collected and remitted by Ameren.

Mr. Wray also clarified that the gas use tax is necessary because taxing out-of-state suppliers directly would be unconstitutional. Instead, the City is imposing a use-based tax, similar to a sales tax, on the gas delivered by Ameren.

Council Member Hilst voiced opposition to the new tax, expressing concern about what he viewed as a fourth utility tax after opposing the previous three and reiterating his stance against additional taxes regardless of who they impact.

Mr. Wray concluded by reiterating that the goal is equity, as the ordinance ensures all natural gas customers contribute equally to the utility tax.

8.4. Ordinance No. 4291-24/25 Approving the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Annual Budget

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

During the presentation of Ordinance No. 4291-24/25, which approves the City of Pekin's Fiscal Year 2025–2026 annual budget, City Manager John Dossey provided a brief overview of the proposed budget. He explained that the ordinance establishes projected revenues and spending limits by fund, department, and category, and is accompanied by supporting documentation, including the general ledger accounts and the Capital Improvement Plan, which outlines intended capital projects and funding sources. Mr. Dossey clarified that although budget limits are set, all spending remains subject to the City's procurement policy and City Council approval.

Mayor Burress then opened the floor to address four previously discussed corrections to the proposed budget. Council Member Nutter confirmed that the leachate item he had raised was included. Finance Director Eric Dubrowski clarified that while the corrections were already reflected in the documents, a procedural motion was needed to formally acknowledge and include them in all final and future versions of the budget.

With the advise of City Attorney Jim Vasselli, Council Member Nutter made the motion to acknowledge the inclusion of these four corrections in the budget documents, which was seconded by Council Member Abel. After confirming the motion was procedural and not yet the adoption of the budget itself, the motion passed 6–0.

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

Further discussion followed on how the budget would be impacted by the failed utility tax ordinance and approved cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). Mr. Dubrowski stated that, although the budget currently reflected a surplus of $9,557 in the general fund, the anticipated $250,000 in utility tax revenue would no longer be collected. Meanwhile, COLA-related expenses would increase by approximately $124,000, although not all of that would impact the general fund directly. The resulting effect would be an estimated general fund deficit of around $150,000, though Mr. Dubrowski offered to provide more precise figures if requested.

8.5. Ordinance No. 4292-24/25 Approving Temporary 6-Month Moratorium on Residential Ground-Mounted Solar Array Permits

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

During discussion of Ordinance No. 4292-24/25, which proposes a temporary six-month moratorium on residential ground-mounted solar array permits, City Manager John Dossey explained that the moratorium is intended to give the Zoning Board of Appeals time to evaluate whether current code regulations are sufficient and to consider additional restrictions if necessary. The moratorium would expire automatically after six months unless repealed earlier by council action. Mr. Dossey noted staff recommended approval, and Zoning Officer Nic Maquet was available for questions.

Council Members and staff discussed a specific installation between Sheridan and Lawndale that met all code requirements but raised significant neighborhood concern. Mr. Maquet shared images of the large dual-array structure, which is approximately 30 feet long and 10 feet high, and clarified that it exceeded required setbacks.

Several Council Members, including Council Member Hohimer and Council Member Orrick, expressed concern over the aesthetics, visibility, and perceived impact on adjacent properties.

Council Member Hohimer mentioned a resident's distress over the proximity and visual impact on their elderly father's home, and other members noted similar concerns about property values and neighborhood compatibility.

Mr. Maquet confirmed that the installation was compliant and had undergone additional surveying to ensure proper setbacks. He also clarified that the lot in question is a through lot and has not been split. He noted the city had received no formal complaints about glare from the panels.

Council Member Abel suggested that consideration should be given to future technologies like solar panels that track the sun, and Council Member Hilst asked about total installation numbers. Mr. Maquet stated only two residential ground-mounted systems had been installed in the past two years.

Chief Ranney added that while ground-level installations could be more vulnerable to vandalism, the city had not experienced issues thus far. Several members emphasized the importance of proactively addressing this issue due to its growing relevance.

8.6. Resolution No. 266-24/25 Approving Annual Partnership with Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (Discover Peoria)

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

Economic Development Director Josh Wray presented Resolution No. 266-24/25, approving the annual partnership with the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (Discover Peoria). Mr. Wray explained that the proposed resolution would authorize the City of Pekin to continue its annual partnership at the $25,000 level, the same as the previous year. He outlined that Discover Peoria serves an eight-county region and works to boost local economies through marketing efforts aimed at increasing tourism, conventions, and events. Mr. Wray noted that Discover Peoria is enhancing its services this year, most notably by offering unlimited access to Placer.ai reports—a data analytics tool valued at approximately $25,000. This tool provides detailed information on visitor behavior, such as where event attendees go after visiting Pekin, offering the City a chance to better understand and cater to consumer trends. Mr. Wray emphasized the additional benefits at the $25,000 level, including articles, media content, promotional reach through the Illinois Office of Tourism, and a seat on Discover Peoria's Board of Directors. He stated that the Tourism Committee reviewed three funding options—$10,000, $20,000, and $25,000—and recommended the $25,000 level as the best value to the city. Mr. JD Dalfonso of Discover Peoria was also present to answer any questions.

8.7. Resolution No. 267-24/25 Amending Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Grant Agreement with the Pekin Outreach Initiative

RESULT:	**PASSED (UNANIMOUS)**
MOVER:	Council Member Rick Hilst
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
ABSENT:	Council Member Chris Onken

Economic Development Director Josh Wray presented Resolution Number 267-24/25, amending the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) agreement with the Pekin Outreach Initiative (POI). Mr. Wray explained that the City originally granted POI $75,000 in February 2024 to renovate space at 243 Derby, within the Salvation Army facility, for use as a day shelter for unhoused individuals. Due to setbacks, including construction delays, an extension was previously granted through July 8, 2024. An additional extension and funding were now being requested.Mr. Wray stated that POI is seeking an additional $7,950, increasing the total grant amount to $82,950. The additional funding is required to correct an ADA-compliant bathroom that was improperly constructed despite being built according to architect-drawn plans that initially appeared compliant. He clarified that the funding would come from the "homeless facilities" line item within the CDBG annual action plan and would not require HUD review or hearings, as it is not considered a substantial amendment.

Mr. Maquet, explained that while the plans were approved and construction permitted, a field inspection revealed that the actual clearances did not meet ADA standards. He admitted the city made an error, stating that the inspector who approved it was disciplined and is undergoing re-education. Due to the block wall construction, the issue could not be corrected without modification.

POI representative Greg Ranney confirmed that although only one ADA bathroom was technically required, both were renovated, and the one in question must be compliant to avoid problems if inspected by the ADA. He stated that a contractor is already lined up to correct the issue and work could be completed within two weeks if the funding is approved.

Council Member Abel commented that he initially questioned why the contractor wasn’t covering the cost but, after hearing the explanation, acknowledged the issue originated from a design flaw and inspection error rather than contractor fault.

8.8. Resolution No. 268-24/25 Approving a Leachate Disposal Agreement with GFL-Clinton

A motion was made by Council Member Hilst seconded by Council Member Abel to approve Resolution No. 268-24/25 Approving a Leachate Disposal Agreement with GFL-Clinton.

Council Member Nutter, seconded by Council Member Orrick, made a motion to amend and approve the resolution to (1) reflect the correct landfill (Clinton), and (2) include a clause for annual rate increases based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The motion passed unanimously, 6–0.

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
ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

City Manager John Dossey introduced Resolution No. 268-24/25, approving a leachate disposal agreement with GFL-Clinton, explaining that GFL Environmental operates a landfill in Clinton, Illinois, and is required to treat all leachate — water that has percolated through landfill waste and absorbed contaminants. Since GFL's Clinton facility cannot currently treat the leachate, they wish to haul it to the City of Pekin's wastewater treatment plant, similar to an existing agreement involving leachate from GFL's Hopedale landfill.

City staff tested a sample and confirmed that Pekin's facility is capable of treating the leachate. The proposed rate is $0.05 per gallon, which staff noted is still profitable compared to the approximately $0.08 per 1,000 gallons rate charged to city users. The agreement is designed to offset treatment plant costs for residents and is based on the existing Hopedale agreement.

Clarifications were made regarding the estimated revenue of $150,000 annually and the lack of a requirement for recurring annual Council approvals, as the contract renews automatically. It was also confirmed that spot testing would ensure compliance with chemical limits, and GFL would bear costs for any required additional treatment due to excessive contaminants.

Mayor Burress and Council Members raised concerns about two issues in the agreement. First, it mistakenly referenced the Hopedale landfill instead of Clinton. Second, there was no cost escalator clause to adjust the rate over time, unlike other contracts with GFL.

Council Member Nutter, seconded by Council Member Orrick, made a motion to amend the resolution to (1) reflect the correct landfill (Clinton), and (2) include a clause for annual rate increases based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The motion passed unanimously, 6–0.

City Attorney Jim Vasselli confirmed no further action was needed from the Mayor.

Any Other Business To Come Before The Council

Police Chief Ranney addressed the Council to announce the implementation of a new follow-up text messaging program for certain calls for service. He explained that citizens may receive texts after calling for service—either while officers are en route or after the incident—depending on the nature of the call. For example, property crimes and vehicle crashes will prompt a message instructing the caller on how to prepare (e.g., securing pets, listing stolen items, sharing photos or video). More sensitive calls such as sexual assaults will not receive automated texts, and domestic battery cases will receive a delayed message to the victim. The Chief emphasized the system is intended to improve service response and gather citizen feedback through short surveys.

Council Member Hohimer praised Code Enforcement Officer Paul Belcher for going above and beyond to help an elderly neighbor resolve an issue with large-item disposal, which left the neighbor extremely grateful.

Council Member Nutter asked for an update on the situation involving unhoused individuals behind Golf Green. Chief Ranney provided a detailed response, stating the property owner (Oxford, via a law firm in West Virginia) was contacted and responded promptly. Oxford granted access and began cleanup within days, hauling out several large dumpsters of debris. The property will now be monitored weekly with new paths cut for inspection. Chief Ranney reiterated the city's continuous efforts with partners to address homelessness on a case-by-case basis and emphasized there is no simple solution due to the complex needs of those affected.

Mayor Burress then invited Airport Manager Mike Cruce to provide an update on the city's air burner unit. Mr. Cruce confirmed the equipment is fully operational, works efficiently without smoke, and has high potential for storm debris cleanup and use by other agencies. Both Mayor Burress and Council Member Nutter expressed satisfaction with its performance.

Council Member Orrick asked Mr. Cruce about credit card usage and fees at the airport fuel station. Mr. Cruce confirmed that self-service fuel sales do accept credit cards, with a processing fee of around 3% built into the transaction, ensuring the city recoups the costs.

Mayor Burress concluded with remarks thanking city staff for their hard work on the budget, noting its flexible nature and importance as a fiscal guide. She also announced a new community engagement initiative—"Coffee with the Mayor"—to be held monthly, starting on the 22nd at Coffee Connection from 3–5 p.m. Each session will focus on a specific topic, with relevant staff in attendance, offering residents an opportunity to connect with city leadership in an informal setting.

Executive Session 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 2. Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and its Employees or their Representatives, 5. The Purchase or Lease of Real Property for the Use of the Public Body and 6. Setting of a Price for

Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body

A motion was made by Council Member Hohimer seconded by Council Member Orrick to move into Executive Session to discuss 5 ILCS 120/2(c.) 2. Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and its Employees or their Representatives, 5. The Purchase or Lease of Real Property for the Use of the Public Body and 6. Setting of a Price for Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body at 8:38 PM.

Council returned to open session at 9:03 PM.

Continued New Business

11.1. Resolution No. 270-24/25 Approving Articles of Agreement Between the City of Pekin and Teamsters, Chauffeurs and Helpers Local Union No. 627 Street Department

RESULT:	**PASSED (4 TO 1 TO 1)**
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 Orrick, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer
NAYS:	Council Member Hilst
ABSTAIN:	Council Member Dave Nutter
ABSENT:	Council Member Onken

City Manager John Dossey presented Resolution No. 270-2425, which authorizes the Articles of Agreement between the City of Pekin and Teamsters, Chauffeurs, and Helpers Local Union 627 for the Street Department. City Manager Dossey provided a summary, noting that the contract negotiations took longer than anticipated due to changes in the negotiation team and the early decision to separate financial components. He explained that the new contract includes mutually agreed-upon language cleanups and that mediation was avoided through productive discussions with Teamsters leadership. Staff recommended approval.

City Attorney Julie from Jim Vasselli's office was present to answer questions. In response to inquiries from the Council, she confirmed the contract's effective date will be upon execution by both parties, with an expiration date of April 30, 2028. She also clarified that pay increases will be applied retroactively for current members of the bargaining unit. Staff further explained that the city's payroll software allows retroactive calculations based on historical allocation of hours, ensuring proper distribution of retro pay according to prior funding sources (such as sewerage versus street).

Adjourn

There being no further business to come to the Council a motion was made by Mayor

Pro Tem Hohimer seconded by 1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried viva voice vote. Mayor Burress adjourned the meeting at 9:05 PM.