



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

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Burress.

Call to Order

City Clerk, Ms. Nicole Stewart, 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
Jimmie Fletcher, Jr.	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM
John P Abel	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM
Peg Phillips	City of Pekin	Council Member	Present	5:30 PM

Approve Agenda

A motion was made by Council Member Nutter seconded by Council Member Abel to approve the Agenda.

RESULT:	PASSED AS AMENDED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Dave Nutter
SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

A motion was made by Council Member Phillips seconded by Council Member Hohimer to move New Business Item 7.2 after New Business Item 7.6.

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
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MOVER:	Council Member Peg Phillips
SECONDER:	Council Member Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

Approval of Minutes

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Dave Nutter
SECONDER:	Council Member Peg Phillips
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

4.1. City Council - Regular Meeting Minutes - September 22, 2025

4.2. City Council - Work Session Special Meeting Minutes September 24, 2025

Public Input

Roxy Greer, married to Roger Greer, announced she was actively obtaining signatures to overturn Home Rule. City Attorney James Vasselli intervened stating that one cannot electioneer at a public body and seek support for one's political endeavors. Mayor Burress agreed and ordered Ms. Greer to refrain from electioneering. Mr. Vasselli suggested that after the meeting she speak with Police Chief Seth Ranney. Ms. Greer then began speaking against connecting I-474 to Veteran's Drive.

Consent Agenda

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Dave Nutter
SECONDER:	Council Member Peg Phillips
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

Council Member Hilst questioned why only one quote was provided under Consent Agenda Item 6.6. City Manager John Dossey explained that the quote that was being approved was provided under New Business Item 7.7.

6.1. Accounts Payable Paid Proof List through October 6, 2025

6.2. Receive and File Building Department Permit Report September 2025

- 6.3. Pekin Police Department Monthly Incident Report August 2025
- 6.4. Pekin Fire Department Monthly Incident Report September 2025
- 6.5. Receive and File the Supplier Agreement for the Electric Aggregation Program Effective May 2, 2026 - May 1, 2027
- 6.6. Receive and File Quote from Illinois Central for Bus Driver Service
- 6.7. Proclamation International Alpha Delta Kappa Month
- 6.8. Proclamation Fire Prevention Week

New Business

- 7.1. Ordinance No. 4345-25/26 Approving a Fifth Budget Amendment to the FY2026 Annual Budget Regarding the Community Development Block Grant Program Fund

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, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented the Request for Council Action.

No discussion took place.

- 7.3. Resolution No. 345-25/26 Approving Pekin 2025 Strategic Plan Prepared by Arndt Municipal Support Inc.

RESULT:	PASSED (6 TO 1)
MOVER:	Council Member Jimmie Fletcher
SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips
NAYS:	Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented the Request for Council Action.

No discussion took place.

7.4. Resolution No. 346-25/26 Approving the City Brand Standards

RESULT:	PASSED (4 TO 3)
MOVER:	Council Member Jimmie Fletcher
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips
NAYS:	Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented the Request for Council Action.

No discussion took place.

7.5. Resolution No. 347-25/26 Approving an Updated Leachate Disposal Agreement with GFL Environmental for the Indian Creek (Hopedale) Landfill

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Jimmie Fletcher
SECONDER:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey explained that upon the request of Council Members Nutter and Hilst, the City spoke with GFL about updating the Hopedale Indian Creek agreement to bring it in line with the GFL-Clinton agreement, adding in the language for the escalator to be with CPI.

7.6. Resolution No. 348-25/26 Approving a Bus Transportation Services Agreement with First Student, Inc. to Provide Temporary School Bus Drivers

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Peg Phillips
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented a request to approve an agreement with First Student, Inc. to provide temporary school bus drivers due to the ongoing shortage of qualified drivers.

Council Member Hohimer expressed frustration that there were no local applicants and encouraged anyone interested in driving to apply.

Mr. Dossey explained that the City is not directly hiring drivers and that First Student, Inc. will handle recruitment. Mr. Dossey noted that District 303 plans to release its own hiring notice soon, while District 108 will issue a request for proposals. He confirmed that the intent is to give preference to current City drivers for available positions.

Council Member Fletcher raised concerns about transportation logistics and liability, questioning whether drivers could use personal vehicles or be compensated for idle time between routes. Mr. Dossey clarified that drivers would not be permitted to use their own vehicles due to insurance concerns and would be paid up to eight hours per day, including limited downtime, under the 90-day agreement with two automatic renewal periods.

Council Member Fletcher and Human Resources Director Shelly Costa discussed hiring timelines and CDL certification requirements, noting it can take 8–10 weeks to license new drivers.

Finance Consultant Bob Grogan added that current City drivers would be eligible for retention bonuses, while contracted drivers would not.

Council Member Hilst expressed concern over paying drivers during non-working hours and questioned the fairness of providing City vehicles and higher hourly pay compared to union staff. He also raised fiscal responsibility concerns, noting the appearance of inequity and the potential effect on employee morale.

City Attorney James Vasselli advised that the agreement minimizes legal and insurance risks and represents the best available option under current conditions, though he acknowledged the unfortunate circumstances.

Council Member Nutter supported issuing a public appeal for drivers and asked whether Peoria Charter had been contacted. Mr. Dossey confirmed that they had, but Peoria Charter is also short on drivers.

Finance Director Eric Dubrowski confirmed that funding for the agreement will come from the bus department contingency.

While several Council Members expressed frustration with the situation, there was consensus that the City is obligated to ensure transportation for students, and the proposed agreement with First Student, Inc. provides the most feasible temporary solution.

7.2. Ordinance No. 4346-25/26 Approving a Sixth Budget Amendment to the FY2026 Annual Budget

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, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

Finance Director Eric Dubrowski presented a request to increase the bus department budget by \$200,000 to carry operations through the end of the fiscal year, noting that the remaining balance would be incorporated into the FY2027 budget. He explained that the amendment would be absorbed within the existing contingency and that, even with the adjustment, the budget remains in a positive position with a projected surplus of approximately \$150,000. He also emphasized that budgeting funds does not require them to be spent and that the department currently holds \$1.4 million in reserves, providing capacity for the amendment.

Council Member Phillips confirmed that the City would still experience lower payroll costs due to reduced staffing levels, which Mr. Dubrowski verified.

The Mayor agreed, acknowledging the budget's continued stability.

Council Member Hilst inquired how many bus drivers were receiving medical benefits, and Human Resources Director Shelly Costa responded that only one driver currently does.

7.7. Resolution No. 349-25/26 Approving a Construction Reimbursement Agreement with Illinois American Water for the Court Street Project

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Peg Phillips
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented the Request for Council Action.

The Mayor addressed comments from the public regarding the length of the Court Street project, noting that while it has taken time, the City is committed to completing the work properly and thoroughly. The Mayor expressed appreciation to Public Works Director Simon Grimm for his continued efforts and dedication in overseeing the project to ensure it is done the right way.

7.8. Resolution No. 350-25/26 Authorization to Purchase Laptop Computers and Related Items

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Peg Phillips

SECONDER: 1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
AYES: 1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented the request.

Council Member Hilst inquired about the total number of laptops. IT Administrator David Hess reported that there are 23 in total, 14 of which are being replaced, while the remaining 9 were updated two years ago and should last about five more years.

Council Member Nutter asked about disposal procedures, and Mr. Dossey explained that the Department of Justice provides the policy.

Mr. Hess added that the hard drives are destroyed through a certified recycling process in which components are separated and recycled, ensuring approximately 93% of materials are recovered.

Mr. Dossey concluded that all devices are properly destroyed and recycled.

7.9. Resolution No. 351-25/26 Authorization to Purchase Desktop Computers and Related Equipment

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, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented the request.

Council Member Hilst noted that the resolution also mentioned six laptops and asked for clarification. Mr. Dossey explained that those laptops are separate from the others and are specifically for the Police Department, which utilizes rugged Toughbook-style computers that go through a CJIS-compliant disposal process.

Mr. Hess added that during COVID, the City utilized thin Surface Books, and this purchase will replace both the laptop and docking station to eliminate redundant equipment.

7.10. Resolution No. 352-25/26 Authorization to Purchase a Continued Service Subscription for Adobe Software

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, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

City Manager John Dossey presented the request to Council.

No discussion took place.

7.11. Discussion City Contracts Regarding Business Not in Good Standing

City Manager John Dossey explained that there had been issues with certain businesses not paying taxes and noted that current contracts do not include language providing the City any recourse in such situations. He suggested that moving forward, as new contractual agreements are entered into over the coming months, language should be added to address this issue.

Mayor Burress commented that the Liquor Commission already has procedures in place to halt licenses for nonpayment of liquor fees.

Mr. Vasselli stated that compliance and corporate status should always be verified and that the City should not conduct business with entities that are not in good standing. He advised that an ordinance will be drafted to ensure legal compliance, requiring verification through the Business Services website.

Council Member Nutter thanked staff for addressing the concern and asked when the legal language could be expected. Mr. Vasselli responded humorously that it would arrive as a “Halloween present” on October 27.

Police Chief Seth Ranney added that contracts should include such provisions in the bid process moving forward, but existing contracts would not be retroactively changed.

Council Member Hilst inquired whether the ordinance could include provisions related to businesses owing money to the City or violating City Code.

Economic Development Director Josh Wray noted that similar language already exists in TIF agreements regarding property maintenance violations, and Mr. Vasselli confirmed that additional criteria, such as bankruptcy or other legal issues, could be incorporated.

Consensus of the Council was to move forward with developing the ordinance.

Any Other Business To Come Before The Council

City Manager John Dossey shared that the past weekend included numerous developments and grand openings across the City. He noted that it was encouraging to see full parking lots and hear positive feedback from residents and developers. He addressed comments suggesting the City was not recognizing small businesses, clarifying that small businesses such as Go Vino and groups like the Better Business Group have been featured on the City's website and through various recognition efforts. Mr. Dossey added that several developers have complimented the City on being good to work with.

Mayor Burress reflected on the City's recent growth, noting that Diane Cullinan of Cullinan Properties helped initiate much of the new development approximately a year ago. She highlighted the City's progress, referencing recent ribbon cuttings for Marshalls, Ross, Chipotle, and Go Vino. She shared that her and Economic Development Director Josh Wray discussed at the recent EDAC meeting how proud they are of the City's direction and momentum.

Council Member Hilst asked for an update on when the Request for Proposals (RFP) for garbage collection would be released. Public Works Director Simon Grimm replied that it would likely occur this winter or early next year, depending on budget and planning considerations.

Council Member Hilst noted that recent accounts payable reports showed the City paying more to recycle (\$78 per ton) than to landfill (\$61 per ton). Mr. Grimm explained that the City does receive grant funding to help offset recycling costs, but Council Member Hilst reiterated the need to move forward with the RFP process.

Council Member Phillips expressed concern from residents about the data center project, electricity usage, and road conditions. She assured the public that the Council discusses these matters frequently, but such projects take time and funding to accomplish. Mayor Burress agreed, noting that while the City is sometimes compared to East Peoria and Morton, those communities also took years to develop their current infrastructure. Council Member Phillips emphasized that the Council is attentive to these concerns and working diligently on solutions.

Council Member Fletcher reported ongoing communication with the public regarding the unhoused population in preparation for the winter months. He stated that he has been coordinating with the City Manager and Police Chief Ranney, who are addressing the issue with appropriate notice and cleanup procedures. He added that he responds to all public emails and forwards them to the proper departments.

Council Member Abel announced that the Chamber of Commerce would be hosting its Business Recognition event on Thursday and encouraged residents to read the City Manager's recent article in the newspaper discussing local business success stories.

Mayor Burress stated that the City would begin holding town hall meetings to increase community engagement.

Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer announced that a fundraiser would be held Friday evening at the Moose Lodge benefiting the Carol House project, which supports abused and battered women and children, and that construction would be starting soon.

Mayor Burress also noted that Walmart recently celebrated 40 years in Pekin with a rebranding ceremony. Police Chief Ranney reported that Walmart donated \$4,000 to the Police Foundation's "Shop for a Hero" program, which will allow approximately 40 children to shop for \$100 worth of gifts for themselves or family members. He added that Runnings will host a similar program in the coming weeks.

Council Member Abel added that Ross donated \$5,000 to the Boys and Girls Club, and Marshalls contributed to the Tazwood Community Services, both as part of their grand opening celebrations.

Executive Session 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)

9.1. Executive Session 5 ILCS 120/2 (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, (5) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body and (6) The Setting of a Price for Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer seconded by Council Member Phillips 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, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees, (5) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body (6) The Setting of a Price for Sale or Lease of Property Owned by the Public Body and (11) Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal at 7:10 PM.

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
SECONDER:	Council Member Peg Phillips
AYES:	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Nutter, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher

Mayor Burress announced no action would be taken following Executive Session.

Council returned to open session at 8:10 PM.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come to the Council a motion was made by Council Member Nutter seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried viva voce vote. Mayor Burress adjourned the meeting at 8:10 PM.

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, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher