MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
July 6, 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 everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance, which was led by thirteen-year-old Peter Townsend from DeMolay, in honor of America's 250th birthday. 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, Alderman Nate Albert, and Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: City Administrator Blaine Wing, Deputy Police Chief Ryan Dobczyk, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter, Assistant City Administrator/HR Director Ashley Monroe, and City Attorney John Rodack.

4. CITIZEN/SPECIAL REQUEST/PUBLIC HEARINGS
There were no items.

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.

Alderperson Oberlin offered a correction to the June 15, 2026, meeting minutes (Item 6B), noting that the written record on page 149 did not clearly distinguish between public works personnel and representatives from DeMolay who were being acknowledged. City Clerk Chris Vershay-Hall agreed to revise and reissue the corrected minutes.

Alderman Scott Dyke requested that Items F, G, and H be removed from the consent agenda for separate discussion.

Mayor Soliman proceeded to read the consent agenda items:

6A. Approve the Minutes from the Work Session Meeting Held on June 08, 2026.

6B. Approve the Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting Held on June 15, 2026 with corrections.

6C. Approve the Minutes of the Work Session Meeting Held on June 22, 2026.

6D. Police Pension Board Appointment.

6E. Approve a Special Event Police Services Agreement with the American Italian Cultural Society for August 7, 8 & 9, 2026.

6F. Approval to Purchase a New 2027 Airtow T14-12 Trailer in the Amount of $21,530.00. (*REMOVED for Discussion*)

6G. Approval to Purchase a New 2027 Ford Police Interceptor Utility including a Comprehensive K9 Equipment Package in the Amount of $63,707.87. (*REMOVED for Discussion*)

6H. Approval to Purchase a New 2027 Ford Police Interceptor Utility including a Comprehensive Patrol Equipment Package in the Amount of $59,457.13. (*REMOVED for Discussion*)

6I. Approve a Resolution Approving an Amendment to January 27, 2026 Agreement for General Services Per-and-Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Treatment Equipment and Pilot Testing Services by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Strand & Associates, Inc. ***Resolution #1430***

6J. Approve the Backflow Solutions, Inc. Agreement to Assist in the Administration, Tracking, and Notification Requirements Associated with the City's Backflow Prevention Program.

6K. Approve the 2026 50/50 Tree Planting Program.

6L. Award the Contract to Austin Tyler Construction, Incorporated for the 2026 Roadway Rehabilitation Program in the Amount of $1,799,817.55.

6M. Approve a Resolution for a Professional Services Agreement for a 2027 Financial Plan for Water and Sewer Utility (Rate Update) by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Burns & McDonnell in the Amount of $27,700.00. ***Resolution #1431***

6N. Approve a Resolution for a Professional Services Agreement for Crest Hill Municipal Park/Plaza by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Spaceco in the Amount of $77,800.00. ***Resolution #1432***

6O. Approve a Resolution for a Professional Services Agreement for Crest Hill Municipal Park/Plaza Planning and Landscaping by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and RVI Planning + Landscaping in the Amount of $60,400.00. ***Resolution #1433***

6P. Approval of Change Order No. 11 from Vissering Construction Inc. with the Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval. Change Order will Increase the Amount of the Contract to $50,051,690.

6Q. Approve a Resolution Approving the Job Description for the Position of Audio Visual and FOIA Specialist and Authorizing the Hiring of Ava Cox as a Police Department A/V & FOIA Specialist at a Salary not to Exceed $61,878.00. ***Resolution #1434***

6R. Approve an Emergency Payment for Public Works Biosolids Handling at the East & West Wastewater Treatment Plants in the Amount of $83,125.00.

6S. Approval of the 2026 Memorial Day/Police Memorial Event Report.

6T. Approval of the 84th Lidice Ceremony 2026 Memorial Report.

6U. Approve the Reduction of the March 2026 Utility Bill to $136.29, Noting that the Residents are Responsible Going Forward for their Usage & Bill.

Alderman Cipiti noted that the certificate of liability insurance for the Festa Italiana event (Item E) reflected the previous City Hall address of 1610 Plainfield Road, and requested it be corrected.

Alderman Albert raised a discrepancy in the stated contract amount for Item L, noting that the supporting bid tabulation reflected a corrected figure of $1,766,817.55 rather than the $1,799,817.55 listed in the agenda memo. City Engineer Ron Wiedeman confirmed the corrected amount.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda items with the noted corrections, excluding item **6F, 6G and 6H**.

Alderwoman Gazal made a <u>motion to Approve the Consent Agenda items 6A through 6E and 6I through 6U.</u> Seconded by Alderperson Oberlin. Roll Call: Ayes: Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal. Nayes: None. Absent: None. <u>MOTION CARRIED</u>.

Mayor Soliman stated that they would now discuss the items that were removed from the Consent Agenda to discuss separately.

6F. Approval to Purchase a New 2027 Airtow T14-12 Trailer in the Amount of $21,530.00.

Alderman Dyke, who had been unable to attend the prior work session, asked how frequently the city had needed to rent a trailer and whether purchasing one was justified. City Administrator Blaine Wing responded on behalf of Public Works Director Gary Richardson, explaining that the Airtow trailer being considered features air-operated hydraulics that allow it to drop low to the ground, making it capable of transporting slow-moving equipment such as scissor lifts that existing trailers cannot accommodate. Administrator Wing stated that the Public Works team projects a return on the investment within five years, given the savings in equipment wear and employee time, and that the trailer carries an expected service life of approximately twenty years. Alderwoman Gazal confirmed, after speaking directly with the Public Works Director, that the trailer was not associated with the recently purchased police utility vehicle.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve item 6F.

Alderperson Oberlin made a motion to approve consent agenda item 6F. Seconded by Alderman Deserio. Roll Call: Ayes: Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio. Nayes: None. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

6G. Approval to Purchase a New 2027 Ford Police Interceptor Utility including a Comprehensive K9 Equipment Package in the Amount of $63,707.87.

Alderman Dyke raised several questions regarding this item, including which existing canine unit, if any, was being replaced, the year and mileage of the current K9 vehicle, and why a hybrid model was not being purchased consistent with the department's recent fleet policy.

Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk explained that the department was not replacing the current K9 vehicle but rather retaining it as a dedicated spare. This decision was made after experiencing recurring mechanical issues that required the working dog to be sidelined whenever the vehicle was out for service. Having a spare ensures continuity of canine patrol even in the event of an accident or extended repair. Regarding the hybrid question, Deputy Chief Dobczyk explained that hybrid vehicles cycle their engines on and off, which creates an unacceptable risk of temperature fluctuation inside the vehicle when the canine is present, particularly during summer heat. The department is otherwise fully committed to hybrids for the remainder of the fleet. Alderman Dyke acknowledged the explanation regarding the hybrid but maintained that he wanted more specific information about the vehicle being added relative to the existing fleet before voting in favor of Item H.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve item 6G.

Alderman Albert made a motion to approve consent agenda item 6G. Seconded by Alderwoman Gazal. Roll Call: Ayes: Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke. Nayes: None. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

6H. Approval to Purchase a New 2027 Ford Police Interceptor Utility including a Comprehensive Patrol Equipment Package in the Amount of $59,457.13. Alderman Dyke reiterated his concern that it was unclear whether this purchase represented a replacement of an existing vehicle or an addition to the fleet, and whether any equipment from a vehicle being retired could be salvaged and transferred to reduce costs.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve item 6H.

Alderman Deserio made a motion to approve consent agenda item 6H. Seconded by Alderwoman Gazal. Roll Call: Ayes: Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal. Nayes: Dyke. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Soliman acknowledged that there were some guests in the audience that wanted to address City Council.

6D. Police Pension Board Appointment.

Mayor Soliman introduced Mr. Bill Barler, who was appointed to the Police Pension Board for a two-year term expiring May 1, 2028. Mr. Barler addressed the Council briefly, thanking Council members for their confidence and expressing his commitment to serving the City and the Crest Hill Police Department.

6E. Approve a Special Event Police Services Agreement with the American Italian Cultural Society for August 7, 8 & 9, 2026.

Dan Brandolino appeared on behalf of the American Italian Cultural Society to present the schedule for the 26th Annual Festa Italiana, to be held August 7–9, 2026. He outlined the full three-day program, including band lineups, a Sunday outdoor mass and procession, a pasta-eating contest, and other featured events. Mr. Brandolino expressed gratitude to the Council for the City's ongoing support, noting the event had been voted best festival in Will County.

City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall provided the resolution and ordinance numbers:

- 6I: Resolution 1430
- 6M: Resolution 1431
- 6N: Resolution 1432
- 6O: Resolution 1433
- 6Q: Resolution 1434

7. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & ELECTED OFFICIALS

7A. MAYOR'S REPORT:
There were no items to report.

7B. CITY CLERK'S REPORT:
City Clerk Chris Vershay-Hall announced an upcoming free community shred event, to be held jointly with Lockport Township Government on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in the City Hall parking lot. Residents were asked to limit submissions to four boxes. The event covers paper shredding only and does not include electronics.

7C. CITY TREASURER'S REPORT:

A. Approval of the List of Bills Issued through July 7, 2026, in the Amount of $2,297,115.55.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve the list of bills.

Alderwoman Gazal made a motion to approve the list of bills. Seconded by Alderman Jefferson. Roll Call: Ayes: Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin. Nayes: None. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

B. Approval of the Regular and Overtime Payroll from June 1, 2026, through June 14, 2026, in the Amount of $319,298.60.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve payroll for June 1, 2026, through June 14, 2026.

Alderman Jefferson made a motion to approve payroll for June 1, 2026 through June 14, 2026. Seconded by Alderman Dyke. Roll Call: Ayes: Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson. Nayes: None. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

C. Approval of an Additional Regular and Overtime Payroll from June 15, 2026, through June 28, 2026, in the Amount of $321,854.45.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to approve additional payroll from June 15, 2026, through June 28, 2026.

Alderman Jefferson made a motion to approve additional payroll from June 15, 2026, through June 28, 2026. Seconded by Alderwoman Gazal. Roll Call: Ayes: Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti. Nayes: None. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

City Treasurer Jamie Malloy also provided a status update on her ongoing review of approximately 7,000 pages of documents submitted as part of the forensic audit. Treasurer Malloy reported that she had not yet been able to determine total revenues, expenditures, or profits from the materials. She noted a number of anomalies encountered in the documents, including an email subject line of “the elastic in my panties,” eleven bills that have been submitted for the same vase, two bills for the Crest Hill Women’s Civic League for Giovan’s with the same bill date and same bill amount, notice that the Women’s Civic League celebrates its 50th with a sample ballot from 1960, emails containing the words, “You rock” came through twice, pictures from cresthillchamberofcommerce.com got put through four times, coupons for Plato’s Closet and Once Upon A Child were submitted twice, two emails put through about the Crest Hill Chamber of Commerce, pictures of nice-looking gentlemen, two copies of pictures of M&M’s, food pantry got submitted four times, a picture of Larry George and his wife, Katie was submitted four times. All of these items with no discernible relevance to a forensic audit. She indicated that approximately 200 pages remained to be reviewed.

7D. CITY ATTORNEY:
There were no items to report.

7E. CITY ADMINISTRATOR:

1. IML Conference and Training Policy for Elected Officials.

City Administrator Blaine Wing presented a proposed policy governing conference and training attendance for elected officials, which had been under discussion since the prior October. The policy establishes that all conference registrations, hotel bookings, and cancellations will be coordinated through the administrative assistant position, currently held by Marybel, with all requests to be submitted in writing via email for documentation purposes.

Transportation reimbursements are capped at $100 per day, with food and incidental expenses reimbursable up to $100 per day and a $300 cap for the IML conference specifically, contingent upon submission of receipts. Elected officials who cancel for non-emergency reasons or fail to attend a minimum of two days are required to reimburse the city. The Finance Department will prepare an expense report for Council review within 45 days of each event’s conclusion. Any exceptions to the policy require a Council vote.

Alderman Dyke asked whether tips paid to hotel staff and valets would be covered; Administrator Wing confirmed they would be treated as incidental expenses.

Alderman Jefferson expressed reservations about the receipt requirement, suggesting that a straightforward per diem distribution would be simpler for staff and more consistent with standard practice. He argued that the policy's accountability concern could be directed at specific past abusers rather than applied broadly. Several other alderpersons disagreed, with Alderwoman Gazal and Alderman Dyke both expressing that maintaining receipts offered important transparency for the public and that it was their longstanding personal practice.

Alderperson Oberlin made a motion to Approve the IML Conference Training Policy for Elected Officials. Seconded by Alderwoman Gazal. Roll Call: Ayes: Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti. Nayes: Jefferson, Albert. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Approve a Resolution Authorizing the Selection and Hiring of Administrative Intern Kishae White at an Hourly Rate Not to Exceed $20.00.

Assistant City Administrator/HR Ashley Monroe presented the results of the intern recruitment process conducted through Northern Illinois University's Master of Public Administration program, which is ranked among the top five such programs in the country. Following interviews with four candidates, staff recommended Kishae White, a local candidate familiar with the Crest Hill area who was identified as an appropriate fit for the city's needs. The position would be part-time, not to exceed 1,000 hours annually, at $20.00 per hour.

Alderwoman Gazal expressed opposition to the hire, arguing that staffing resources should be directed toward filling existing vacancies in departments experiencing backlogs — specifically citing the Building Department, where a permit submitted on June 18 had not yet been processed as of the meeting date. She maintained that an intern would require significant time to train and would not adequately address the city's most pressing staffing gaps.

Alderman Albert made a motion to approve a resolution authorizing the selection and hiring of administrative intern Kishae White at an hourly rate not to exceed $20.00. Seconded by Alderman Kubal. Roll Call: Ayes: Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson, Oberlin, Albert, Kubal. Nayes: Gazal, Cipiti. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED. ***Resolution #1435***

3. Will County Emergency Notification System Changes to Smart 911.

City Administrator Blaine Wing presented an informational update on Will County's transition from the Everbridge emergency notification platform to the new Smart 911 system, effective July 1, 2026. Because the county chose not to migrate data from the prior system, all residents are encouraged to re-register. Sign-ups are available through the City's website or directly at willcounty911.gov/smart911. The new system offers enhanced capabilities, including the ability to geographically target notifications to specific streets or neighborhoods affected by incidents such as water main breaks. The system also integrates with Wescom dispatch. Administrator Wing noted that residents can customize notification preferences by type — including weather, community events, and emergency alerts — and that the platform operates nationally, allowing residents to receive alerts when traveling to participating communities. This item was presented for information only and required no Council action.

7F. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:
There were no items to report.

7G. CITY ENGINEER:
City Engineer Ron Wiedeman reported no agenda items. In response to a question from Alderman Jefferson regarding the Division Street project update, Engineer Wiedeman stated that the project was awaiting Comcast to complete utility relocation, which was anticipated to conclude that week, after which contractor PT Farrell was scheduled to place the surface course.

7H. FINANCE:
There were no items to report.

7I. POLICE DEPARTMENT:
Deputy Police Chief Ryan Dobczyk reported no agenda items but provided an update on fireworks enforcement activity covering July 1–5, 2026, in response to Council inquiry. The department received approximately 29 to 30 calls for service during that period and issued 6 citations in total. July 4th generated the highest volume of calls — 16 — but no enforcement detail was scheduled that day; officers on regular patrol nonetheless wrote 3 citations. Deputy Chief Dobczyk noted that a significant number of fireworks complaints originated from areas under county jurisdiction, where City officers could not take enforcement action.

Alderwoman Gazal requested a planning discussion prior to next year's Fourth of July to evaluate staffing and resource allocation strategies for fireworks enforcement, particularly given the exceptionally high activity associated with the nation's 250th anniversary celebration this year. Deputy Chief Dobczyk agreed.

Alderman Dyke expressed concern about the allocation of overtime detail staffing in the days preceding and following the holiday rather than on the holiday itself, noting that the volume of activity did not appear to warrant the same level of detail on quieter days such as July 5th. He also indicated he would no longer approve block party permits for July 4th in his ward, citing a specific incident on the 1800 block of Wilcox Street where a largescale fireworks display was observed, and that the block party permit language was vague regarding prohibited activities. Deputy Chief Dobczyk acknowledged the concerns and indicated a willingness to collaborate with the Mayor and Chief on revised enforcement strategies for future years.

Alderwoman Gazal suggested exploring coordination with the Lockport Township Park District Police regarding enforcement at Memorial Park and other park areas that routinely attract outside residents for fireworks during the holiday.

7J. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

1. Approval to Authorize the Replacement of Interior Windows & Speaker Systems in the Interior City Hall Foyer for an Amount Not to Exceed $53,500.

City Administrator Wing, presenting on behalf of Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter and Building Commissioner Don Seeman, explained that five interior windows in the City Hall foyer had been damaged — attributed to improper cleaning materials used during the move to the new facility. Only one vendor responded to the City's solicitation and provided a proposal; other vendors either declined to bid or proposed far more costly approaches requiring wall removal. The approved scope includes replacement of all five windows (including the Park District window) and integration of a speaker system to replace the cut-through communication function. Going forward, the City will implement a supervised monthly cleaning schedule using only water on the windows, post warning stickers, and ensure that only authorized staff trained on proper materials perform the cleaning.

Alderperson Oberlin made a motion to approve to authorize the replacement of interior windows & speaker systems in the interior City Hall foyer for an amount not to exceed $53,500. Seconded by Alderman Deserio. Roll Call: Ayes: Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio. Nayes: None. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

Community & Economic Development Director Ritter also provided two additional informational updates. First, a Letter of Intent (LOI) had been received for a warehouse and distribution tenant to occupy 21225 Lidice Parkway, a 577,000 square-foot building representing the largest commercial vacancy in the city. The phased occupancy arrangement was described as encouraging news for the City's tax base and employment.

Director Ritter confirmed that all Route 66 signage installations were complete throughout the City, and that a dedicated webpage at cityofcresthill.com/RT66 had been launched featuring information about the signs and related regional events.

Alderman Cipiti raised the topic of data centers, noting the controversy surrounding such facilities in neighboring Joliet and suggesting the Council proactively establish a policy position for Crest Hill. Director Ritter confirmed that data centers are not currently defined uses in the City's zoning code and would be considered under a special use permit in M1 or M2 districts. He agreed to add the topic to a future work session agenda, to be addressed in conjunction with a broader update to the City's use chart.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
Alderman Dyke requested that City Administrator Wing investigate the non-functioning lights on the monument sign on Broadway. No other unfinished business was presented.

9. NEW BUSINESS:
There was no new business.

10. COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:
Alderwoman Gazal reported that the City of Crest Hill is partnering with Lockport Township for a Back-to-School Fair to be held on Friday, July 31, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at City Hall. The event will distribute school supply kits — not backpacks — and registration is required. Residents were directed to call 815-838-0380 to register. One kit per registrant will be provided.

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:
Alderman Deserio extended a patriotic birthday acknowledgment to the United States and encouraged residents to thank veterans and law enforcement officers.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT:
Cathy Abele of 16166 Huron Street addressed the Council regarding ongoing traffic safety concerns at the four-way stop at Michigan Street and McGilvray Drive. Ms. Abele described a near-miss incident that occurred during her 6:00 a.m. morning walk on July 4th, in which an eastbound driver on McGilvray failed to stop and came within two feet of striking her. She stated that the stop sign violation was not an isolated occurrence and requested a City resolution. Deputy Chief Dobczyk acknowledged the seriousness of the report, apologized for the experience, and committed to working with Ms. Abele to set up a targeted traffic enforcement detail at that intersection. A brief discussion followed among Council members, with the suggestion of deploying a speed trailer also raised, though Deputy Chief Dobczyk indicated that a staffed traffic detail would be more effective.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION:
City Attorney John Rodack indicated that no executive session was required.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

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

Alderman Dyke made a motion to adjourn at 8:16 p.m. Seconded by Alderman Deserio. Roll Call: Ayes: Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Deserio, Jefferson. Nayes: None. Absent: None. MOTION CARRIED.

Approved this____day of _________________, 2026,
As presented_______
As amended________

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CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

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RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR