



**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, MAY 11, 2026 AT 5:30 PM  
MAYOR MARY J. BURRESS PRESIDING**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Mary Burress.

**Call to Order**

Deputy City Clerk, Ms. Paige Anderson, confirmed all Council Members were physically present and logged in except for Council Member Nutter who was absent. Mayor Burress declared a quorum and opened the meeting at 5:33 PM.

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	Absent	--:-- 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**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Rick Hilst
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer
<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hilst, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Dave Nutter

**Approval of Minutes**

**4.1. City Council - Regular Meeting Minutes - April 27, 2026**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (5 TO 0) TO 1</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Rick Hilst
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro Tem Karen Hohimer

<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer, Council Member Phillips, Council Member Fletcher
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	Council Member Rick Hilst

Council Member Hilst announced that he would be abstaining as he was not present at the Council Meeting of April 27, 2026.

## **Public Input**

Prior to opening public input, Mayor Burress referenced the special meeting held on Saturday, May 2, during which Judge Jansen donated a new podium to the Council Chambers in memory of his father, who served as City Clerk for 40 years. Judge Jansen and his family attended to present the podium and speak.

Mayor Burress then read a letter from attorneys of WHP regarding the real estate project agreement between the City of Pekin and Pekin I Developer LLC for the property located at 3528 Edgewater Drive, Pekin, Illinois. The letter served as notice of termination of the agreement related to the proposed data center project.

Council Member Phillips requested clarification regarding the contents of the letter. City Attorney Vasselli explained that WHP was exercising its rights to terminate the purchase agreement. He also clarified that a lawsuit against the City was not considered viable. The City would return the earnest money contingent upon approval of the item included on the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Burress stated that the Council had heard the concerns and feedback from the public throughout the process and emphasized that the Council's limited public comment during deliberations did not indicate a lack of attention to residents' concerns.

Mayor Pro Tem Hohimer also commented on her position regarding the project.

Kim Bowers spoke regarding communication between the public and the Council. She expressed appreciation that Council Members reviewed information presented by residents and adjusted their positions based on the facts. She thanked the Council and community for working through a stressful process and expressed gratitude for the outcome.

Sam Hutchison, owner and founder of Bears Bites, spoke regarding public safety concerns in the downtown area. She stated that since relocating her business to Pekin in July 2024, she has experienced ongoing concerns involving attempted break-ins, vandalism, intoxicated individuals near her business, and other criminal activity. She stated that customers no longer feel safe and expressed disappointment given her initial enthusiasm about moving her business to Pekin.

Mayor Burress stated that the City has had ongoing discussions with the Police Chief regarding these concerns. Ms. Hutchison acknowledged that police officers have been responsive but noted that resources and available options appear limited. Mayor Burress stated that conditions had temporarily improved following adoption of the ordinance regarding sleeping on public property, but concerns have recently increased again.

City Manager Dossey encouraged Ms. Hutchison to meet directly with Police Chief Ranney and Lt. Rabe to discuss the issues in greater detail. He stated that the Police Department targets specific areas when sufficient information is available and noted that the City continues working with social service providers to assist unhoused individuals. Mayor Burress added that there is a shortage of available shelter beds.

Council Member Abel commented that discussions regarding a Homeless Bill of Rights continue at the state level. City Manager John Dossey noted that communities throughout Illinois are facing similar challenges and that local officials discussed the issue during Lobby Day activities in Springfield.

Elaine Richey inquired about enforcement of the City's dog barking ordinance, expressing concerns regarding inconsistent enforcement among neighbors.

Mark Stevens commended the City's Solid Waste employees for their response to the recycling container transition and praised staff for personally delivering new containers. He also asked questions regarding restrictions associated with 64-gallon containers.

Terry Johnson thanked the Council for reading the termination letter regarding the data center project and expressed appreciation for the outcome. He also addressed concerns regarding the local deer population and encouraged the Council to reconsider restrictions on deer management efforts.

Zoey Carter expressed appreciation regarding the data center project outcome and stated that she would continue advocating against similar projects elsewhere if necessary. She also discussed concerns regarding the unhoused population and encouraged the City to explore alternative approaches, including programs similar to those implemented in Bloomington that provide housing, counseling, and support services. She also announced an upcoming river cleanup event on May 18 and requested repairs to the downtown clock. Mr. Dossey suggested coordinating cleanup efforts with City staff to ensure proper waste disposal arrangements.

Adam Rogers echoed comments regarding compassion and support for unhoused individuals and encouraged the Council to consider alternatives to law enforcement-focused solutions. He also addressed deer population concerns and suggested involving local educational institutions in wildlife management discussions.

Renee Thomas, of Orlando, Florida, thanked the Council and community members for their efforts related to the data center project and emphasized the importance of transparency moving forward.

Mayor Burress reiterated that the Council was fulfilling its responsibilities throughout the process, regardless of differing public opinions.

Matthew Johnson discussed property tax allocations related to the Residential TIF District and questioned funding priorities associated with stormwater and creek maintenance projects. He thanked the Council for listening to residents regarding the data center project.

Dave Milam expressed appreciation for the Council's handling of the data center project and encouraged collaboration with residents and local business owners regarding future development opportunities for the property. He expressed optimism regarding Pekin's future and requested follow-up communication regarding redevelopment ideas.

### **Consent Agenda**

Council Member Jake Fletcher read the 11 items listed on the Consent Agenda. Council Member Hilst requested Consent Agenda Items 6.7 and 6.10 be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately at the end of New Business.

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

- 6.1. Accounts Payable Paid Proof List through May 1, 2026**
- 6.2. Receive and File FY2027 Budget Transfers through May 6, 2026**
- 6.3. Receive and File Building Department Permit Report for April 2026**
- 6.4. Proclamation Motorcycle Awareness Month**
- 6.5. Proclamation National Skilled Nursing Home Care Week**
- 6.6. Receive and File Letter from PFS Attorneys at Law Regarding 3528 Edgewater Drive**
- 6.8. Ordinance No. 4399-26/27 Amending Pekin City Code Chapter 2, Division VI, Division 1 Generally, to Establish Term Expiration for All Boards, Commissions, and Committees**
- 6.9. Resolution No. 427-26/27 Mayor's Appointment of Peg Phillips as Mayor Pro-Tem and the Re-Appointment of John Abel as 1st Alternate Mayor Pro-Tem**
- 6.11. Resolution No. 429-26/27 Approving a Memorandum of Understanding Amending the Collective Bargaining Agreement with International Association of Firefighters Local 524**

### **New Business**

**7.1. Resolution No. 430-26/27 Approving Joint Funding Agreement for the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Fiscal Year 2027 Unified Planning Work Program**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Karen Hohimer
<b>SECONDER:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips, Council Member Fletcher
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Dave Nutter

No discussion by Council.

**7.2. Resolution No. 431-26/27 Approving the Fiscal Year 2027 Economic Development Program Funding**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (5 TO 1)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Karen Hohimer
<b>SECONDER:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips, Council Member Fletcher
<b>NAYS:</b>	Council Member Hilst
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Nutter

No discussion by Council.

**7.3. Resolution No. 432-26/27 Approving a Tourism Marketing Contract Renewal with McDaniels Marketing**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (4 TO 2)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Karen Hohimer
<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips
<b>NAYS:</b>	Council Member Hilst, Council Member Fletcher
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Nutter

No discussion by Council.

**7.4. Ordinance No. 4400-26/27 Approving a Second Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2027 Annual Budget**

A motion was made by Council Member Abel seconded by Council Member Phillips to approve the ordinance.

A motion was made by Council member Fletcher seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Phillips to table the item until the next meeting. Motion carried.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>TABLED TO MAY 26, 2026 COUNCIL MEETING (6 TO 0)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Jimmie Fletcher

<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro Tem Peg Phillips
<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips, Council Member Fletcher
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Nutter

Staff requested that Council table the item due to changing circumstances affecting the developer and uncertainty regarding project timing. Mr. Dossey explained the proposed amendment had two components: updating TIF fund revenues based on finalized projections from County data, resulting in an estimated net increase of approximately \$1.17 million across TIF funds, and adding a proposed drainage improvement project behind East Court Village estimated at \$2 million, funded through the Court Street TIF and Sewer Fund. Staff noted the drainage improvements would address ongoing creek erosion and infrastructure concerns but had become more complex after learning the creek falls under Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction, requiring an extended permitting process. Staff indicated there was no urgency to act and that the project could be reconsidered later if circumstances changed. Council discussed the timing and expenditure, and a motion was made to table the item to allow additional review and information from the developer.

**7.5. Ordinance No. 4401-26/27 Amending Pekin City Code Chapter 3, Article 1, Division 2 Collection and Disposal, to Permit Use of 96 Gallon Carts for Recycling**

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

City Manager John Dossey presented the request.

In response to public comments, staff clarified that residents may continue using older containers for yard waste or garbage collection if properly marked and accompanied by required yard waste stickers.

**7.6. Ordinance No. 4402-26/27 Amending Pekin City Code Chapter 3, Article 1 Solid Waste Collection Services, to Establish a Rate Discount for Senior Citizens' Owner-Occupied Residences**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (4 TO 2)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mayor Pro Tem Peg Phillips
<b>SECONDER:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel

<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips
<b>NAYS:</b>	Council Member Hilst, Council Member Fletcher
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Nutter

City Manager John Dossey presented the request.

Council Member Rick Hilst asked for more information on the age threshold. Discussion included the eligibility age requirement and whether age alone should determine qualification for the discount. Staff explained that the age threshold aligns with existing Illinois homestead exemption standards.

Council Member Jake Fletcher added comments about emails he has received and his stance that if there is a surplus in the fund, that it should be divided up between all households that have paid into it.

Mayor Burress stated she supported offering limited assistance to senior residents but personally would not participate in the discount despite qualifying. She explained the age threshold aligned with existing practices used for senior exemptions elsewhere in government and noted the intent was to provide modest relief to residents who may be living on fixed incomes. Council Member Hohimer similarly stated support for the program while indicating she would not personally seek the discount and hoped residents who did not need assistance would continue paying the standard rate to preserve the fund's financial health.

**7.7. Ordinance No. 4403-26/27 Amending Pekin City Code Chapter 5, Article VII, Division 2 Stormwater and Erosion Control, to Allow for Temporary Stormwater Conditions During Project Development**

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

Economic Director Wray explained the proposed amendment originated from discussions surrounding development activity near Menards and permitting coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers. Staff indicated that temporary stormwater accommodations are a common development practice in many jurisdictions but were not currently codified in City regulations. The amendment would permit portions of a development project to proceed before all final stormwater infrastructure is completed, provided temporary conditions are incorporated into approved civil engineering, erosion control, and stormwater pollution prevention plans.

Mr. Wray emphasized that the amendment would not eliminate stormwater requirements or permit unfinished projects to close permanently. Under the proposed language, projects could receive only a temporary certificate of occupancy until all approved stormwater improvements were completed and final compliance was achieved. Staff noted this flexibility would be particularly useful for developments requiring extended review and approval processes through agencies such as IDNR, IDOT, or the Army Corps of Engineers.

Council Member Hilst questioned the lack of a defined maximum timeframe for temporary stormwater conditions and expressed concern that the term “temporary” could be interpreted indefinitely. Mr. Wray responded that timelines would be established through the approved project plans and that requests would not be granted casually. He stated temporary conditions must be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer as part of the overall stormwater plan and would remain subject to enforcement.

Additional discussion clarified that the City retains authority to revoke temporary occupancy approvals or take enforcement action if projects fail to remain compliant or do not progress as approved. Staff noted the City could ultimately withhold or revoke occupancy authorization until final stormwater obligations are completed.

## **7.8. Discussion: Public Works Vehicle Fleet**

Public Works Director Simon Grimm explained that the Public Works fleet currently includes eleven solid waste vehicles consisting of seven traditional rear-load trucks and three side-load trucks acquired through a lease agreement beginning in 2022 and extending through 2028. Mr. Grimm stated staff has identified operational concerns with the leased side-load units, which utilize a drop-frame chassis design. Due to road conditions at the landfill and the low-clearance configuration, the trucks have experienced recurring damage to air tanks and other undercarriage components. Mr. Grimm further explained that replacement parts are proprietary to the manufacturer, creating delays and challenges in maintenance and repairs.

Mr. Grimm advised staff has been discussing a potential plan to replace two of the side-load units in Fiscal Year 2028 and indicated orders would need to be placed in advance due to extended production timelines. Staff proposed exploring replacement vehicles utilizing a more common Freightliner chassis while maintaining similar side-load collection capabilities. Mr. Grimm also noted upcoming federal emissions regulations expected to take effect in 2027 may increase maintenance costs for future diesel engines due to additional filtration requirements. Ordering ahead of implementation could potentially reduce future operating costs.

Council requested additional written information before considering any future action. Council Member Fletcher asked staff to provide a detailed email outlining projected costs, lease structure, trade-in values, replacement schedule, and

budget impacts so Council could review the information in advance of formal consideration. Mr. Grimm confirmed that staff intended to distribute a complete information packet and noted timing considerations may require placement on a future agenda.

Discussion clarified the estimated lease structure being explored involved two replacement vehicles at an estimated cost of approximately \$750,000 over five years, with no impact anticipated to the current fiscal year budget and future payments proposed to come from the Solid Waste Fund.

**6.7. Ordinance No. 4398-26/27 Amending Pekin City Code Chapter 2, Article 6, Division 19, Economic Development Advisory Committee**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (5 TO 1)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Jimmie Fletcher
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro Tem Peg Phillips
<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips, Council Member Fletcher
<b>NAYS:</b>	Council Member Hilst
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Nutter

Council Member Rick Hilst asked for the reasoning to increase membership. Economic Development Director Josh Wray explained that it is actually a reduction, as membership was previously increased.

**6.10. Resolution No. 428-26/27 Annual Committees, Boards, Commissions, and Members Appointments and Confirmations**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PASSED (6 TO 0)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Jimmie Fletcher
<b>SECONDER:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem John Abel
<b>AYES:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hilst, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips, Council Member Fletcher
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Nutter

Council Member Hilst requested that Council Members receive copies of applications submitted for board and commission appointments. Staff explained that applications are optional but reviewed when submitted.

A motion was made by Council Member Hilst, seconded by Council Member Fletcher to table the item.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Failed (2 TO 4)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Rick Hilst
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Jimmie Fletcher
<b>AYES:</b>	Council Member Hilst, Council Member Fletcher

<b>NAYS:</b>	1st Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Abel, Mayor Burress, Council Member Hohimer, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Council Member Nutter

### **Any Other Business To Come Before The Council**

City Manager John Dossey reported that more than 80% of City staff recently completed human trafficking awareness training, resulting in certification recognition for the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Peg Phillips thanked residents for attending meetings and participating in public discussions regarding the data center proposal. She stated that the issue ultimately brought the community together and expressed relief regarding the project's termination.

Council Member Jake Fletcher stated that concerns raised by local business owners regarding public safety should remain a high priority for the City and that there would be follow up.

Mayor Mary Burress discussed rotating Mayor Pro Tem responsibilities and encouraged residents interested in serving on City boards and commissions to contact City officials.

### **Executive Session 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)**

Council did not move into Executive Session.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to come to the Council, a motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Phillips, seconded by Council Member Abel, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried viva voce vote. Mayor Burress adjourned the meeting at 7:49 PM.

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