

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
March 3, 2025

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. Mayor Soliman asked everyone to remain standing after the Pledge of Allegiance. He commented that our long-term Civil Service Commissioner, Nick Weiss, passed away on February 25, 2025, at the age of 79 years old. He was a Police Officer for over forty years. He was a resident of Carillon Lakes and Willow Falls in Crest Hill. He served on the Civil Service Board for eight years and was a dedicated, loyal, and committed commissioner. He leaves behind a wife and two sons.

Mayor Soliman thanked Nick Weiss and his family for the sacrifices he made for the City of Crest Hill and offered our condolences to his wife and the family for their loss. Mayor Soliman then asked for a moment of silence in memory and honor of Nick Weiss.

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

Also present were: Interim City Administrator Tony Graff, Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Glenn Gehrke, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Community and Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Alderman Joe Kubal, Interim Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer, Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen.

Mayor Soliman stated that he received a text from Alderman Kubal, and he is excused from the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on February 18, 2025, for Council approval per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

(#1) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Albert, to Approve the Minutes from Regular Meeting Held on February 18, 2025, per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

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

CITY ATTORNEY: Attorney Mike Stiff commented that he has no agenda items but is happy to answer any questions. There were none.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR: Interim City Administrator Tony Graff gave an update on his memo the Council had received.

Community Development Update Items From Director Ainsworth:

- A. Lockport Township Fire District Training Facility Proposed Project: The Planned Unit Development Application was re-submitted to the Community Development Department. Staff are rigorously reviewing the updated materials and are planning to hold the public hearing scheduled for 3/13/2025, which is the regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting.
- B. A & D Storage Resubmittal: The current property owner submitted the new Plan Commission application for the property at the southwest corner of Renwick Road and Borio Drive. The new application is due to a request to change the exterior drive aisle material compared to what was approved in their original ordinance. Since the applicant is on a tight schedule, there will be a special Plan Commission meeting on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at 7 pm for this item.
- C. Old City Hall Property Update: The applicant for the Plan Commission Application notified staff this week that they will be resubmitting their application materials later since they are still working on the latest building prototype for this location. Also, there will be an extension request to the current Purchase and Sale Agreement from the buyer. More information will be available as soon as more details are provided from the applicant/buyer.
- D. Community Development staff sent out a list of new and closed businesses last week, but there is one more business report that just closed, Joliet Patterns, which was a multi-media printing company. According to the owner, there have been 'economic headwinds' that the business could not overcome. As such, they ceased operations at 508 Pasadena Avenue.

City Center Facility – Nothing new to report.

STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER – Capital Development Board – No Update

Lockport Township Fire District Training Facility Proposed Project: The Planned Unit Development Application was submitted, and the Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for 3/13/2025 Planning Commission Meeting. Staff are conducting their final review and preparing a staff report working together with the Fire District consultants and staff.

BL DUKE FIRE: B.L. Duke Fire Incident 11/1/2024: The DPW Staff completed the cost analysis which is under review with the City Attorney Michael Stiff and Staff regarding the services provided for the incident on 11/1/2024 at the BL Duke Scrap Metal Recycling Yard 2 Genstar Lane near Industry Avenue off Broadway Street (Unincorporated Will County). The next step in the process is to schedule a meeting with the B.L. Duke

management to review the report along with the City's request for reimbursement (\$432,982.16).

Job Announcements: The following Job Announcements were posted, and the Interim HR Director reviewed the job descriptions and created updated announcements for the following positions (the announcements have been posted on the city web site).

- a. Building Inspector Announcement: HR will begin the background checks anticipated start date by March 17th. Building Commissioner Don Seeman will be doing the training.
- b. City Administrator Search – MGT/GovHR Consulting Recruitment Services – The search has started with posting the job announcement with the deadline of March 17, 2025, to accept the resumes. The electronic book will be given to the Council a week before the meeting on April 8, 2025.

DCEO – \$250,000 Grant Award for the purchase of Police Vehicles and Equipment Update. The reimbursement agreement was received and reviewed by staff and signed. The Grant Award Project Planned was to purchase 4 – New Police Vehicles with the Equipment through the Cooperative Purchasing Bid. The estimated cost is \$60,000 per vehicle with equipment. There will be a follow-up presentation at a Work Session by Police Chief Ed Clark.

Water Meter Replacement Project – (ON-GOING) Non-Compliance property owners' appointments are progressing. It is still a struggle with the homeowners to allow us to come in and replace the meters. Eventually there will be an extra charge on those water bills for the homes that do not allow the water meters to be replaced since there will have to be a manual read.

Places For Eating Tax – Delinquent Businesses: There will be collection letters being sent out soon that is delinquent with a more aggressive request. There are still non-compliant businesses, and we are going over the legal actions for non-payment. MyWaffle has not made any response or payments regarding his delinquency. The deadline for him to pay is approaching and if nothing is paid, we will take legal action.

West Sanitary Sewer Treatment Project – Nothing new to report, still on schedule for the plant to be completed in 2026. Will keep everyone posted.

Department of Public Works Training - On 2/25/2025 training for the department began with on Confined Space Entry being conducted at the PW facility by Dane Mall, Lead Public Entity Risk Advisor with Alliant Insurance Service (no cost to the city) this is the city insurance company. On 2/27 the same company has offsite training on Ergonomics and Lifting which I am sending two groups of employees at two different times that day (no cost to the city). On 3/13 the same company will provide important training in Public Works which is Trench and Excavation training (no cost to the city). The training which was set up is the Certified Flagger training on 3/17 in advance of the construction season. It will cost \$1300, conducted by Bartalone Safety Company thru the recommendation of the city insurance provider.

State of Illinois Crime Lab/State Police Headquarters Project – UPDATE – Nothing New to Report concept plan was presented to the city council work session on 11/5/2024 we will keep the council updated as information is received from the State.

City Website – Update: CivicPLUS had an introduction meeting with the city team to begin the process for redesigning the City Web Site. CivicPLUS is our Web Site Host and offers this service with additional training for staff to keep the Web Site Fresh. As part of the next step there will be designs to review and these will be sent to the city council members for feedback.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if we could make sure when a resident calls with a concern, that they are not told their concern will be put at the bottom of the list. She explained that she received a call from a resident stating she called Public Works to let them know that the trash needs picked up and was told she is at the bottom of the list. She commented that it is not what you say but how you say it.

Alderman Jefferson commented that the Interim Public Works Director needs to be here so they can talk to him and not talk through the Interim City Administrator because it was very disrespectful and if you cannot be respectful to the Council or the residents who pay your salary then you need to not be here. He then asked when the Interim Director will be in to talk to him. Interim Administrator Graff commented that it was not the most appropriate way to relay a message to the citizen and the Interim Public Works Director works for him and he will talk to him.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: There were no agenda items for discussion.

CITY ENGINEER: City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that he has no agenda items but is happy to answer any questions.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if there were any updates on the sign lighting. Engineer Wiedeman commented that he needs to follow up with this and update the Council.

Alderwoman Gazal also asked if there will be anything on this budget for the light at McGilvrey. Engineer Wiedeman commented that it will be next year since they are looking at different designs since it is an SRA route, and it will need to be approved by the County and hopefully we could look at bidding towards the end of the year.

Alderman Cipiti asked for an update on the crosswalk project. Engineer Wiedeman commented that they met with the school a month ago and they came to a point where there was discussion based on the money they receive for bussing. Once the school can see what they can potentially do, to not lose their funding, they will meet again around April. He commented that it was a productive meeting but there are some ‘roadblocks’ they have to get through and that is what they are working on at this point.

Alderman Cipiti asked if the Council can be updated regarding the crosswalk. Interim Administrator Graff commented that the flooding issue needs addressed in that area and Engineer Wiedeman informed the school that if any work is done it will need to have some

structures in the future so they connect the trail system for the children to go back and forth, and this will need addressed in the future.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that she was confused.

Engineer Wiedeman commented that there are two things going on there, there are issues in the parking lot with flooding from the waters coming from Caton Farm Road and this was discussed with the school. The second part that Interim Administrator Graff is talking about is behind the school on the bike path there is a low area there that goes through a wetland which was designed to let water overflow go through the top of it and every time it rains water goes through that path. Obviously, this will bring issues, and we discussed working with them for a solution but technically the bike path is the responsibility of the school based on the agreement that they signed with the park district, but we can possibly help with a solution to that problem, which is part of the discussions.

Alderman Cipiti asked how the flooding on Caton Farm Road effects the crosswalk path. Engineer Wiedeman commented that it does not, and it is two different issues. He also commented that the school originally thought the city owned the bike path and it was investigated.

Alderman Cipiti asked for an update on the grant for the crosswalk. Engineer Wiedeman commented that it is not until late April or early May that they make the announcement.

Alderman Albert asked if we could make sure to not forget to hold the township responsible for helping with the McGilvrey project since the other side of the road is unincorporated and there should be some type of cost sharing.

Engineer Wiedeman commented that he would bring that up to the County, but they have already pretty much stated that it is our project.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Economic & Community Development Director Patrick Ainsworth commented that he has no agenda items for discussion but is happy to answer any questions. There were none.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Police Chief Ed Clark requested Approval to Purchase Four Ford Interceptor Hybrid Vehicles per DCEO Grant Reimbursement Award per the memo dated March 3, 2025. This is for an estimated cost of \$264,008.00 but after talking to the mechanics and seeing which equipment is reuseable the estimated cost would be around \$250,000.00.

(#2) Motion by Alderman Albert seconded by Alderperson Oberlin, for Approval to Purchase Four Ford Interceptor Hybrid Vehicles per DCEO Grant Reimbursement Award per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

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

Chief Clark thanked Engineer Ron Wiedeman for letting him know about the grant.

Chief Clark also announced that Saturday, March 8, 2025, is the Polar Plunge at the Braidwood Recreation Center.

Alderwoman Gazal would like the invitations to the city events extended to the Council in the future.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Soliman commented that the Joliet Herald News and Shaw Media did another survey this year and for the second year in a row, the City of Crest Hill is one of the top workplaces of Will and Grundy Counties and he would like to congratulate the employees for their work and for their customer service they provide.

The communities included were Plainfield, Crest Hill, Channahon, New Lenox, and Joliet.

Alderman Oberlin commented that the mayor made a statement at the Carillon Lakes event stating that the mayor is working with Silver Cross Hospital to bring a hospital here to Crest Hill on some land and she was not aware of this and if this is a true statement why is the Council not aware of this.

Mayor Soliman commented that it is a true statement and Silver Cross Hospital is putting an urgent care in the strip mall along Weber Road and he was speaking to a representative of Silver Cross Hospital and made the representative aware of the 200 acres just north of the Speedway gas station and recommended to him that would be a nice location for an emergency center something like what is in Plainfield on 127th Street. He also commented that the representative was unaware that the land was available, and he would pass it along with the real estate side of the hospital and inquire about the property.

Alderman Cipiti commented that he has been hearing and seeing communications from other municipalities that the mayors are scheduled to give a State of the City/Village statement and asked the mayor if he planned on doing that for the residents.

Mayor Soliman commented that when there was an active Chamber of Commerce there was always a State of the City, but we have not had an active Chamber in many years. He also commented that when you look at the other municipalities, they are all hosted, prepared, and sponsored by their Chamber of Commerce. He also commented that we have not had a Chamber of Commerce since 2015/2016.

Alderman asked the mayor if he does not think one could take place without a Chamber of Commerce? Mayor Soliman commented that he is just saying that the State of the City/Village in all municipalities are always under the Chamber of Commerce. Alderman Cipiti commented that he understands that, but could we not do something. Mayor Soliman commented that he would not know who would lead it. Alderman Cipiti commented that it is an important thing, and the mayor could lead it. Mayor Soliman commented that no other mayor leads it, and it has always been done through the Chamber of Commerce and Crest Hill does not have a Chamber of Commerce.

Alderman Cipiti continues to comment that when things are important, we find a way to do them but when we do not think they are important we come up with an excuse. Mayor Soliman asked Alderman Cipiti if he would like to sponsor it and put it together. Alderman Cipiti commented that it is not his job.

CITY CLERK: City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall requested Approval to Waive the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business Licenses and Alarm Registration Fee for Del Toro Transmission per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

(#3) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to Deny the Waiver of the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business License for Del Toro Transmission in the amount of \$150.00 per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Ald. Methvin.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall requested Approval to Waive the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business Licenses and Alarm Registration Fee for Adil Pediatrics per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

(#4) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to Deny the Waiver of the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business License for Adil Pediatrics in the amount of \$150.00 per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Ald. Methvin.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall requested Approval to Waive the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business Licenses and Alarm Registration Fee for Hendrickson Bumper & Trim per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

(#5) Motion by Alderman Jefferson seconded by Alderman Dyke, to Deny the Waiver of the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business License for Hendrickson Bumper & Trim in the amount of \$450.00 per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Ald. Methvin.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall requested Approval to Waive the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business Licenses and Alarm Registration Fee for Prestige Brick Pavers & Landscapers per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if we investigated this business and how they were paying for two business licenses. Attorney Stiff commented that it has not been 100% investigated. He commented that he had talked to Deputy Karen Kozierka and was told she had a conversation with this gentleman when he applied for this each year and our ordinance does say that two different locations are two different business licenses. He then stated that when the business owner advised that he had equipment and material stored at this site, they charged him a separate business license since it is a separate location from the residential business location.

Alderman Jefferson asked if this is a shared space. Attorney Stiff commented that to his understanding the owner of the property rents individual owners, but it does not look like a clear aerial view of parking spots, it is a big gravel lot of grouping of 'stuff.'

There is still investigation going on from the Clerk's Office to see who is renting space from Mr. Conte.

Alderman Jefferson commented that he does not feel this individual should be the only business owner paying for license there when no one else is and feels it needs to be investigated more then bring it back for discussion.

(#6) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Albert, to Deny the Waiver of the Administrative Penalty for the 2025 Business License for Prestige Brick Pavers & Landscapers in the amount of \$225.00 per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Cipiti, Albert, Dyke, Oberlin.

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Ald. Methvin, Jefferson, Gazal.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

There being four (4) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Alderman Cipiti asked if going forward will there be more request to waive the penalty fees for business licenses or can we stop it here. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented not until there is an ordinance in place that we discussed last week. Attorney Stiff commented that it was discussed to change the ordinance to add that language, and it will go to a work session to discuss and then for a vote after that.

Alderperson Oberlin asked for research on other municipalities and how they manage situations like this.

CITY TREASURER: City Treasurer Glen Conklin requested to Approve the List of Bills Issued Through February 26, 2025, in the Amount of \$150,172.22 per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

(#7) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin, seconded by Alderwoman Methvin, to Approve the list of bills issued through February 26, 2025, in the amount of \$150,172.22 for Council approval per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

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

City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the Regular and Overtime Payroll from February 10, 2025, through February 23, 2025, in the amount of \$266,193.11 per the memo dated March 3, 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business.

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

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS: Alderwoman Gazal announced that a new business off Weber Road opened called Blessing Cooks and asked for people to go and support Blessing Cooks.

She also announced that there are two important items on the Plan Commission agenda, one being the gun range and the other one is the old City Hall this Thursday, March 13, 2025. She stated that if anyone is unhappy this would be your opportunity to come out and express how you feel.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that the Crest Hill Family Outreach Food Pantry is having a tough time financially, and if anyone could help or donate, please go to their website for information, and this would be greatly appreciated.

Alderman Albert commented that he seen the Public Works crew working on a watermain break and Eric Bushong was leading the crew and he just wanted to give them a 'hats off' on the impressive operation they were doing and thanked them.

Alderman Albert then commented that last week was the D.A.R.E. Graduation and his son won second place on the D.A.R.E. poster and wants Officer Outlaw to realize how much the children appreciate her coming to the school and the work she does with the children.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Raul Salazar, owner of Prestige Brick Pavers & Landscapers, commented that Conte runs a paving business from his place and has equipment and gravel there. He also commented

that he rents spaces as a business, as well. He then said his business mailing address is his home address where he receives his mail.

Raul also commented that last week it was said that his case would be investigated in order to make a decision, and he feels that it was investigated enough to figure out what Conte is doing renting spaces, and it was not investigated properly to charge him a late fee and two licenses.

Stuart Soifer, a resident, approached the podium and commented that LVS is Lockport and not Crest Hill. Alderman Albert commented that it is a Lockport mailing address only. Stuart then commented that if he goes to a storage facility and store equipment, he does not pay a business license.

Stuart then asked if the mayor was talking about the two hundred acres that is owned by Department of Corrections and if so, that property is not even available. Mayor Soliman commented that maybe if someone is interested, it could be available.

Mayor Soliman informed the Council that there was a need for an executive session on 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

(#8) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Cipiti, to go into executive session on 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

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

Executive Session 8:18 p.m.

(#9) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Albert, to reconvene from the executive session on Security Procedures 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

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

Reconvened 8:54 p.m.

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

(#10) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to adjourn the March 3, 2025, Council meeting.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Approved this 17 day of MARCH, 2025.

As presented

As amended ✓


CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK


RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR