

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
June 1, 2026

1. OPENING OF MEETING

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.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Soliman asked State Representative Natalie Manley to lead the pledge of allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

3. ROLL CALL

Roll call indicated the following present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Jamie Malloy, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman Angelo Deserio, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, and Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: City Administrator Blaine Wing, Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Glenn Gehrke, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter, Public Works Director Gary Richardson, Assistant City Administrator/HR Ashley Monroe, and City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent was: Alderman Nate Albert.

Mayor Ray Soliman explained that he received a text message from Alderman Albert and he is unable to attend today's meeting. Alderman Albert is excused.

Mayor Soliman stated that Natalie Manley, the State Representative for Crest Hill, was present to speak. Ms. Manley read House Resolution 933 to commend Crest Hill on the 84th anniversary of the dedication of its Lidice Memorial. The resolution honors the multigenerational dedication of Crest Hill residents to remembering the martyred Czechoslovakian village of Lidice. A copy of the resolution was presented to Alderperson Oberlin, who will read the resolution at the annual Lidice Memorial Ceremony on June 7th.

4. CITIZEN/SPECIAL REQUEST/PUBLIC HEARINGS

4A. 2026 Grand Prairie Water Challenge Presentation

Mayor Soliman provided background on the Grand Prairie Water Commission. The Water Commission comprises the municipalities of Romeoville, Crest Hill, Joliet, Shorewood, Channahon, and Minooka. Mayor Soliman described it as the largest water commission in the state of Illinois and acknowledged the ongoing support of State Representative Natalie Manley, Senator Cappel, Representative Dee Avelar, and State Senator Rachel Fisher in securing state and federal funding for the

Commission. Mayor Soliman recounted the annual inter-community water conservation contest among the six member mayors. Crest Hill was the inaugural winner in 2023, held the trophy through 2024, and finished third in 2026, with the trophy being passed to the Village of Minooka. For the 2026 contest, each community drew a winner from among its participating residents. The Crest Hill winner was Jackie Roberts; as she was unable to attend due to illness, her sister, Kathy Strle, accepted the water conservation gift basket on her behalf.

7A. MAYOR'S REPORT:

1. Introduction of the Public Works Superintendent of Operations, Water, and Wastewater.

Public Works Director Gary Richardson introduced three newly hired administrative staff for the Public Works Department, expressing appreciation to the recruitment firm Local Gov for their assistance in the search. The three appointees were:

John Robinson – Superintendent of Operations, overseeing streets, fleet, and buildings and grounds. Mr. Robinson comes to Crest Hill from Oak Forest and is scheduled to begin on June 15.

Derrick Wentz – Water Superintendent. Director Richardson noted that Crest Hill currently requires a Class B operator and will require a Class C operator upon transition to Lake Michigan water. Mr. Wentz holds a Class A operator's license — the highest classification in the State of Illinois — and is scheduled to begin on June 15.

Antrena Trimble – Superintendent of Wastewater. Ms. Trimble has over 25 years of wastewater experience and holds a Level 1 wastewater operator's license, the highest classification in the state. She is scheduled to begin on June 8.

Director Richardson expressed confidence in all three hires and noted that these appointments fill the administrative positions within Public Works.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

No one approached the podium to make public comments on the agenda items.

6. CONSENT AGENDA:

Mayor Ray Soliman asked if any of the Council members wished to have any items removed from the consent agenda for more discussion. No items were removed.

Mayor Soliman proceeded to read the seven consent agenda items:

6A. Approve the Minutes from the Regular City Council Meeting Held on May 18, 2026.

6B. Approve a Sign Permit Waiver for Festa Italiana - American Italian Cultural Society.

- 6C. Approve a Parade Road Closure for Festa Italiana - American Italian Cultural Society.
- 6D. Approve a Three-Day Liquor License Waiver for Festa Italiana – American Italian Cultural Society.
- 6E. Approve Pay Request #3 from Fer Pal Construction USA, LLC with Direction to Strand Associates to Send to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$265,787.06.
- 6F. Approve the Civic Plus Website Agreements.
- 6G. Approve a Resolution Adopting the City of Crest Hill Brand Star Standards Guide+2026-2027. **Resolution #1420**

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda items.

Alderman Gazal made a motion to Approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Alderman Deserio. Roll Call: Ayes: Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Kubal. Nays: None. Absent: Albert. MOTION CARRIED.

City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall provided the resolution number:

- 6G: Resolution 1420

7. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & ELECTED OFFICIALS

7A. MAYOR’S REPORT:

Mayor Soliman invited Dan Brandolino, Chairman of the Festa Italiana–American Italian Cultural Society, to address the Council. Mr. Brandolino provided an overview of the 26th annual Festa Italiana, scheduled for August 7–9, 2026. Notable changes for this year include a full menu offered on Friday evening (5:00–11:00 p.m.), revised Saturday hours (5:00–11:00 p.m., condensed from prior years to reduce volunteer fatigue), and Sunday hours of noon to 9:00 p.m. following the 11:00 a.m. Mass and traditional procession. The menu will feature traditional Italian fare. There will be bands performing and the annual spaghetti eating contest will be held. Mr. Brandolino noted that the festival was voted the Best Festival in Will County in 2025 and attributed that distinction in part to the all-volunteer, made-from-scratch kitchen. Mayor Soliman commended the festival as well-run and problem-free over the years.

Mayor Soliman reported on the 38th Annual Veterans Memorial Day Ceremony and 31st Police Memorial Ceremony held on May 25, 2026. He noted attendance of over 125 people and praised the event as a success. Guest speaker Staff Sergeant Calvin Lee of the Joliet Township High School ROTC program was singled out for particular commendation, described by Mayor Soliman as among the top three speakers in the

ceremony's 32-year history. A combined presentation of "Duty, Honor, Country" performed by Sergeant Lee alongside the Frankfort Brass Band drew an emotional response from attendees. Mayor Soliman acknowledged all volunteers who assisted with setup and cleanup, read a list of individual contributors by name, and thanked the Lockport Township Park District for the donation of tents. Former City Treasurer Glenn Conklin was also recognized for his longstanding donation of printed programs for the ceremony. Mayor Soliman honored the thirteen Crest Hill residents who did not return from World War II or Vietnam, and the two slain Crest Hill police officers, Tim Simenson and James Nink.

7B. CITY CLERK'S REPORT:

There were no items to report, but Alderwoman Gazal wanted to thank the clerk's department for an email that was sent to Council with the details of what was going on at Menard's.

7C. CITY TREASURER'S REPORT:

A. Approval of the Regular and Overtime Payroll from May 4, 2026, through May 17, 2026, in the Amount of \$304,127.24.

B. Approval of the List of Bills Issued through June 2, 2026, in the Amount of \$1,494,183.44.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion.

Alderman Cipiti made a motion to Approve the List of Bills. Seconded by Alderman Jefferson. Roll Call: Ayes: Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Kubal, Dyke. Nays: None. Absent: Albert. MOTION CARRIED.

City Attorney Mike Stiff stated that there should be a vote to approve the regular and overtime payroll as well.

Alderman Dyke made a motion to Regular and Overtime Payroll from May 4, 2026, through May 17, 2026. Seconded by Alderwoman Gazal. Roll Call: Ayes: Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio. Nays: None. Absent: Albert. MOTION CARRIED.

7D. CITY ATTORNEY:

There were no items to report.

7E. CITY ADMINISTRATOR:

There were no items to report, but Administrator Blaine Wing wished to thank Ashley Monroe, the management team and City Council since he was out of the office most of the previous week. He enjoyed time with family and friends knowing the City was well cared for.

Aldersperson Oberlin wished Administrator Wing a happy one-year anniversary with the City of Crest Hill. Alderman Cipiti seconded that sentiment.

7F. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

1. Approve an Emergency Repair Proposal with Water Well Solutions and the City of Crest Hill, Will County, IL, for the Booster Pump Systems at Well 4 and Well 9 in the Amount of \$11,725.00.

Public Works Director Gary Richardson brought forward an emergency repair request for booster pump systems at Well 4 and Well 9, noting that the item was not budgeted but represented a significant operational concern. Well 4 also requires replacement of its variable frequency drive (VFD). Director Richardson indicated that all wells are being inspected, but these two are in immediate need of repair.

Alderswoman Gazal made a motion to Approve an Emergency Repair Proposal with Water Well Solutions and the City of Crest Hill, Will County, IL, for the Booster Pump Systems at Well 4 and Well 9 in the Amount of \$11,725.00. Seconded by Aldersperson Oberlin. Roll Call: Ayes: Cipiti, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin. Nays: None. Absent: Albert. MOTION CARRIED.

Alderswoman Gazal commended Director Richardson for his work since joining the City in December, noting the progress made in Public Works staffing and operations. Alderman Jefferson seconded that sentiment.

7G. CITY ENGINEER:

There were no items to report.

In response to a question from Alderswoman Gazal regarding an update on the Division Street reconstruction project, Engineer Wiedeman reported that the project is ahead of schedule and anticipated to be completed before the Fourth of July. He noted that the road is expected to reopen to traffic on both sides by approximately June 15. He advised Council to expect a forthcoming change order related to the discovery of soft, unstable subgrade material beneath the old roadway—likely the result of historical filling over a wetland—requiring additional excavation. While this represents an added cost, he noted it would significantly extend the life of the new pavement.

Alderman Dyke raised a concern that the monument sign lights on Broadway were not functioning. Director Richardson and Engineer Wiedeman were unaware of the issue and committed to sending staff to inspect it the following morning.

7H. FINANCE:

There were no items to report.

7H. POLICE DEPARTMENT:
There were no items to report.

7J. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:
There were no items to report.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
There was no unfinished business.

9. NEW BUSINESS:
There was no new business.

10. COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:
Aldersperson Oberlin announced that the 84th Annual Lidice Ceremony would be held on Sunday, June 7, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. at Lidice Memorial Park at Prairie and Hosmer. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony would move to City Hall. Light refreshments provided by the Czech School will follow the ceremony.

Alderman Dyke noted that the Finance Committee will be meeting Thursday morning at 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Soliman announced that the Veterans Committee will meet on Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. in the Community Room, for a wrap-up of the 2026 program and planning for the following year.

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:
All Council members in attendance welcomed the three newly appointed Public Works Superintendents and expressed confidence in the direction of the department.

Aldersperson Oberlin thanked State Representative Manley for presenting the resolution for the Lidice Memorial.

Alderman Cipiti, Alderman Jefferson and Alderwoman Gazal offered thanks and commendations to the Mayor and all volunteers involved in the Memorial Day ceremony. Alderwoman Gazal additionally thanked City Administrator Blaine Wing and Building Commissioner Don Seeman for assisting with post-event cleanup at the Memorial Day ceremony, noting it helped avoid additional staff overtime.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Resident Linda Dyke addressed the Council regarding the condition of Lidice Memorial Park, noting the presence of broken glass and litter. Alderperson Oberlin responded that she picks up litter in the grass and on the street whenever she is there, but a cleanup was already scheduled and that the matter would be addressed prior to the June 7 ceremony.

Ms. Dyke also commented that she heard that Alderperson Oberlin was complaining about buying flowers and water for the Lidice ceremony. Alderperson Oberlin stated that **she didn't complain**. She stated that she had bought the flowers with her money and the water was from her house, so **she didn't want there to be any confusion**. Alderperson Oberlin stated it was a joy for her to do it.

Ms. Dyke also questioned the water pipe that is coming out of the ground with a lock on it at the Lidice park. She wanted to know if that was City water. Alderperson Oberlin stated that it is a well and it is not City water.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1): The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.
2. 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(5): The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired.
3. 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(2): Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representative, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to go into executive session on 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(1), 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(5), and 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(2).

Alderperson Oberlin made a motion to go into executive session on 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(1), 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(5), and 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(2) at 7:53 p.m. Seconded by Alderwoman Gazal. Roll Call: Ayes: Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti. Nays: None. Absent: Albert. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to reconvene from the executive session on 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(1), 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(5), and 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(2).

Alderman Oberlin made a motion to reconvene from the executive session on 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(1), 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(5), and 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(2) at 9:19 p.m. Seconded by Alderman Deserio. Roll Call: Ayes: Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson. Nays: None. Absent: Albert. MOTION CARRIED.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Council, a motion for adjournment was in order.

Alderman Cipiti made a motion to adjourn at 9:19 p.m. Seconded by Alderman Deserio. Roll Call: Ayes: Oberlin, Cipiti, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal. Nays: None. Absent: Albert. MOTION CARRIED.

Approved this 15 day of JUNE, 2026,

As presented X

As amended _____



CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK



RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR