

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
September 16, 2024

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 for a moment of silence for Officer James W. Nink, who passed away on September 16, 1967, and Sergeant Timothy A. Simenson who passed away September 18, 1994. Both officers passed away in the line of duty. Mayor Soliman offered condolences to the families of both officers and thanked them for their commitment, service, dedication, and loyalty they had to the City of Crest Hill. He also asked for a moment of silence for all Police Officers and public service employees who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

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

Also present were: Interim City Administrator Tony Graff, Deputy Chief Jason Opiola, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Director of Community Development Ron Mentzer, Interim Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Alderwoman Jennifer Methvin, Alderman Joe Kubal, Police Chief Ed Clark, Interim Finance Director Erica Waggoner, Interim Public Works Director Mike Eulitz, Building Commissioner Don Seeman, Deputy Clerk Karen Kozierka.

Mayor Soliman commented that he received messages from Alderwoman Methvin and Alderman Kubal, and they are excused from tonight's meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the Work Session Meeting Held on August 26, 2024, for Council approval per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

(#1) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to Approve the Minutes from the Work Session Meeting Held on August 26, 2024, per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Methvin, Kubal.

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

Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on September 3, 2024, for Council approval per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

(#2) Motion by Alderman Jefferson seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to Approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on September 3, 2024, per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Methvin.

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

CITY ATTORNEY: Attorney Mike Stiff requested to Approve an Ordinance Amending Section 2.72.040 (Membership; Compensation) of Chapter 2.72 (Civil Service Commission) and Section 2.80.404 (Compensation) of Chapter 2.80 (Plan Commission) of Title 2 (Administration and Personnel) of the City of Crest Hill Code of Ordinances per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

Attorney Stiff commented that after discussion at the Work Session Meeting he reviewed Section 2.80.404 and noticed that the Civil Service Commission has half the meetings that the Plan Commission has, and it was voted to change the compensation amount based on a twelve-month schedule. He then stated that if the intent is to raise the Civil Service Commission members to the same as the Plan Commission, even though they have less meetings, then the ordinance is ready to pass. He then commented that if the Council would like to discuss this more, we can vote to approve only the Plan Commission changes before you and amend the ordinance to remove Chapter 2.72 (Civil Service).

Alderman Jefferson commented that he objected at the last meeting to the changing of the agenda item. The agenda item was addressing the Plan Commission only. He also stated that according to the Robert's Rule of Order, Twelfth Edition, it states you can only change an agenda item by two-thirds vote or unanimous vote, and neither of which they had, and this is an out of order act. He also commented that he feels we need to table this and have a proper discussion with the proper amendments made.

Attorney Stiff commented that you can vote on the Plan Commission portion in the ordinance, and he can remove the Civil Service section and have that on an agenda for discussion and have its very own ordinance. He then stated that the agenda item does not have to be specific, it was read to discuss an amendment to the compensation of the Plan Commission ordinance and that is what we are doing.

(#3) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderperson Oberlin, to Approve an Ordinance Amending Section 2.72.040 (Membership; Compensation) of Chapter 2.72 of Chapter 2.80 (Plan Commission) of Title 2 (Administration and Personnel) of the City of Crest Hill Code of Ordinances per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Methvin.

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

Ordinance #1999

CITY ADMINISTRATOR: Interim Administrator Tony Graff gave a report and update, which is as follows:

The Fire inspection and Testing has been completed and all devices are operational. The elevator inspection follow-up is scheduled for October 14, 2024, when the State Fire Marshall is here.

Front Damage Inside Clerk and Park District Windows: They have reached out to the vendors to finalize the proposals. We also asked for a proposal regarding speakers since there is a problem with hearing through the speakers.

Grand Prairie Water Commission “GPWC” (Lake Michigan Water Project): The Commission’s next meeting is 10/3/2024.

STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER – The Governor’s Office is waiting for the 18th of the month which is when the hearing process of the ninety days are done, and we should hear from them to know the next steps soon.

Lockport Township Fire District Training Facility Proposed Project: There was valuable feedback regarding the proposed project at the meeting. There will be a Public Hearing for this project on November 14th.

Route 66 100th Anniversary Tourism Grant Application: The application was completed and submitted to Heritage Corridor for review. There are some changes that will be discussed with the Council.

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).

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR – Candidate Applications have been received and the pre-screening will begin by the City Administrator, Interim Human Resources Manager, and Interim Public Works Director.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER – the Staff selected two candidates to be invited for interviews with the City Council which is scheduled for 9/24/24 at a closed session starting at 6:30PM.

BUILDING INSPECTOR –The job announcement has been reposted with the deadline of 9/30/2024.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: The job announcement is prepared and posted on job sites and associations working with Interim Director Mentzer.

FINANCE DIRECTOR Recruitment: MGT/GovHR USA representative Ryan Cotton prepared the job announcement which has been posted.

Mosquito Spraying by Clarke Environmental: A spray was performed on 9/10/24. They are estimating the next spray around 9/30/24 depending on weather. They are wanting some rain to help the spray stick.

Water Meter Replacement Project – (ON-GOING) Non-Compliance property owners' appointments are progressing.

West Sanitary Sewer Treatment Project – The project is 50% completed and is still on schedule to be fully completed in 2026.

PLANNING COMMISSION – MUNICODE PROGRAM UPDATE: The Plan Commission agendas are now being posted through Municode and the next step is to provide computers to the Planning Commission members for the agenda packets. City Clerk Vershay-Hall is working with our technology vendor and will provide an update and proposals and bring them to a work session for discussion.

State of Illinois Crime Lab/State Police Headquarters Project – UPDATE NOTHING NEW TO REPORT (PENDING)

“COMMUNITY EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS”

- WHITE OAK LIBRARY FALL FEST EVENT 9/28/2024 10 AM TO 2 PM.
- SIEGAL'S FARM PUMPKIN FEST EVENT 9/28/2024 10AM TO 2PM.

Alderman Jefferson asked if there is any infrastructure planned for Division Street. Interim Administrator Graff stated that they are going to be doing a traffic study since there will be more traffic coming out of the facility.

Alderman Jefferson commented that he met with some residents, and they are impressed with this facility, but they were upset with how many people from Carillon Lakes and Lockport that spoke who are not affected by this.

Alderman Dyke asked for an update regarding the money Stateville owes the City of Crest Hill. Interim Administrator Graff commented that the \$800,000.00 payment has been approved but the State wants more documentation regarding the additional \$113,000.00. We have asked them to pay us the approved \$800,000.00 but we are not waiving the additional \$113,000.00 and ask them to review that.

Alderman Dyke also asked who maintains the center medians on Weber Road because they have many overgrown weeds. City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that it is the responsibility of Will County.

Alderman Dyke asked for an update on the old City Hall. Interim Administrator Graff commented that they are moving closer to the closing date, hopefully in 30-45 days. Alderman Dyke asked about what needs cleaned out of the building still and if all is cleaned out, he would like to stop paying for the dumpster.

Alderman Dyke also asked to have the Ford Explorers on the next Work Session for discussion and the Council to decide what we would do with them.

Alderwoman Gazal asked for an update on Sikich. Interim Administrator Graff commented that he reached out to Mary O'Connor, and he is trying to schedule a phone conference and has given her the extra documentation she requested. We should hear back from her for an update within a month.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if we are looking into getting Maria in Maintenance any part-time help. Interim Administrator Graff commented that he would look into it, but he believes a part-time person was hired.

Alderwoman Gazal asked to investigate why there is a leak in the ceiling.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: There were no agenda items and the Interim Public Works Director Eulitz was excused from the meeting.

Mayor Soliman extended his gratitude to the Public Works Department for all the water main breaks last weekend on Innercircle. The first water main break was the biggest ever and took about 12-15 hours to repair and then there were four other breaks because of the pressure.

CITY ENGINEER: City Engineer Ron Wiedeman requested Approval to Formally Reject the 2024 Sanitary Sewer Cleaning and Televising and Send the Attached Rejection Letter to all Bidders Stating the Reason for the Bid Rejection per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

(#4) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, for Approval to Formally Reject the 2024 Sanitary Sewer Cleaning and Televising and Send the Attached Rejection Letter to all Bidders Stating the Reason for the Bid Rejection per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Methvin.

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

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman requested to Approve a Resolution in Support of the City of Crest Hill's Application for an Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) Grant for Pedestrian School Crossing Upgrades on Caton Farm Road at Richland School Crossing in the City of Crest Hill per the memo dated September 16, 2024. There is funding that we believe we can receive but we will be responsible for twenty percent of the final cost, which our portion is estimated at \$20,000.00. If we decide not to move forward this is okay but this is the only time to receive funding for this.

Alderwoman Gazal asked why this was not on the agenda because she understood that the school does not want this. Engineer Wiedeman commented that that is not necessarily true, the school would like some type of crossing there, but their concern was providing additional signing and flashing signs. We would still have to meet with the school and one

of the things they asked for was funding and this would be an opportunity for funding. There are no final plans yet.

Alderman Cipiti asked whose idea was this project and how did it originate. Engineer Wiedeman commented that we received phone calls from residents about crossing Caton Farm Road and to see if a crossing could be put in and they talked to the school, researched funding, and put a plan into place. He also stated that there used to be a crossing in the past but was moved. Alderman Cipiti asked if the residents that contacted the city also contacted the school. Engineer Wiedeman commented that he did not know if they contacted the school or not.

Engineer Wiedman commented that if we go for the grant application and receive the funding and then decide it is something we do not want, we will not have to take the grant we could pass on the grant, but this is an opportunity to get funding and there is a tight deadline.

Alderman Cipiti asked for this project to be placed on a Work Session for discussion. Engineer Wiedeman stated that if we place this on a Work Session for discussion we cannot apply for the grant because the resolution is part of the application that must be submitted by September 30, 2024.

Attorney Stiff commented that the state is wanting to know if you receive the grant that you will commit to paying twenty percent. We can always turn down the grant if you receive it but this resolution is so the grant can be evaluated at the state level.

(#5) Motion by Alderman Albert seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to Approve a Resolution in Support of the City of Crest Hill's Application for an Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) Grant for Pedestrian School Crossing Upgrades on Caton Farm Road at Richland School Crossing in the City of Crest Hill per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Ald. Gazal, Cipiti.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Methvin.

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

Resolution #1259

Engineer Wiedeman commented that starting September 17, 2024, they will be patching the westbound lanes on Theodore by Oakland. This will shut the intersection down in Oakland. The work should be completed by the end of the week, weather permitting, and notifications have gone out.

Asphalt patching will be going on with D Construction. He also commented that Circle and Green will start the resurfacing of the road.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT: Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer had no agenda items but wanted to update the Council on the Old

City Hall. He commented that last Tuesday he received information from a representative of QuikTrip confirming they are underway with the traffic analysis that they will submit to the city for the proposed project and the survey of the entire project. It was stated that they will not close the sale of the property until they work through the city's zoning approval process and receive the necessary zoning approvals from the City of Crest Hill. Interim Director Mentzer commented that they would not close on the property until early spring of 2025.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Deputy Chief Jason Opiola requested Approval of a Special Event Police Services Agreement with Siegel's Farm per the memo dated September 16, 2024. This will occur on October 13th, 19th, and 20th and the hours are from 12PM until 6PM.

It was stated that they did not receive the entire document but only the first page. Deputy Chief Opiola commented that he did not know why there was only one page, but he would get the remaining pages for them to review.

Alderman Gazal asked for an explanation before voting since they only received one page of the agreement. Mayor Soliman commented that this is their standard contract agreement and is the same verbiage. It was stated that it was for one officer.

Alderman Oberlin asked Clerk Vershay-Hall if she received the entire agreement. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that the Police Department uploads their items and if they did not upload the entire agreement into Municode it would not be there. It was stated that each department must upload their own documentation into Municode.

(#6) Motion by Alderman Albert seconded by Alderman Gazal, for Approval of a Special Event Police Services Agreement with Siegel's Farm per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Methvin, Kubal.

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

Alderman Oberlin commented that the Neighbors Night Out was successful and that Officer Outlaw did a wonderful job organizing the event.

Many Council Members thanked the Police Department for their hard work in getting the Neighbors Night Out together and stated it was a wonderful community event.

Alderman Gazal thanked everyone for their donations.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Soliman gave congratulations for the Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Crest Hill and Will County Highway Department for the improvements on Knapp and Weber Road. This is a significant improvement to the City of Crest Hill and much safer now.

CITY CLERK: City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall announced that the City of Crest Hill and Lockport Township will be doing a free Community Shred Event on Saturday, October 26, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. This will be held in the City Hall parking lot. There will be a limit of four (4) boxes.

CITY TREASURER: City Treasurer Glen Conklin requested Approval to Revise the Employee Handbook Language-Tuition Reimbursement Policy and Meal Reimbursement Policy per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

Interim Human Resources Manager Dave Strahl commented that this was discussed at a Work Session on August 26, 2024. Several of the suggestions from the Council have been included and the Human Resource Manager has been added as a sign-off, as well. He also drafted a promissory agreement that will be included in every reimbursement application. The promissory agreement acknowledges that the employee signing this will abide by the reimbursement rules and any outstanding funds due to the city will be paid from their final paycheck. If the final paycheck is not enough to pay back the reimbursement, there will be a payment schedule of up to twelve months on the remaining balance and if the balance is not paid, the city will use any means necessary to repay the debt which could impact their credit history.

(#7) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, for Approval to Revise the Employee Handbook Language-Tuition Reimbursement Policy and Meal Reimbursement Policy per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Jefferson, Methvin.

There being five (5) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

City Treasurer Glen Conklin requested to Approve the list of bills issued through September 17, 2024, in the Amount of \$789,633.79 per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

(#8) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin, seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to Approve the list of bills issued through September 17, 2024, in the amount of \$789,633.79 for Council approval per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Methvin.

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

City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the regular and overtime payroll from August 26, 2024, through September 8, 2024, in the amount of \$263,220.13 per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

City Treasurer Conklin commented that he has placed the expense reports on the dais as a reminder that there is no reimbursement for alcohol, or in-room services, and the city will

pay for the stay at the hotel, parking at the hotel, and meals and beverages not to exceed \$100.00 per diem or \$300.00 for the weekend.

He also would like to have on an agenda for discussion the policy that Interim Manager Strahl is working on, a policy that is exclusive to the IML.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if they could have an update on the Places for Eating Tax since there has not been an update in a while. Treasurer Conklin stated that he would have Interim Finance Director Waggoner work on that.

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: Alderman Albert commented that the Neighbors Night Out Event was a great time and a great sense of community. He then thanked the Police Department and everyone else who was part of it.

Alderman Cipiti thanked the Police Department for all they did for the Neighbor Night Out Event, the residents really enjoyed it.

Alderson Oberlin wished her son a Happy 34th Birthday.

Alderman Gazal wished Alderson Oberlin's son a Happy Birthday.

Alderman Jefferson commented that Neighbors Night Out was successful and a good time was had, and it represented the City of Crest Hill in a good way.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Stuart Soifer, a resident, commented that he would like the city to look at placing lane markers or some type of traffic control and more street lighting on Division Street where the new exit and entrance for the Gas City is located. He commented that twice as he was traveling east on Division there were semi-trucks lined up in the median and someone pulled out to make a left hand turn to go eastbound on Division and nearly ran off the road, twice.

Mayor Soliman informed the Council that there was a need for an executive session on 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

(#9) Motion by Alderson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to go into executive session on 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Methvin, Kubal.

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

Executive Session 8:08 p.m.

(#10) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to reconvene from the executive session on 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) per the memo dated September 16, 2024.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Methvin.

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

Reconvened 9:02 p.m.

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

(#16) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to adjourn the September 16, 2024, Council meeting.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Methvin.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2024.

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR