

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION  
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
June 8, 2026

The June 8, 2026, the City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 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, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also Present were: City Administrator Blaine Wing (left at 11:00 p.m.), Finance Director Glenn Gehrke, Community & Economic Development Director Daniel Ritter, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Assistant City Administrator/HR Director Ashley Monroe, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Alderman Angelo Deserio.

Mayor Soliman stated that he received an email from Alderman Angelo Deserio and he is unable to make it for the meeting.

**MAYOR**

1. **Police Pension Board Appointment**

Mayor Soliman introduced a mayoral appointment to the Crest Hill Police Pension Board. He explained that one of the two Mayor-appointed board members had passed away on April 11, and that he was recommending Mr. Bill Barler, a Crest Hill resident of Carillon Lakes, to fill the vacancy for a two-year term expiring May 1, 2028. Mayor Soliman noted the position is uncompensated and requires attendance at approximately four meetings per year. Mr. Barler addressed the Council, sharing that he and his wife had become residents in February 2022 after attending a parade in the area and were enthusiastic about the community. The Council raised no questions.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve the Police Pension Board Appointment.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

**CLERK**

There were no agenda items.

**TREASURER**

City Treasurer Jamie Malloy briefly introduced a matter concerning a resident on Cora Street who had received a water bill of approximately \$4,200 and was seeking a payment

plan. Mayor Soliman redirected this discussion to City Administrator Item 6, as the relevant parties were present in the audience.

## **CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

### 6. Discussion of Draft Water & Sewer Payment Plan Options

City Treasurer Malloy noted she had previously emailed the Council regarding the matter and clarified that her initial identification of the staff contact had been in error.

Finance Director Glenn Gehrke provided background, explaining a series of compounding circumstances that led to a \$4,200 water bill being assessed to new homeowners. The situation originated in December of the prior year when a continuous water flow—traced to a washing machine spigot—began at the property. The outgoing owners paid a January bill, after which the water meter's communication wire broke, cutting off the City's remote reading capability. The City attempted to reach the prior owner but received no response. When the property sold in January and the new owners eventually transferred the account into their name in March, the City's meter system was repaired and once again detected a continuous flow. The new owners promptly shut it off upon notification. However, because the final read given to the prior owner had been an estimate made when the meter was non-communicative, significant usage was billed to the new owners.

Council discussion was extensive. Several members, including Alderman Dyke and Alderwoman Gazal, expressed concern that the City bore partial responsibility given that the meter's communication failure was not followed up with a physical visit to the property, and that an estimated final read rather than an actual read was used at closing. Director Gehrke and City Administrator Blaine Wing acknowledged there was no formal policy requiring a physical visit when a meter communication error occurs, and that a policy requiring an actual read at the time of property transfer did not exist. Administrator Wing noted that the City's finance and public works staff were preparing payment plan policy options and had been reviewing what neighboring municipalities do, with a proposed tiered structure: the Finance Director would have authority to negotiate plans up to \$2,500, the City Administrator up to \$5,000, and anything above that threshold would come before the Council.

City Attorney Mike Stiff noted that City Council had historically extended payment accommodations on a case-by-case basis without a formal policy and advised that a straw poll could be taken that evening to provide interim relief while a formal policy was developed for the June 15th meeting. He further recommended the Council place a moratorium on the scheduled June 19th water shutoff for the affected residents.

After deliberation, the majority of the Council supported both waiving half the outstanding balance and establishing a payment plan for the remaining amount. Alderman Jefferson suggested that, given all the unanswered documentation questions, the water simply remain on under an interest-free

balance until matters were fully sorted, and that staff meet with the residents to develop a plan. Council members Alderman Dyke, Alderperson Oberlin, Alderman Cipiti, and Alderman Kubal supported the more immediate half-waiver approach, while Nate Albert aligned with Alderman Jefferson's preference for further review.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to reduce the resident's portion owed for the water bill to \$2,100, waive the shut off of water on June 19<sup>th</sup> and to develop a payment plan and terms with the residents.

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

NAYES: Ald. Cipiti, Albert.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

3. Plan Commission Recommendation for a Special Use Permit for a Self-Service Storage Facility with Respect to Real Property Located at 103 Elsie Ave in Crest Hill, Illinois (application of Bernadino Estrada)

Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter presented the Plan Commission's unanimous recommendation for approval of a special use permit for a self-service storage facility at 103 Elsie Avenue. Director Ritter described the property as a large building-covered parcel located one parcel off Broadway Avenue, surrounded on three sides by residential uses, making many commercial applications impractical. The applicant, Bernardino Estrada, had cleaned up and improved the property's exterior. Currently, one tenant would be utilizing the full interior for storage, with the potential to subdivide into multiple units in the future. The Plan Commission's conditions included restricted hours of operation and a prohibition on storage of flammable, explosive, toxic, hazardous, or radioactive materials. At Alderwoman Gazal's suggestion, an additional condition was added prohibiting outdoor storage of boats, trailers, or recreational vehicles, as the site's limited parking made such storage impractical, but Council wished it codified.

No members of the public approached the podium.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote approving the application of Bernardino Estrada with an additional condition on outdoor storage.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

4. Plan Commission Recommendation for Rezoning, Plat of Easement, a Special Use Permit for a Contractor-Based Business known as Concrete Raising & Waterproofing Inc., and Variations Request from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance with Respect to Real Property Located at 1818-1820 N Broadway Street in Crest Hill, Illinois (application of Javier Salazar)

Director Ritter presented the Plan Commission's recommendation for approval of a rezoning from B-2 (General Business District) to B-3 (Business Service District), a special use permit for contractor-based business Concrete Raising & Waterproofing, Inc., and associated variations for the property located at 1818–1820 N. Broadway Street. Director Ritter explained that petitioner Javier Salazar had owned the property for approximately a year and a half, had operated legally under a prior zoning classification before a code change rendered the use legally nonconforming, and was now seeking to formalize and expand his operations with exterior storage of equipment and materials in a screened, paved rear yard.

Director Ritter noted that Mr. Salazar had already made significant improvements to the property—painting the building, repairing windows, removing a deteriorating awning, and clearing code violations—and had been cooperative throughout the planning process. Attorney Sara K. Gray, representing the petitioner, confirmed that Mr. Salazar had agreed to substantial additional requirements including removal of a septic system, capping of an existing well, and connection to City water and sewer. The City, in turn, planned to extend a water main along the property's frontage on Broadway Street, with the petitioner required to connect and to install a sidewalk and landscaping within six months of water main completion. Alderman Dyke and Community & Economic Development Director Ritter praised the improvements already made to the site.

No members of the public approached the podium.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote approving the application of Javier Salazar.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

5. Discussion on Adding a New Liquor License Category – Limited Beer and Wine Restaurant

Director Ritter presented a staff recommendation to create a new Class H-1 liquor license category for limited beer and wine service in restaurants. Director Ritter explained that all surrounding communities offer some version of a beer-and-wine-only license, that the full restaurant liquor license at \$1,200 annually poses a significant cost burden for establishments where alcohol is not a primary revenue source, and that the new category would carry all the same food service and seating requirements as the existing restaurant license while restricting service to beer and wine only, including draft.

Marta and Andy Wysocki, owners of The Black Sheep restaurant, explained that customer demand for beer and wine accompaniment to their food was the driver of the request, and that at a prior business they had lost money on liquor sales due to the cost of the full license, insurance, and state fees. They confirmed they had no plans for video gaming and that their space at

approximately 1,600–1,700 square feet would not accommodate gaming terminals. Director Ritter noted that the state requires a minimum of 3,000 square feet for a video gaming terminal license, which would preclude The Black Sheep regardless. Mayor Soliman stated that this liquor license was for patrons who come in to eat and want a beer or wine with the consumption of food.

Council discussion focused primarily on the appropriate annual fee. Alderperson Oberlin noted that Joliet’s comparable license is \$750 and suggested matching that figure; Romeoville’s lower fee of \$500 was noted to be for packaged goods only, not draft. Staff’s initial proposal had been \$800. Council consensus settled on \$750 as the annual fee, aligning with the Joliet benchmark.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve the creation of a new Class H-1 Liquor License category for limited beer and wine restaurant service, with an annual fee of \$750.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

## **FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

### 1. Community Portal for Caselle to use Credit Card on Website

Finance Director Glenn Gehrke presented a proposal to implement a community online portal through the City’s Caselle ERP system, enabling residents to view utility bills, make online payments, and submit permit applications. The new portal would require a change in credit card payment processor, increasing the processing fee passed to residents from the current 2.25% to 3%. Director Gehrke noted this translates to approximately \$9 more per year for the average resident paying a \$200 bi-monthly bill by credit card, and that in-person payment at City Hall would continue to carry no processing fee. Monthly costs for the portal service are approximately \$155 total across base service, business licensing, miscellaneous, permits, and accounts receivable modules. An optional module for customizable forms (e.g., garage sale permits) carries a \$1,200 startup fee and \$60/month ongoing, which was not included in the current proposal.

Director Gehrke noted the portal would allow real-time posting of payments into Caselle, eliminate manual data entry by staff, and provide residents with visible usage history—a feature noted as particularly relevant in light of the earlier water billing discussion.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve the community portal in Caselle to use credit cards on the website.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Jefferson.

## **ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**

1. A Resolution for a Professional Services Agreement for a 2026 Water System Model Update and Water Main Replacement Prioritization Plan by and Between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Strand and Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$150,000.00

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented a proposal for Strand and Associates to perform an updated water system hydraulic model for the City. He noted the last such study was completed in 2021, and that subsequent water main improvements warranted a new model. The model is used to determine water pressures at fire hydrants and throughout the distribution system, and informs decisions for new development, extensions, and fire protection planning. The total cost of the professional services agreement is \$150,000.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve a Resolution for a Professional Services Agreement for a 2026 Water System Model Update and Water Main Replacement Prioritization Plan by and Between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Strand and Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$150,000.00.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio, Jefferson.

2. Discussion on the Approval of an Agreement with the State of Illinois, Capital Development Board and the City of Crest Hill for the Extension of a Watermain from Well 11 to Broadway

City Engineer Wiedeman presented an agreement between the City of Crest Hill and the Illinois Capital Development Board for the extension of a water main from Well 11 to Broadway Street, running through an easement on Department of Corrections property. He explained that the project originated from a letter he had written to the state raising water quality concerns related to the Stateville Prison connection, which initiated discussions that led to this agreement. Under its terms, the Capital Development Board will reimburse the City for all costs associated with designing and constructing the water main, including survey, design, construction, engineering, soil boring, attorney, and easement documentation costs, estimated at approximately \$1,800,000. The agreement had been reviewed by City Engineer Wiedeman and City Attorney Stiff, who noted it had been adapted from a standard state form and that the state and Illinois State Police were responsible under the agreement for negotiating and securing the necessary easements.

Alderman Jefferson confirmed the project would be located east of the current Division Street construction and would not conflict with that work.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote for Approval of an Agreement with the State of Illinois, Capital Development Board and the City of Crest Hill for the Extension of a Watermain from Well 11 to Broadway.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

4. A Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Construction Agreement by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and P.T. Ferro Construction Company for the Division Roadway Reconstruction Improvement

City Engineer Wiedeman presented Change Order No. 1 to the Division Street reconstruction contract with P.T. Ferro Construction Company, in the amount of \$120,000. He explained that borings conducted during design had not revealed the full extent of peat bogs discovered once existing pavement was removed. Following the recommendation of the project's soil engineer, additional unsuitable material was excavated and replaced with engineered stone base to ensure the pavement achieves its intended design life.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote for a Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Construction Agreement by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and P.T. Ferro Construction Company for the Division Roadway Reconstruction Improvement.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

5. Discussion on Assistant City Engineer Position

City Engineer Wiedeman presented a proposal to post and hire an Assistant City Engineer, noting that the position had been budgeted in the current fiscal year. He outlined two primary rationales: first, as a succession planning measure given that he anticipates retiring in approximately two years; and second, to address the growing volume of engineering work, including oversight of construction projects, utility inspections, development reviews, and upcoming major capital projects such as the Grand Prairie development. City Engineer Wiedeman and City Administrator Wing indicated the position would be posted in-house first, targeting candidates with several years of experience in civil engineering. The anticipated timeline called for posting in August–September, reviewing candidates in fall, and a January 2027 start date.

HR Director Ashley Monroe noted that current market comparables for assistant city engineer positions in the Chicagoland area range from \$100,000 to \$150,000 annually. Staff proposed a salary range of \$100,000 to \$125,000 to attract qualified candidates with a path to the City Engineer position upon City Engineer Wiedeman's retirement. Engineer Wiedeman noted that when the assistant eventually moves into the director role, the

successor support position would likely be a field engineer at a lower salary range rather than a licensed professional engineer.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote for an approval for an in-house search for an assistant city engineer position in the salary range of \$100,000 to \$125,000 with an approval of the job description.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

## **CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

### 1. Discussion on America250 Commemoration

City Administrator Blaine Wing presented the City's planned activities to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States. In addition to the light pole banners discussed under the Engineering Department item, Wing noted that three official America250 flags had been purchased and would fly beneath the U.S. flag at City Hall, Public Works, and the East Plant. Commemorative banners would be displayed in the Council Chambers. City Hall lighting would be set to red, white, and blue throughout July. Staff are coordinating with civic groups to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at July meetings. Social media and the City's digital sign would feature 250th content. An IML draft resolution encouraging resident participation in national 250th celebrations was being prepared for Council consideration. Alderwoman Gazal and Alderperson Oberlin commented that patriotic bunting would look nice around the dias in Council chambers. This item required no formal action and will be placed on the consent agenda.

## **ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**

### 3. Provide direction to staff and budget number to purchase and install 250<sup>th</sup> Banner and/or Standard Banner

City Engineer Wiedeman jointly presented a proposal for the purchase and installation of decorative banners on the 29 light poles surrounding City Hall in commemoration of America's 250th anniversary. Engineer Wiedeman reported that the cost per banner from Unlimited Graphics is approximately \$850–\$900 each, installation via a rented bucket truck would cost approximately \$450, and production takes about two and a half weeks, creating a tight timeline ahead of the Fourth of July.

Engineer Wiedeman recommended a mixed approach: purchasing approximately four to six banners featuring America250 branding for placement at prominent entry points, with the remaining banners featuring a standard Crest Hill design that could be reused in future years. Council supported this approach, favoring a mix of the top three designs shown, with the America250 banners placed in pairs at key locations and the Crest Hill-branded banners filling the remainder. Council gave staff latitude to finalize the specific design selection and bring the formal vote to the June 15

meeting, with ordering to proceed promptly to meet the pre-July 4th installation deadline.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote for a four to six 250 banners and then non-250 mixed design banners. All Council members were in favor.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

### **1. Partial Tap-On Fee Discussion**

Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter reported on research conducted with City Attorney Stiff regarding the applicability of previously granted tap-on fee waivers that Alderman Dyke brought up at a previous meeting. Director Ritter noted that the City significantly revised its tap-on fee structure in 2019 and 2021 to base fees on actual system usage rather than flat generic rates, which eliminated the need for case-by-case waivers. With respect to a 2013 ordinance that had granted a waiver for a specific R-1 lot on Weber Road, Director Ritter confirmed that the waiver applied only to the exact use specified—a single R-1 residential lot—and would not extend to any redevelopment, subdivision, or change of use. No further direction from the Council was required on this item.

### **2. Discussion on Regulation of Tarped Vehicles**

Director Ritter and City Attorney Stiff presented findings from preliminary research into the regulation of tarped vehicles. Director Ritter noted that a 2013 city ordinance currently prohibits tarped vehicles on public streets as a public nuisance, but that no regulation exists addressing tarped vehicles on private property. Research into surrounding communities—including Joliet, Romeoville, Plainfield, Lockport, and Shorewood—found no regulations governing tarped vehicles on private property in those municipalities either.

Alderman Dyke expressed strong concern about the volume of vehicles in Ward 1 that appear to be inoperable but are covered with tarps, making it impossible for code enforcement to confirm whether tires are flat, registration is current, or whether a vehicle has moved. He indicated there were similar issues with vehicles backed into driveways with plates obscured. Alderman Dyke stated that he could come up with a count of these vehicles but stated that it is a problem in Ward 1. Resident Linda Dyke corroborated these concerns with specific examples from the ward.

Attorney Stiff explained that regulating tarped vehicles on private property is legally more complex than on public streets. Declaring something a nuisance on private property requires a defensible rationale tied to genuine negative community impact. Furthermore, lifting a tarp to inspect a vehicle would require an administrative search warrant, raising constitutional concerns. He and Director Ritter noted that the most legally defensible avenue remains the inoperable vehicle statute, which does allow eventual towing from private property after extensive notice and due process, but enforcement is difficult when a vehicle is concealed.

Suggestions raised by Council included regulating the number of tarped vehicles, establishing time limits for tarping, and potentially requiring a permit—though Director Ritter noted each approach carried its own enforcement and legal challenges. Alderman Cipiti asked what additional research can be done if area communities have been researched. Alderman Jefferson stated that through the Secretary of State all vehicles must be registered, insured and plated. Linda Dyke stated that she was going to make a video of tarped cars in Ward 1 to be played at the next meeting. Resident Stuart Soifer suggested looking at less urban communities, such as Fox Lake, which may have ordinances addressing similar issues. Director Ritter indicated he had found some examples but that they tended to address tarping of already-determined-inoperable vehicles rather than tarped vehicles generally.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to direct Director Ritter and City Attorney Stiff to continue research and return with a legally defensible regulatory framework.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

6. Direction on Zoning Ordinance and City Code Amendments – Updates to Use Chart and Sign Code

Director Ritter sought Council direction to allow staff to undertake a comprehensive review and update of the City’s zoning use chart and sign code. Director Ritter noted that while the current zoning ordinance was formally adopted in 2018, much of its use chart dated to 1978 and did not reflect current market conditions. Areas of focus would include potentially tightening regulations on discount and rummage stores, tobacco retailers, auto repair, and truck and trailer parking given their concentration in certain areas, as well as reconsidering uses that may be overly restricted. The sign code update would aim to modernize standards to improve streetscape aesthetics and reflect recent legal changes stemming from Supreme Court decisions, while remaining business friendly. Both the use chart and sign code updates would go through the Plan Commission public hearing process before coming to the City Council for action.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to allow staff to undertake a comprehensive review and update to the City’s zoning use chart and sign code.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

## CITY ADMINISTRATOR

2. Discussion on List of Bills & Payroll to be Read by City Treasurer

City Administrator Blaine Wing stated, "In my memo in the packet on page ten, I explain that several months ago there was a request to have the Treasurer start reading again and no longer have the list of bills in the consent portion of the agenda. Again, in my memo, I list and just verbally explain that neither the Finance Director nor myself have any problem with the Treasurer going forward. This would just be an update to our consent agenda policy so if that's what Council would like to do, it was also noted that other than just the list of bills that potentially payroll would be another item that could be read by the Treasurer. So, we would just need direction to adjust the policy. If this was unanimous, we would bring that as a consent item and start doing that going forward with our pulling it from the consent agenda and it would be then up to the Treasurer to read those items, either the one or both. So, we're just looking for direction tonight from Council." After a pause, Mayor Soliman asked, "Anybody on Council?" Alderman Cipiti asked, "Regardless of where it's at, that doesn't change the ability for anyone up here to have a question regarding it and it can be pulled. If it's on the consent agenda, it can be pulled if there's questions. That question can be asked if the Treasurer has it. I'm just, it doesn't change anything as far as the ability to address what's in those reports." Administrator Wing answered, "Yeah, so it would no longer be pulled because it would be a listed item underneath the Treasurer component, but Council would be fully able to ask questions. Both items would still need to be approved. Again, we're approving the payroll and/or we're approving the list of bills so you would just make a motion to discuss that and there would need to be a second. Underneath the consent agenda, it just requires one person to pull it for discussion so I mean there is a slight you know, between the one and the other but it would no longer need to be pulled for discussion." Alderman Cipiti asked, "And it was put into the consent agenda because that's typical of how it started?" Administrator Wing stated, "Yeah, so we looked at the other communities that are in the Grand Prairie Water Commission and the list of bills, and the payroll are in their consent agendas so when we were looking to neighboring communities, again there's not an explanation for the reasons why. Previously it was read by the Treasurer and again if that's what Council would like to do. We knew that when we were creating the consent agenda there's going to be some adjustments and if that's what Council would like, we're happy to do it. There's not a legal reason that it needs to either be in the consent agenda or not." Alderwoman Gazal said, "Well, like you said, in the past the Treasurers, they always did that and also different departments, they still have their stuff to present separately. If you look at ever since you passed the consent agenda and every agenda form, you're going to see that certain departments they still have their own thing to represent regardless of consent or not, they still have theirs separate, so I don't see that there's a problem of doing it." Administrator Wing stated, "Again, I'm not saying that there is a problem. I'm just..." Alderwoman Gazal said, "Like I said, when I brought it up because I told you the gentlemen that reach out that it does look like we have elected officials and we have department heads that they need to say something. Like, we're

paying people to just sit there and look pretty. I mean, we've got to have some kind of record to show that we're all valuable here and we all have something to share and give, whatever however you want to phrase it." Mayor Soliman asked, "Anybody else?" Alderman Albert stated, "I think it should remain in the consent agenda for efficiency's sake. We can pull out if we need to discuss it further, but we don't need to have three separate votes for all this stuff." Alderman Cipiti asked, "How does the City Treasurer feel about this? I'd like to hear her thoughts." City Treasurer Malloy stated, "Truthfully, either way it doesn't really upset me. I'm more than happy to read the overtime also as well as..." Administrator Wing added, "the list of bills." Treasurer Malloy answered, "the list of bills, yeah, thank you! It's getting late, Blaine. It's been a long day." Administrator Wing stated, "We're all on the same team so..." Alderman Jefferson stated, "The way I was always trained was you always give a financial report, you know." Treasurer Malloy replied, "I'm glad to do it." Alderman Jefferson continued, "Things have changed over a period of time so this may be the new way to go putting it in consent but just going back to my roots, I was always you never look over finances with a minimum of concern and consent is kind of like with a minimum of concern. To me, but hey I can catch up to 2026." Alderman Albert said, "Our previous Treasurer used to report the payroll and overtime, but never we actually voted on it." Alderwoman Gazal stated, "That's not true." Administrator Wing stated, "I can't speak to the past, but once I got here and worked with the Clerk's office and the Attorney really the community should be approving it so again under consent it would be approved under that line item and/or if the Treasurer is reading it, that's where it would say approved so there would need to be a motion and a second to approve it." Mayor Soliman asked, "Anybody else?" Alderman Kubal stated, "The consent agenda was put in place to allow us to more a little more efficient here and this looks like we're backtracking now and creating extra time for I don't, you know, so I don't understand it myself. I think it belongs in the consent agenda. This isn't an item that we're going to be discussing on a regular basis. That's my opinion." Mayor Soliman asked, "Anybody else?" Alderperson Oberlin stated, "Well, I will agree with what they said we did it that way for efficiency and if it doesn't matter to the Treasurer which place it goes then why would we not just leave it in the consent agenda unless there was a problem on a particular evening? I don't think the consent agenda is something that I take lightly in any respect so I take everything seriously. It's just a more efficient way of getting things done with less motions and seconds." Mayor Soliman asked, "Scott?" Alderman Dyke stated, "I don't know, I guess in a way sometimes maybe residents like to hear their Treasurer maybe make a report or something. You know we did it that way for so many years just to say here's a list of bills for this amount, granted you name it off in the consent agenda just doesn't seem the same, I guess." Ray Soliman asked, "Mark?" Alderman Cipiti stated, "Well, I kind of like the way it was before with the Treasurer actually presenting those two items, but that's, you know, just what I'm most used to. Doesn't mean that I'm going to insist on it. Regardless of where it's placed, the items are still available to be raised and questioned and discussion to be had. I guess, you know, I do like the idea of the Treasurer presenting those things because

that is you know what they present is nice to hear from the Treasurer, but just my thoughts.” Mayor Soliman stated, “So I’m not sure if you’re in favor of leaving it on consent or having the Treasurer read it.” Alderman Cipiti replied, “Probably leaning toward the Treasurer reading it is my preference.” Mayor Soliman stated, “Okay, so I see four for let the Treasurer read it and three keep it on consent, so I guess we’ll have to wait for [Alderman Deserio] and see what he wants.” Alderwoman Gazal stated, “See here’s the thing, you always pick and choose. Only when [Alderman Deserio] is not here, you want to say I just want to wait for [Alderman Deserio], but for years when a person wasn’t here you just voted and you moved on. It’s a guy that he is never here, so obviously he doesn’t care.” Administrator Wing said, “So, for me again without it being a consensus one way or another, it would be placed on Council’s agenda for the upcoming meeting to discuss, so tonight even if you gave me direction it’s not, as long as there’s not one person who is giving consensus, Council would have to discuss this at the upcoming agenda. It would not be able to be a consensus item, so this is feedback so it won’t go on consent, so it would go on for Council to discuss on next Monday.”

3. Hiring an Intern

City Administrator Wing and HR Director Monroe presented a proposal to hire one graduate-level administrative intern through Northern Illinois University’s (NIU) Master of Public Administration program. Administrator Wing noted the position had been budgeted in the current fiscal year and that the NIU program—ranked third nationally—provides a structured internship with a minimum one-year commitment. The intern would work part-time, approximately 16 to 24 hours per week depending on course schedule, at an hourly rate of \$18 to \$21, below the threshold requiring IMRF pension enrollment and offers no benefits. HR Director Monroe described the intern’s expected duties as including research support for labor negotiations and contract renewals, communications and website projects, analysis for various policy initiatives, and event support. HR Director Monroe stated that she would be the primary supervisor of the intern. She also noted the position could provide AV and streaming support as the City transitions away from a staff member currently managing those duties.

Director Ritter added that in his experience across multiple communities, NIU interns had delivered significant research value on projects that department heads otherwise lacked bandwidth to complete. Administrator Wing and Director Ritter both noted the program had produced individuals who went on to become city managers and senior directors, and that providing a path to a future director-level role would make the position attractive to high-quality candidates.

Alderwoman Gazal confirmed that it was a paid position and raised concerns about the continued growth of City staffing, asking how many more employees the City will need. Alderman Kubal and Alderman Jefferson expressed support due to history with interns, characterizing the program as a cost-effective resource. Alderperson Oberlin and Alderman

Cipiti asked specific questions about who the intern would report to, the frequency of intern work updates to Council, how long the intern would be employed and how does an intern go to school in DeKalb and work in Crest Hill. HR Director Monroe confirmed that NIU was holding candidate interviews at the end of the month, and that Council authorization was needed to proceed.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to approve an administrative intern job description and range of hourly pay.

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

NAYES: Ald. Gazal.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

4. Lockport Township Back to School Request

City Administrator Wing presented a request from Lockport Township to support a Back-to-School Fair to be held at City Hall on July 31, 2026, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., with setup beginning at noon. The Events Committee, represented by Alderwoman Gazal and Alderman Jefferson, reviewed and supported the request. Administrator Wing indicated the request included use of the Council Chambers and community room as well as financial support of up to \$750. Administrator Wing noted he would connect Township representatives with the Alderman Jefferson's existing vendor contacts, which have historically allowed similar events to be run at no supply cost.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to support the Lockport Township Back to School fair program for an amount up to \$750.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

5. 1,4 Dioxane Legal Services Agreement

City Attorney Stiff recapped the background of this item, noting that in December 2024 he had presented to the Council in executive session regarding potential litigation related to 1,4 dioxane contamination detected in the City's water supply concurrent with PFAS testing. The Council had at that time given direction to proceed with a legal services agreement. The same law firms that handled the City's PFAS litigation—the Driscoll Law Firm and Kevin Madonna's law firm—would represent the City in this matter on a contingency fee basis, meaning no upfront cost to the City. All filing fees and litigation costs would be advanced by the attorneys and reimbursed from any settlement or verdict proceeds, in addition to their contingency fee.

Attorney Stiff noted he had negotiated final revisions to the agreement, substituting "City Administrator" for "general manager" as the City's point of contact and adjusting the signature line for the Mayor. He provided talking points to enable staff and Council to respond to resident inquiries

about 1,4 dioxane. He anticipated the litigation would follow a path similar to the PFAS cases, with an individual City lawsuit being consolidated into a multi-plaintiff federal proceeding.

Council members expressed support, noting that as the City was transitioning to Lake Michigan water, the contingency arrangement presented no financial risk and offered the potential for recovery.

Mayor Soliman conducted an informal vote to draft a legal services agreement.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Deserio.

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

There were no agenda items.

### **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

There were no agenda items.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

### **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.

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

Executive session: 10:45 PM.

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

Reconvened: 11:20 p.m.

There being no further business before the Council, and no action needed from the executive sessions, the meeting is adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Approved this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

As presented \_\_\_\_\_

As amended \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR

DRAFT