

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
March 30, 2026

The March 30, 2026, the City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 20600 City Center Blvd. Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Jamie Malloy, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti.

Council Members Absent: Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal, Alderman Angelo Deserio.

Mayor Soliman stated that he received a message from Alderman Albert about a week ago and also received texts from Aldermen Kubal and Deserio today. The three men are excused from tonight's meeting.

Also Present were: City Administrator Blaine Wing, Finance Director Glenn Gehrke, Community & Economic Development Director Daniel Ritter, Public Works Director Gary Richardson, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Police Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk, Police Deputy Chief Dave Reavis, Assistant Administrator/HR Director Ashley Monroe, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Police Chief Ed Clark, Building Commissioner Don Seeman.

MAYOR

There were no agenda items.

CLERK

There were no agenda items.

TREASURER

There were no agenda items.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

1. A Resolution of the City of Crest Hill in Support of Municipal Housing Authority
Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter stated that this is a draft resolution from the Illinois Municipal League. This resolution states that the City of Crest Hill supports municipal or local zoning authority as opposed to state-wide or generic authority.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve a Resolution of the City of Crest Hill in Support of Municipal Housing Authority.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

1. Discuss Utilizing the GIS Consortium and Municipal GIS Partners (MGP, Inc) for GIS Services.

Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter explained that GIS is a spatial and data system that the City of Crest Hill uses internally for spatial analysis, aerial zoning and tracking of utility information. Director Ritter introduced Tom Thomey, the founder of MGP, Inc. who gave a brief overview of MGP and also stating that the consortium currently consists of 47 cities and villages in the greater Chicagoland area. Mr. Thomey introduced Robert Davis who went over GIS options through MGP, which can assist in zoning, utilities, public works, police crime data, construction and more.

Alderman Jefferson asked if the data that is collected through MGP is sold to anyone. Mr. Davis explained that the data that is collected by the City is owned by the City and it is not sold or repurposed.

Alderman Oberlin asked if any public works information obtained through cameras could or would be loaded into MGP. City Engineer Ron Wiedeman answered that it would be downloaded. MGP will make the City of Crest Hill more efficient since MGP can perform the functions that Crest Hill has been wanting and needing. Alderman Oberlin also asked about owner information for rental properties and if that would also show in the GIS information. Director Ritter explained that owner information would come from the county and through a link to the county, it could be included as well. City Engineer Wiedeman explained that there would be field work that would still have to be done by an outside firm and then handed over to MGP to do the programming part of it.

Alderman Gazal asked which staff members would have access to GIS information. City Administrator Blaine Wing stated that all departments would be using it, but information for the public would be limited.

Alderman Jefferson asked how this GIS information would benefit the residents. He also asked about the cost of this GIS versus what we pay Robinson, the engineering firm who has been doing our GIS work. City Engineer Wiedeman stated that we pay about \$150,000 per year to Robinson, so this is in line with that cost. He also stated that Robinson, being an engineering firm, has done well for the City, but isn't a GIS company. As far as how GIS will benefit the residents, the map of construction alone will help residents be informed on what work is being done on their street and in their neighborhood and it will help with the city-wide garage sale. Director Ritter stated that it helps staff be more efficient for the residents.

Alderwoman Gazal asked Police Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk if the police could use this GIS information. Deputy Chief Dobczyk stated that if it's in the middle of the night and a burglary is happening at a resident's house, to have the homeowner information to be able to get a hold of the homeowner to see if they can identify the suspect would be invaluable to the investigation. The public works department stated that they would like to have this information all together. Currently the water information is in one place, and the sewer information is in a different place, making things difficult.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve utilizing the GIS Consortium and Municipal GIS Partners (MGP, Inc) for GIS Services.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

Alderman Dyke asked about the cost of the project, asking if it would be \$168,657 per year as it is listed in the packet. Engineer Wiedeman replied that it would be for the 2027 budget year.

