

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
August 21, 2023

The regular meeting of the City of Crest Hill was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 20600 City Center Boulevard, Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

Roll call indicated the following present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman John Vershay, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Building Commissioner Don Seeman, City Attorney Mike Stiff, Deputy Clerk Karen Kozerka.

Absent were: Assistant Public Work Director Blaine Kline, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Soliman presented the corrected minutes from the regular meeting held on July 3, 2023 for Council approval per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#1) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to approve the corrected minutes from the regular meeting held on July 3, 2023 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the regular meeting held on August 7, 2023 for Council approval per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#2) Motion by Alderman Jefferson seconded by Alderman Albert, to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on August 7, 2023 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the work session held on August 14, 2023 for Council approval per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#3) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to approve the minutes from the work session meeting held on August 14, 2023 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal.

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Ald. Kubal.

ABSENT: None.

There being seven (7) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

CITY ATTORNEY: City Attorney Mike Stiff requested to Approve a Resolution Approving a Contract for Consulting Services By and Between the City of Crest Hill and Brent Hassert Consulting LLC per the memo dated August 21, 2023. This is an initial three-month contract with Hassert Consulting for Management Consulting Services that would be provided by Steve Gulden and subject to an extension of 180 days after the initial 180 days.

Aldersperson Oberlin asked if the stipend is for a certain period. Attorney Stiff stated that is for the first 180 days. He also stated that if it is extended for another 180 days, he believes the stipend would be removed. Aldersperson Oberlin commented that she did not see in the document where it stated the stipend would not renew with the renewal and feels it should be added to the document. Attorney Stiff stated that he would add something to the extension of the 180 days that is under section 3.01b stating that Fees will not be part of any extension. Attorney Stiff asked Steve Gulden if that is acceptable and Steve responded stating that is fine. Aldersperson Oberlin stated she would make the motion with that change.

Alderman Cipiti asked after the second 180 days will the contract automatically terminate. Attorney Stiff stated yes, it will terminate. Alderman Cipiti asked if there was anything in there to reopen for any kind of extension. Attorney Stiff stated that we can build in another term but believed Steve wanted just two terms of the 180 days. Attorney Stiff stated that if we get to the six months mark, we can always negotiate a new contract. Alderman Cipiti commented that as it reads now it terminates. Attorney Stiff commented that it terminates after 180 days unless it is extended for another 180 days and at that point it will terminate.

(#4) Motion by Aldersperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Albert, to Approve a Resolution Approving a Contract for Consulting Services By and Between the City of Crest Hill and Brent Hassert Consulting LLC with corrections as discussed per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Vershay.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution #1187

Alderman Cipiti asked what we need to do to get the right-of-way in the alley at 1723 to continue the storm drain. Attorney Stiff commented that other than him physically going to Mr. Rojas' residence and bringing him to Attorney Stiff's office to sign or bringing it to him to sign, he is unsure what we can do. We have been in contact with his attorney multiple times, and he believe since his case is over the attorney is not getting paid to return phone calls. Attorney Stiff stated that his last offer to Mr. Rojas was that someone would bring the sign-off to him to sign at any location he might be at, but besides that, we just keep trying.

Alderman Dyke asked if we could skip that section of the alley and cut through more on the other half and bring it through. City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that we can not do that. Attorney Stiff commented that we need Mr. Rojas consent, otherwise, it is a taking under the fifth amendment, where we will be doing something on his property without his consent of the sign-off easement.

Alderman Cipiti asked if he has said why he won't sign. Attorney Stiff commented that in addition to the flooding problem over there, this is the same gentleman who purchased that parcel with two dwelling units on one parcel and the parcel is not big enough for two parcels under our zoning code. Attorney Stiff stated that because Mr. Rojas claimed that the sunset provision (which states once there is a transfer in ownership you are no longer grandfathered in and have no further rights that the prior owner had) is unconstitutional he will continue to rent both dwellings. The city had filed suit to enforce our ordinance and Judge Anderson agreed with the city that the ordinance was constitutional, and the tenant was to move out of the one dwelling. Attorney Stiff stated that maybe he is harboring animosity and that is why he is dragging his feet. Mr. Rojas lawyer has told him to sign the sign-off since it will help him and the neighbors with the flooding issues, but he hasn't and that is where we are at currently.

Alderman Cipiti asked if anyone had any sit-down conversations with Mr. Rojas. Attorney Stiff commented that ethically he cannot talk to Mr. Rojas since his lawyer has not told him he no longer represents Mr. Rojas. Attorney Stiff stated that someone from the city can reach out to Mr. Rojas directly.

Alderman Dyke commented that he knows Mr. Rojas was wanting money for his portion of the alley since alleys are owned by everyone on that block. Attorney Stiff commented that all the neighbors signed off except him, he stated he wanted money and if we paid him money, we would have to pay all the neighbors' money, and this is a project that benefits everyone. Alderman Jefferson asked if we have ability to use eminent domain by the city. Attorney Stiff stated that the city has eminent domain power but that would be costly and time consuming that we have no quick take authority, and it would have to go through the costly process. City Engineer Wiedeman stated that he would look and see if there is another option.

Mayor Soliman welcomed Steve Gulden back to the City of Crest Hill. Steve Gulden approached the podium and stated that he looks forward to working with the Council, Mayor, and Staff. He believes Crest Hill has great possibilities and we can work together to upgrade the community.

Steve Gulden asked if there is any type of hazard legal standing with Mr. Rojas since there are flooding issues. Engineer Wiedeman stated that it isn't just flooding that there is also an existing storm sewer that runs adjacent and close to people's homes that was installed prior to Crest Hill being there. He stated that the point of the project was to eliminate that pipe by putting a storm sewer in our public right-of-way, but we need to tie-in to a structure that is in the alley, and we would be crossing this gentleman's property. Steve commented he was just thinking about any emergency powers or health and safety welfare that we can present to a judge. It was commented that the flooding does not occur except for exceptional rain circumstances. Alderwoman Gazal asked if he lost in court could he be held in contempt. Attorney Stiff commented that there must be a pending court matter before a judge can hold someone in contempt for not following the order and both cases, we had with Mr. Rojas are finalized.

Alderwoman Gazal welcomed Steve Gulden to the City of Crest Hill and stated she looks forward to working with him and hoping he can move us forward and show some leadership in the city and open doors for more hiring.

Mayor Soliman commented that his first day will be August 29, 2023. Steve stated that he will be here on Tuesday, August 22, 2023, and August 24, 2023 for meetings, as well.

Alderman Oberlin welcomed Steve to the city.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR: There were no agenda items for discussion.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: Mayor Soliman requested on behalf of Assistant Director of Public Works, Blaine Kline Approval of Pay Request #7 from Vissering Construction Inc. with Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$1,709,390.74 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#5) Motion by Alderman Oberlin seconded by Alderman Albert, for Approval of Pay Request #7 from Vissering Construction Inc. with Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$1,709,390.74 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

CITY ENGINEER: City Engineer Ron Wiedeman requested to Execute a Professional Services Agreement with Strand and Associates to Perform Design Engineering Services and Bid Document Preparation for Contract 1 for the U.S. Route 30 from Leness Lane to Theodore and Theodore from U.S. Route 30 to Broadway and Broadway Street from Theodore to Chaney Water Main Lining Project not to Exceed an Amount of \$396,100.00 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#6) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderman Vershay, to Execute a Professional Services Agreement with Strand and Associates to Perform Design Engineering Services and Bid Document Preparation for Contract 1 for the U.S. Route 30 from Leness Lane to Theodore and Theodore from U.S. Route 30 to Broadway and Broadway Street from Theodore to Chaney Water Main Lining Project not to Exceed an Amount of \$396,100.00 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman requested to Approve Change Order No. 1 with Sheridan Plumbing & Sewer for the U.S. Route 30 Water Main Lining Project which will Reduce the Contract Amount by \$226,280.08 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#7) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to Approve Change Order No. 1 with Sheridan Plumbing & Sewer for the U.S. Route 30 Water Main Lining Project which will Reduce the Contract Amount by \$226,280.08 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT: Building Commissioner Don Seeman requested to Approve Donald E. Morris Architects P.C. as the New Plan Review and Inspection Service per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#8) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Dyke, to Approve Donald E. Morris Architects P.C. as the New Plan Review and Inspection Service per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Building Commissioner Don Seeman requested to Approve the Purchase of iPads for Building Inspectors per the memo dated August 21, 2023. Commissioner Seeman stated that the Verizon plan is locked in and after one year of service we can upgrade as a government account.

(#9) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to Approve the Purchase of iPads for Building Inspectors per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Vershay.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Police Chief Ed Clark thanked the mayor and the council for the support of the Police Department and our endeavors in increasing our manpower on the street. Chief Clark introduced new police hire Brett Williams from Joliet and Kyle Vonderheide from Minooka. He stated that the gentleman will go to the academy on August 28, 2023.

Brett Williams approached the podium to introduce himself and stated that he is honored and excited to work alongside the Crest Hill Police Department and the Council.

Kyle Vonderheide approached the podium to introduce himself and he thanked everyone for the opportunity and stated that he is very excited to be working for the City of Crest Hill and the Police Department.

Mayor Soliman welcomed the officers to the City of Crest Hill and reminded them that they represent the City of Crest Hill on everybody's bad days. He told them you will be giving the first impression of the city, so how you react to them is important and reminded them to treat everyone with respect and to take advantage of the training the city has to offer along with the knowledge of the experienced officers.

Many Council members welcomed the new police officers to the City of Crest Hill.

Alderwoman Gazal asked Chief Clark for an update on the stop signs for the shopping mall by Renwick she had requested back on February 15, 2023. Chief Clark stated that he has worked on this and is waiting from Robert Chavez from Caton Commercial to respond regarding paying for the stop signs or paying the city to install them. Chief Clark also commented that he will take care of this this week. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we could send a certified letter. Chief Clark said he will physically meet with him again and get this going.

MAYOR: Alderwoman Gazal asked the mayor if we can have the ribbon cutting on the next work session agenda, so the rest of the Council can be part of the discussion and the celebration of this building. Mayor Soliman commented that absolutely, as he sent out the save the date to City Council on August 15, 2023. He stated that we want to have an open house and give tours of the Police Department and City Hall side. We are proud of what we have created here and hope the residents are proud of this building. Mayor Soliman commented that we are in the infancy stages of planning everything and the city staff has been informed and will be doing most of the work of the open house. Alderwoman Gazal stated that she appreciates that and hopes there will be discussion with the rest of the Council.

CITY CLERK: City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall announced that we had 50 participants for the City-Wide Garage Sales this past week.

CITY TREASURER: City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the list of bills through August 22, 2023 in the amount of \$631,696.09 for Council approval per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

(#10) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to Approve the List of Bills through August 22, 2023 in the Amount of \$631,696.09 for Council Approval per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the regular and overtime payroll from July 31, 2023 through August 13, 2023 in the amount of \$231,833.78 per the memo dated August 21, 2023.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS: There were no committee/liaison reports.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: Alderman Albert announced the Crest Hills Lions Club Luau is Sunday, September 3, 2023 at St. Joe's Park and will be from 12:00p.m. until 10:00p.m. There will be a car show, a vendor fair, bingo, kids' activities, and live entertainment.

Alderman Cipiti congratulated the new Police Officers and hopes they have a long and safe career.

Alderperson Oberlin congratulated and welcomed the new Police Officers and Steve Gulden. She also wished everyone a nice and safe family-oriented Labor Day.

Alderman Jefferson welcomed the two new Police Officers and wished them a long and productive career and welcomed back Steve Gulden.

Alderman Dyke welcomed the new Police Officers to the City of Crest Hill and wished them a long and safe career.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mackenzie Reinhart, a resident on the 1700 block of Raynor, informed Chief Clark that she has problems with the 1709 Kelly house, she stated that her and Linda were outside talking, and five African American males came out of the house swinging baseball bats and they called the Police. When the Police arrived the Officer asked her what she did to provoke them and she stated we did nothing they were talking,

we were not at their address or looking at them and the Police Officer did nothing. Chief Clark asked Mackenzie if they could talk after the meeting, and she stated she did have time. Mackenzie also stated that there is a car at that house following her and taking pictures of her car. She stated that she went to the Police Department and filed a CAD report about it and the Officer stated that she needs to speak with the alderpeople about that house. Chief Clark said he would like to discuss this with her, as well.

Aldersperson Oberlin asked if she stated that the alderpeople are the ones she should talk to about crime. Aldersperson Oberlin stated that she did not know that the alderpeople have been deputized. Mackenzie stated that she was shocked, as well.

Linda Dyke, a resident, asked Attorney Stiff if Section 8 Housing has rules since this home is a Section 8 Housing home. Chief Clark commented that after the last meeting he worked with Joliet Housing Authority and at the time they were going to revoke that funding for that home. However, the funding has been paid another way. Linda asked the Chief if he has contacted the landlord and Chief Clark stated about thirty times, he is an over the road truck driver and tracking him down is very difficult.

There being no further business before the Council, and no action needed from the executive session, a motion for adjournment was in order.

(#11) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderman Vershay, to adjourn the August 21, 2023 Council meeting.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Approved this 5 day of SEPTEMBER, 2023

As presented J

As amended _____


CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK


RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR