

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
January 6, 2025

The regular meeting of the City of Crest Hill was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 20600 City Center Boulevard, Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison. Mayor Soliman asked for everyone to remain standing for a moment of silence for our 39th President of the United States, Jimmy Carter. He also asked for a moment of silence for a Crest Hill resident, Don Waller, who passed away on Sunday, December 29, 2024. He was a World War II Veteran and passed away at the age of 98 years old and was one of four World War II Veterans living in the City of Crest Hill.

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

Also present were: Interim City Administrator Tony Graff, Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Glenn Gehrke, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Community and Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen, Interim Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the Work Session Held on December 9, 2024, for Council approval per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

(#1) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Albert, to Approve the Minutes from the Work Session Held on December 9, 2024, per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on December 16, 2024, for Council approval per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

(#2) Motion by Alderman Albert seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to Approve the Minutes from Regular Meeting Held on December 16, 2024, per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Ald. Methvin.

ABSENT: None.

There being seven (7) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

CITY ATTORNEY: Attorney Stiff had no agenda items but was happy to answer any questions. There were no questions.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR: Interim City Administrator Tony Graff commented that Will County will remove the Kiosk located in the City Hall Foyer. There was an average of nineteen people that had used the kiosk and because of that Will County will be moving the kiosk to another location.

West Wastewater Treatment Plant:

There is a new process that is recommended for the West Wastewater Treatment Plant by IEPA with a Compliance Commitment Agreement. This was prepared by our consulting engineers who worked with the Interim Public Works Director Julian Hansen and this agreement was accepted by the IEPA.

There are three areas that need to be approved and two of them are already completed and they are working on the third, which is the Phosphorus Discharge Optimization Plan.

City Hall Outstanding Projects: (Note: No Updates – Short Staff Availability)

- a. Plumbing – Sanitary Sewer Police Rest Rooms preparing to review proposals and scope of work with staff.
- b. Bullet Proof Windows “CRACKED” – Clerks Office & Park District Office Preparing Bid Proposals Advertising. On Hold
- c. Storm Water Drainage Pipes – Pipes were Televised, and the next step is to assess the damage and prepare proposal for repairs/replacement. (Planning to obtain update from DPW & Tony Halaska)
- d. New Panic Alarm Button System Installed in the Clerk’s Office, City Council Room, Building Department...This system communicates an alarm directly to WesCom 911 Center. (Training to be provided by Deputy Chief Dobczyk)

Grand Prairie Water Commission “GPWC” (Lake Michigan Water Project): The next Board Meeting is January 9, 2025.

STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER – Capital Development Board Update

- **Project 120-230-139 Bid Date:** Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 11:00 AM
Description: Demolish Buildings, Stateville Correctional Center
City: Crest Hill **County:** Will
Trade: General- Remod & Rehab
Estimate: Less than \$4,000,000.
Bid Type: Original

Lockport Township Fire District Training Facility Proposed Project: Pending the Traffic Study Report was completed and submitted to IDOT.

Post Critical Incident Debriefing with Lockport Township Fire Protection District response for services on 11/1/2024 at the BL Duke Scrap Metal Recycling Yard 2 Genstar Lane near Industry Avenue off Broadway Street (Unincorporated Will County). The meeting was held with City Staff and the Fire District on 11/19/2024. City DPW Staff are working with the Fire District preparing all activities related to costs which were incurred by the City including the use of water which was estimated to be 200,000 gallons. On component was identified as part of the debriefing which was direct communication between the Fire District and the DPW crew. The Police Chief is obtaining the costs for portable radios which can be compatible with all public safety agencies and E911 WesCom Center. A potential grant opportunity is being explored to purchase the radio upgrades.

Job Announcements: the Interim HR Director reviewed the job descriptions and created updated announcements for the following positions (the announcements have been posted on the city web site).

- **BUILDING INSPECTOR ANOUNCEMENT:** Announcement for the position is still pending continuing to accept applications and conduct interviews. Our Building Inspector, Don Seeman, went to Joliet Junior College to talk to the students in the Construction Program there and we have received a few resumes from students.

Water Meter Replacement Project – (ON-GOING) Non-Compliance property owners' appointments are progressing. 47 Property Owners remain to schedule water meter replacements.

Places For Eating Tax – Delinquent Businesses: The Hearing was conducted, and four businesses did not show, and one business complied. Additional citations have been issued. Beginning to explore other legal options to seek monetary judgement for non-payment.

West Sanitary Sewer Treatment Project – Nothing new to report, still on schedule for the plant to be completed in 2026 (60% Completed). Will keep everyone posted.

State of Illinois Crime Lab/State Police Headquarters Project – UPDATE – Nothing New to Report concept plan was presented to the city council work session on 11/5/2024 we will keep the council updated as information is received from the State.

Old City Hall Property Update: The target date to receive the application for the PUD Development Plan is Mid-January/February. Projected real estate contract closing date is May/June once the entitlement process is completed, per the contract. They would like to have the Plan Commission Hearing in April.

Alderperson Oberlin would like the City Council to be trained on the Panic Buttons as well. Interim Administrator Graff commented that the Council will be shown, as well and these buttons go directly to WESCOM.

Alderwoman Gazal asked why we never advertised to the residents that the kiosk was here for their use. Interim Administrator Graff commented that Will County was supposed to be advertising the kiosk.

Alderman Cipiti asked if the business that did not pay the eating tax for over a year was given a business license for 2024? Interim Administrator Graff commented that they were not given their business license in 2024. Alderman Cipiti asked what the procedure is for not paying the Places for Eating Tax for over a year and operating a business without a business license. Interim Administrator Graff commented that they would be taken to our Administrative Adjudication process. Alderman Cipiti commented that it is not fair to other business owners that you have a business not paying and operating for over a year.

Interim Administrator Graff commented that the Clerk needs to file a complaint with Code Enforcement for no business license. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that Code Enforcement was notified about this business. She also commented that the business was ticketed, and they never showed up for the Administrative Hearing. It was said that they would gather information and bring this back to the Council.

Alderman Dyke asked if the Italian Cultural Club should be paying the Places for Eating Tax since they have dinners throughout the year. Interim Administrator Graff commented that he would research that and let him know.

Interim Administrator Tony Graff requested to Approve a Resolution Amending the Crest Hill Employee Handbook by Adding Section 9.8 Camera/Recording Devices in the Workplace per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

Alderman Cipiti would like this tabled until the January 13, 2025, work session to discuss further.

(#3) Motion by Alderman Cipiti seconded by Alderperson Oberlin, to TABLE the Approval of a Resolution Amending the Crest Hill Employee Handbook by Adding Section 9.8 Camera/Recording Devices in the Workplace per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Alderman Dyke apologized for not making the 'Meet and Greet' for the new employee Patrick Ainsworth. He could not attend since it was the day after Christmas and bad timing.

Alderman Dyke then commented that the Monday work session after Christmas was canceled, and he does not see why if we can have a 'Meet and Greet' the day after Christmas why we could not have a work session before the new year. He also commented that he feels we should have a work session before the new year.

Alderman Dyke also commented that many mailboxes were damaged with plowing and wondered why we could not look into swing away mailbox. He then commented that he has given this information to past Public Work Directors, and it has never been discussed.

Alderman Dyke asked if the Council, Human Resource Manager, and the City Attorney can look into how the Council is paid for the meetings attended and the attendance of the Council since they already looked into Plan Commission and Civil Service and feels the Council should be looked at as well.

Alderman Cipiti and Alderwoman Gazal would like to discuss the mailboxes that were damaged at the next work session on January 13th. Alderwoman Gazal also asked if these mailboxes are being replaced and if this employee went to a training. Interim Administrator Graff commented that two mailboxes have been replaced already, and this employee did go to a training after this incident.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: Mayor Soliman requested Approval of Pay Request #24 from Vissering Construction Inc. with Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$1,003,207.98 per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

(#4) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Albert, to Approve Pay Request #24 from Vissering Construction Inc. with Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$1,003,207.98 per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

CITY ENGINEER: City Engineer Ron Wiedeman had no agenda items but wanted to let the Council know that we are just waiting on ComEd to hook up the service to the two city signs, on Weber and the other on Broadway. The job is complete on our end, but ComEd must hook up the service.

Alderperson Oberlin asked if anyone found anything out about the mutilated box on Theodore. Engineer Wiedeman commented that he has contacted AT&T, and they are aware of this, and it is on the schedule to be replaced but no date was provided.

Alderperson Oberlin also commented that she received phone calls saying that when the areas were dug up to place these signs, the Crest Hill Woman's Civic League sign was trashed into a pile and not replaced and would like this investigated. She then commented that the Woman's Civic League paid for these signs, and they should not be trashed and there was a total of seven (7) signs.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Mayor Soliman introduced the new Community and Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth.

Community and Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth greeted everyone and commented that he looks forward to meeting everyone individually and he is happy to be of assistance to the community.

Many Council members welcomed Patrick and commented that they are looking forward to working with him.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Police Chief Ed Clark had no agenda items but wanted to thank all who participated giving Christmas Cheer to families that could use some help this year. The presents were delivered on December 23, 2024. He again thanked all the employees for their donations.

He also announced that March 18, 2025, will be a blood drive from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Please sign up and give blood.

Alderman Dyke asked for an update with all the buses that are in disarray at the Oakland Avenue bus garage. Chief Clark commented that he would meet with the Building Commissioner and see what they can do, since they should not be storing things there.

Alderman Cipiti asked about the semis that are being parked behind the Gas N Wash on Weber and Division and wondered if there is any enforcement that can be done to monitor the parked semis. Chief Clark commented that they are looking into having an ordinance to help this and it is in the works.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that she does not see a problem with the semis there to rest for a couple of hours, eat and gamble but it can be a problem if this happens overnight.

Alderman Jefferson commented that he is in there often and has talked with many drivers and most of the drivers are in there eating and playing the slot machines. He also commented that many of them are taking a break inside there or inside their truck because they have driven their hours and cannot go anywhere, and he does not see anyone really hanging around there. Chief Clark commented that he understands but we do not want this to become a truck parking lot, where they park and go somewhere else and come back in a couple of days and it could turn into that.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Soliman commented that all thirty-nine (39) liquor licenses have been completed and paid for and the one business that Council was notified about on Renwick Road did make payment to LocalGov on December 31, 2024. This business was allowed to stay open but not serve alcohol until everything was funded through the banking system.

There are nineteen (19) video gaming licenses, and they have all been completed and paid.

There are twenty (20) tobacco licenses that have been completed and paid.

The one (1) BYOB Permit has also been completed and paid.

Mayor Soliman thanked the business owners for their cooperation, and he also thanked his two Deputy Liquor Commissioners, the Treasurer's Office, the Clerk's Office, and his assistant Marybel DeHaro.

CITY CLERK: City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall commented that she has nothing to report.

CITY TREASURER: City Treasurer Glen Conklin requested to Approve the List of Bills Issued Through January 7, 2025, in the Amount of \$627,774.77 per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

(#5) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin, seconded by Alderman Dyke, to Approve the list of bills issued through January 7, 2025, in the amount of \$627,774.77 for Council approval per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the Regular and Overtime Payroll from December 2, 2024, through December 15, 2024, in the amount of \$282,226.76 per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the Additional Regular and Overtime Payroll from December 16, 2024, through December 29, 2024, in the amount of \$277,643.91 per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the Additional Payroll for Kim Linden Retro Pay in the Amount of \$866.40 per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS: Alderman Jefferson commented that he received a call from a resident, and they had an issue with water pressure, and they had called Public Works and could not get an answer. He then commented that he called Public Works and received a recording that that person was out of the office from December 20, 2024, until January 2, 2025, which then he directed the resident to call City Hall. Interim Administrator Graff commented that he spoke to this resident and had a crew go to her house and they were able to work the problem out. He then commented that the problem was happening because of the resident's water softener and the crew showed her how to flush her water softener and how to maintain it, which the water pressure then came back with no problem.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS: There were no Committee/Liaison Reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Stuart Soifer, a resident, approached the podium and asked if he did not pay the water bill what would happen. Mayor Soliman answered and said the water would be shut off. Stuart then commented that this business owner does not have a license for a year, but they are allowed to stay open. Mayor Soliman commented that they have

reached out to the business owner and have talked to them and we have issued citations and the process is being followed.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS: Alderperson Oberlin thanked the residents for stopping in her place of employment to wish her a farewell on her retirement and she stated that it meant a lot to her.

Alderman Cipiti wished everyone a Happy New Year, welcomed Patrick Ainsworth, and congratulated Alderperson Oberlin on her retirement.

Mayor Soliman informed the Council that there was a need for an executive session on Litigation 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11) per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

(#6) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to go into executive session on Litigation 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11) per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Executive Session 7:46 p.m.

(#7) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to reconvene from the executive session on Litigation 5ILCS 120/2(c)(11) per the memo dated January 6, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Reconvened 8:13 p.m.

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

(#8) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to adjourn the January 6, 2025, Council meeting.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Approved this ____ day of _____, 2025.

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR

DRAFT