Alderwoman Gazal asked about projected yearly increases. Administrator Wing replied that MGP has it listed out for the next five years. Mr. Davis replied that the budget provided has a three percent increase every year, but it is negotiated every year by the GIS Consortium with MPG. Three percent is used as a cap to help guide with cost-of-living costs and such. Mr. Davis also stated if inflation goes off the hook and things get crazy, what is documented is their best guess. He also said that the forty-seven communities in the Consortium negotiate at the same time and get the same rate so it is very competitive.

2. An Ordinance Amending Section 10.01.10-618 (SPECIAL PARKING PROHIBITIONS) of Division VI (PARKING REGULATIONS), ARTICLE 10 (SPECIAL PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO THE CITY OF CREST HILL), Chapter 10.01 (CREST HILL VEHICLE CODE), TITLE 10 (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) OF THE CITY OF CREST HILL CODE OF ORDINANCES.

Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter presented this ordinance addressing parking prohibitions on Ontario Street, specifically the small section between Ryan Drive and the intersection of Huron and Michigan. The request originated from the Seasons development discussion but represents ongoing parking concerns in the area.

The ordinance prohibits parking in this section due to visibility concerns with both sidewalk and traffic access at two intersections. The proposal was reviewed and supported by the City engineer, police department, and community development staff.

Alderwoman Gazal explained that she brought this forward after discussing with Police Chief Ed Clark about ongoing problems with a household that

parks eight to ten cars in the area, leaving them stationary and parking close to curves, creating visibility issues for oncoming traffic. With the new apartments coming, she believes this will benefit all residents.

Alderman Cipiti asked when the ordinance would go into effect. City Attorney Mike Stiff clarified that while the ordinance would be effective upon passage at the April 6th meeting, it would not take effect until proper signage is posted. Public Works Director Gary Richardson confirmed they have basic no parking signs in stock; public works would need to get Julies done and estimated two to three days for installation after the ordinance passes.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve an Ordinance amending Section 10.01.10-618 (SPECIAL PARKING PROHIBITIONS) of Division VI (PARKING REGULATIONS), ARTICLE 10 (SPECIAL PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO THE CITY OF CREST HILL), Chapter 10.01 (CREST HILL VEHICLE CODE), TITLE 10 (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) OF THE CITY OF CREST HILL CODE OF ORDINANCES

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

Director Ritter wanted to thank Claudia Gazal, Darrell Jefferson and all who volunteered for the Easter event. He attended with his son and had a really good time.

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

1. Resolution approving an Agreement for Professional Engineering Services for 2026 Sanitary Sewer Cleaning and Televising Bid and Oversight Services by and Between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Robinson Engineering, Ltd. for an amount of \$39,880.00.

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented this service agreement with Robinson Engineering for \$39,880. The project will cover Gaylord Road South of Plainfield Road, Theodore Street from Gaylord to Pioneer, Cedarwood Drive from Theodore Street to the city limits south, Caton Farm Road from Gaylord to Richland School, plus the Crest Acres, Richland, and Whispering Meadows subdivisions.

The total length for televising is 46,362 lineal feet with sizes ranging from 8 to 27 inches. Once reports are received, they will be analyzed regarding repair needs and/or lining requirements, with recommendations brought to Council.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve an agreement for Professional Engineering Services for 2026 Sanitary Sewer Cleaning and Televising Bid and Oversight Services by and Between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Robinson Engineering, Ltd. for an amount of \$39,880.00.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

2. A Resolution approving a professional services agreement for design services for the Gaylord Rd, Cedarwood Dr. and Caton Farm Rd. Resurfacing and widening of Gaylord Rd. at specific locations to be part of the Grand Prairie Water Commission Project by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. for an amount of \$133,500.00.

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented this agreement with Stantec Consulting Company for \$133,500 to design resurfacing and widening work to be incorporated into the Grand Prairie Water Commission project. The work includes lengthening the existing 35-foot roadway taper on the west side of Gaylord and widening the intersection.

Aldersperson Oberlin asked about the lengthening of the existing 35-foot roadway taper on the west side of Gaylord and how narrow it is there. She stated that she knows this is going to do the best to expand it but wanted to know if the project was going to leave the turn lane the whole way. Engineer Wiedeman explained that the box culvert will be removed for the new water main installation and replaced with wider dimensions - three 12-foot lanes and a 4-foot median. The left turn lane will accommodate four to five cars, similar to current capacity, but with improved width and safety.

Mayor Soliman praised this as a great opportunity to address a long-standing hazardous situation while preparing for Lake Michigan water infrastructure.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve a resolution approving a professional services agreement for design services for the Gaylord Rd, Cedarwood Dr. and Caton Farm Rd. Resurfacing and widening of Gaylord Rd. at specific locations to be part of the Grand Prairie Water Commission Project by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. for an amount of \$133,500.00.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

3. A Resolution Approving an Agreement for Professional Engineering Services for the Jasmine Ditch Drainage Investigation by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. for an Amount of \$24,400.00.

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented this agreement with Christopher Burke Engineering for \$24,400 to analyze and determine proper sizing for the Jasmine Ditch drainage system. The investigation does not include any construction work that might be needed if culverts require widening.

When Alderman Jefferson asked the location of the project, Engineer Wiedeman explained that the drainage issue affects the area west of Gaylord Road near the water tower, where a resident has experienced house flooding. Engineer Wiedeman explained that the city wants to be positioned to act quickly once they gain legal possession of the ditch property.

Alderman Cipiti asked about remaining budget for actual work after the investigation. City Engineer Wiedeman confirmed \$200,000 is budgeted for construction and \$50,000 for the design in case a culvert is needed but won't know the exact amount until after the jobs go out for bid. Alderman Cipiti also wanted to know what the timeline would be after the engineering is complete and recommendations are given. Engineer Wiedeman stated the investigation should take 2-3 months, aligning with the legal timeline for property acquisition. City Attorney Mike Stiff reported that plats are with the appraiser for condemnation proceedings. City Engineer Wiedeman states to answer the timeline question, the intent is to have plans ready once the City gets ownership of the property through legal means. He is hoping that work can get started in the fall, depending on when the City acquires the legal ownership of property.

Alderman Oberlin asked about the beginning section of land in the Jasmine Creek area. Engineer Wiedeman stated the section of land that the City is working at getting possession of doesn't currently have a viable owner and to the west is Joliet. Alderman Oberlin asked specifically if Mr. Brandt's backyard was part of this area and Engineer Wiedeman replied that Mr. Brandt's property is separate from this area. Engineer Wiedeman noted that Director Ritter would be coordinating with Joliet regarding outfall issues, as they're developing adjacent property that will be annexed to Joliet. Engineer Wiedeman wants to make sure that this all works once we walk away.

Alderman Cipiti thanked everyone involved with this project and stated that he is looking forward to some positive results on behalf of the residents.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve a resolution approving an agreement for Professional Engineering Services for the Jasmine Ditch Drainage Investigation by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. for an Amount of \$24,400.00.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

4. A Resolution Approving an Agreement for the 2026 Sidewalk Cutting Program-Construction by and between The City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Safe Step, LLC for an Amount of \$80,000.00.

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented this agreement with Safe Step LLC for \$80,000, continuing the same program from the last three years. This

work will complete the survey of all sidewalks within the city, after which staff will evaluate and return with repair recommendations.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve a resolution approving an agreement for the 2026 Sidewalk Cutting Program- Construction by and between The City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Safe Step, LLC for an Amount of \$80,000.00.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

5. Resolution Approving a Professional Service Agreement for Design Services for the Broadway Water Main Crossing Additional Services- by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Strand & Associates Inc. for a cost of \$29,800.00.

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented this agreement with Strand & Associates for \$29,800 to design two additional water main crossings across Broadway. Economic development is working with property owners developing the east side of Broadway, who will provide a 15-foot utility easement for water main installation.

Currently only one water service crosses to the east side. With the move to Lake Michigan water, the City wants to encourage connections and provide redundancy. Community & Economic Development Director Ritter noted this project should significantly improve development potential on the east side of Broadway by providing adequate water service.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve a resolution approving a Professional Service Agreement for Design Services for the Broadway Water Main Crossing Additional Services- by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Strand & Associates Inc. for a cost of \$29,800.00.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

Alderman Dyke asked City Engineer Wiedeman about the retaining wall on Theodore Street between Center and Cora. Progress seemed to stop. City Engineer Wiedeman responded that there was a resident who needed a set of stairs since his children need to catch a bus. The contractor submitted a change order to the City, and they are waiting for materials to come in before the work can be finished.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Approval Request of Special Event Police Services Agreement with St. Carlo Acutis Parish.

Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk stated that a parishioner reached out to have a police presence for their 'stations of the cross' walk on good Friday, April

3rd from 6:30 to 9:00pm. There is a potential to have up to three hundred people and it's something that was done last year as well.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote for approval request of Special Event Police Services Agreement with St. Carlo Acutis Parish.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

2. Approval Request of an Intergovernmental Agreement with Joliet Metropolitan Area Narcotics Squad.

Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk explained that this agreement states that the Cooperative Police Assistance Team (CPAT) is merging with the Joliet Metropolitan Area Narcotics Squad (JMANS) to form a unified enforcement group.

City Attorney Mike Stiff noted that while he proposed several revisions to clear up undefined terms in the document, the state was resistant to changes. All other agencies have signed the agreement as written, leaving Crest Hill as the last to approve. Though Attorney Stiff believes his proposed changes were necessary for clarity, he acknowledged they weren't deal-breakers.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote for approval request of an Intergovernmental Agreement with Joliet Metropolitan Area Narcotics Squad.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Albert, Kubal.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

There were no agenda items.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

1. Continuation of the Budget Revision Discussion.

Finance Director Glenn Gehrke introduced the continuation of fiscal year 2026-2027 budget discussions. City Administrator Blaine Wing explained they would focus on the general fund, capital replacement program, and capital improvement projects, with department heads discussing their specific sections.

Administrator Wing noted that through refinement meetings with department heads, they improved from a \$5,000 surplus to over \$332,000 surplus in the general fund.

Officials Budget Discussion

The officials budget totals just over \$100,000, including council member salaries, FICA, Medicare, contractual services, and other standard expenses.

Alderman Gazal questioned why the Treasurer's office appeared as a separate line item rather than being included with finance, noting this hadn't been done in previous years. Alderman Gazal asked if the Mayor has a budget line item as well. Administrator Wing stated that the Mayor is under the officials heading, with elected officials.

City Treasurer Jamie Malloy asked if the Treasurer was the only elected official on her own. Administrator Wing explained that the City Clerk was also on her own in the budget and this was pretty typical for most municipalities. Treasurer Malloy asked if the Clerk's section would include the two associates and City Clerk. Administrator Wing replied that it would include the City Clerk, Deputy Clerk and the Administrative Clerk in the Clerk's department.

Alderman Jefferson supported treating all elected officials equally, suggesting if the Treasurer gets a separate office listing, the Mayor should as well. After discussion, Administrator Wing agreed to separate the Mayor's office from the general elected officials category, if that is Council's direction.

Finance Director Glenn Gehrke explained that when Council separated the Treasurer position from the finance department oversight in June, they needed separate budgets for accountability and transparency - the Treasurer controls her budget allocation while the City Administrator controls the finance department budget. The Treasurer's salary is split between general funds and water/sewer funds, with Director Gehrke explaining this reflects the cost-sharing formula based on services provided to both tax-based and fee-based operations.

Alderman Oberlin wanted to verify that the budget amount for the Treasurer is the same no matter where it is placed and it is being separated because if it is put in with finance, that would allow that office to spend all of that money. Administrator Wing confirmed that was correct. Alderman Oberlin stated that it would be fair to give the Mayor a budget allowance since the Clerk and the Treasurer have budget allowances. They would each have their own. Alderman Cipiti and Alderman Dyke both voiced their opinion that if the Treasurer and the Clerk have separate budgets in the general fund, that the Mayor should have a separate budget in the general fund as well.

Alderman Cipiti asked City Treasurer Jamie Malloy if she was involved in any discussion of what would be appropriate amounts for the budget. City Treasurer Malloy stated that Administrator Wing had emailed her looking for advice and she still needed to respond to his email.

Police Department Budget

Deputy Chief Dobczyk highlighted significant increases in the police budget, particularly WESCOM (dispatching) expenses which increased due to new union contracts, health insurance increases, and risk management costs. WESCOM also lost a “circuit breaker” that had paused increases in 2024. The department’s calls for service increased from 14,696 incidents in 2020 to 19,007 in 2025, though they’re working with WESCOM to re-code certain activities to reduce future costs.

Training budget increases resulted from state-mandated SAFE-T Act requirements and sending officers to specialized training. The police department is hosting more training classes locally to save money - recently hosting a TASER instructor class that saved \$1,800 on training fees.

Alderman Dyke questioned what the stipend allocations entailed. Director Gehrke and Deputy Chief Dobczyk explained that stipends include contractual items like the evidence custodian, crime prevention officer, and investigation sergeant positions, plus educational and longevity stipends.

Alderman Oberlin asked about travel expenses and noticed the budget amount doubled. Deputy Chief Dobczyk explained increases due to academy training at Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) in Belleville and overnight requirements for distant training locations.

Alderman Jefferson said that he liked to see the breakdown of the budget items, rather than a big amount. Administrator Wing stated that he can show the breakdown amounts for the police budget. Alderman Jefferson said that he likes the information about what goes into a budget amount.

Streets Department Budget

Public Works Director Gary Richardson noted that streets department general fund operations are relatively light since most day-to-day operations come from water and sewer funds. The main highlight was utility cost increases affecting the streets department budget.

Alderman Dyke asked about salary increases regarding the upcoming union renewal negotiation and how that was calculated for the budget. Administrator Wing explained that they put the standard two percent cost of living adjustment in as a place holder amount on the budget. When Alderman Dyke asked about the twenty percent jump in the salary amount, Director Richardson explained this is the first new contract negotiation in five years, plus they have hired additional staff, contributing to the budget increase from \$592,000 to \$705,000.

Alderman Jefferson asked if the City has a mechanic since it was blank in the streets budget. Director Richardson answered that the mechanic is listed under the fleet budget.

Alderman Jefferson also asked about the stipend amount and what the entails. Director Richardson explained that there are longevity stipends,

CDL stipends, Class A stipends, Class B, wastewater, it depends on what class is being taken and what is being upgraded in the field.

Other Departmental Budgets

The budget discussion covered facilities maintenance, information technology, fleet maintenance, administration, clerk's office, and finance departments. Notable discussions included:

- A \$500 clothing allowance for Clerk's office staff, which City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall explained covers the annual \$40 per employee clothing policy
- Fleet maintenance staffing with two highly capable mechanics who handle 24/7 emergency coverage during snow operations
- Questions about building maintenance needs, particularly HVAC systems and ongoing sewer backup issues
- Annual raises were figured out by using two percent cost of living and then a range of zero to three percent. That amount, a blanket of \$40,000, is listed under administration
- The \$1.5 million that came from the sale of the former city hall will be going into the general fund under capital
- Concerns about fixing the plumbing, some windows and heating/cooling issues in the current city hall are going to be looked at so a plan can be formed

Community Development Budget

Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter explained salary changes including one promotion and converting two part-time inspector positions to one full-time position to retain qualified staff and improve inspection efficiency. The department struggles with the current manual permit system and hopes to upgrade to automated systems for online permitting and better process efficiency.

Contractual services include high grass vendor, building permit review, rental registration software, comprehensive plan costs, ticket software shared with police, and economic development consultant services. The facade improvement program budget remains at \$12,750 with grants up to \$10,000 per project.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if there was going to be a way to start advertising the facade improvement program so more new businesses know about this program. Director Ritter stated that he was going to come back to Council in either April or May to talk about that further.

Additional Budget Requests

City Administrator Blaine Wing presented additional requests totaling \$28,500 that could be funded from the \$332,000 surplus:

- \$3,000 for coffee and food allocated across departments under administration control
- \$2,500 for employee wellness programs including health fairs and wellness challenges

- \$5,000 additional for economic development marketing materials and trade shows
- \$15,000 for a police drone with thermal imaging capabilities
- \$3,000 for city shirts and branding materials

Alderman Dyke asked for more information about the police drone item. Deputy Chief Dobczyk explained that the drone program started about a year ago. There are four officers that are FAA-certified drone pilots and another officer going to be going through training in May. The drone that the police department has now doesn't have thermal imaging capabilities so it can only be used for half the day, not at night. The amount is for the drone, some accessories and a case, but it would be so helpful to keep the police safe at night if they have to run into a field or someplace with low visibility.

The coffee request generated significant debate, with Alderman Dyke expressing strong opposition based on past abuse, particularly by the public works departments. Other council members supported a controlled budget approach, with Public Works Director Richardson defending his current staff and noting the policy differences from past practices.

Capital Replacement Program

The capital replacement program includes \$874,510 in vehicle and equipment purchases: a snowplow, street sweeper, hydraulic lift trailer, crane for west treatment plant, Kubota for treatment operations, and two hybrid police squad cars. The program shows an \$81,000 surplus that will build the replacement fund for future needs.

Alderman Jefferson asked what the purpose was for the hydraulic lift trailer. Director Richardson stated that it was for transporting heavy equipment, backhoe and Kubota for example, around town.

Alderman Cipiti asked how many street sweepers the City owns. Director Richardson said that the City owns one right now and it is down at the present moment. It is over fifteen years old and just busted a hydraulic line this morning, which is going to take a little time to get repaired.

Alderman Cipiti asked if the Mayor's budget was going to come out of the officials budget. Administrator Wing confirmed that it was going to be taken out of the officials budget.

Capital Improvement Projects

The presentation concluded with a review of the three-year capital improvement plan totaling approximately \$8 million in projects, broken down by year to make implementation practical.

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman listed the City projects, street projects, water projects, ditch projects and the retaining wall project.

Budget Organization Issues

Extended discussion occurred about budget structure and transparency. Alderman Jefferson requested more detailed breakdowns rather than general category totals. Council debated the separation of treasurer and mayor offices from general elected officials, ultimately agreeing to create separate line items for clarity.

Alderman Cipiti asked how donations are handled for the different committees within the official's budget. Alderman Dyke stated that he asked for the line item for the beautification committee be removed because in the past if money was needed, it was voted on by Council and taken out of the general fund. Alderwoman Gazal expressing frustration that donations raised for specific events get absorbed into the general fund, so she asked if the line item for the events committee be removed since she uses sponsorships for events, not the budget money. Alderman Cipiti asked how event spending is tracked within the budget and said that it is nice to know where money is going when it is spent. Director Gehrke stated that he creates an activity code for each event and tracks donations and spending per each event so a revenue expense report for that particular event. Alderman Cipiti stated that he heard that if a donation is made for an event and the amount of donations exceed that amount used for that event, that overage goes into the general fund. Director Gehrke stated that was true. Alderman Cipiti then said that if someone is donating to an event, the resident is expecting that money or donation to go toward that event. Why should a resident donation help pay for plumbing at City Hall, for example? Finance Director Gehrke explained the current committee/events policy requires all donations to go to general city coffers with Council controlling allocation. Administrator Wing agreed to work with auditors on proper procedures.

After extensive budget discussion covering all departments and additional requests, the meeting concluded with the understanding that staff had received direction on budget priorities and would refine the proposal for future Council approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public came forward to address the Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. SILCS 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)(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.

3. 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.

Aldersperson Oberlin made a motion to go into executive session for 5ILCS 120/2 (c)/(1), 5ILCS 120/2 (c)/(2), 5ILCS 120/2 (c)/(5). Seconded by Alderwoman Gazal. Roll Call: Ayes: Dyke, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti. Nays: None. Absent: Deserio, Albert, Kubal. MOTION CARRIED.

Executive Session: 10:52 p.m.

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

Reconvened: 12:14 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:14 a.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2026.

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR