

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
February 18, 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.

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, Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk, Finance Director Glenn Gehrke, Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Police Chief Ed Clark, Community and Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer.

PRESENTATION BY WHITE OAK LIBRARY DISTRICT REGARDING THE REFERENDUM PROPOSAL: Mayor Soliman commented that Scott Pointon from the White Oak Library District is here to have a discussion that is for informational purposes only.

Scott Pointon approached the podium and thanked everyone for having him at the meeting. He announced that the Library has a Referendum on the ballot for the election on April 1, 2025. The library district has recognized that they need to expand their services, and they revisited public input in 2024. One thing that was noted was to have longer hours, which they decided to close on Sundays so they can add in earlier times during the week but now people are complaining they are not open on Sundays, so they would like to add back in additional hours on Sunday and stay open later Friday nights.

They also noted that they need to increase the outreach services. They would like to make a book mobile since he noted that one in four of the residents is a senior citizen, but they also would like to do more for young children and preschool age children.

He also noted that they have seen the downloadable e-books, downloadable audio, and streaming media content has exploded and will continue to grow and these items are very expensive.

He stated that the average home for Crest Hill is approximately \$235,000.00 (there are many worth more and some that are worth less) but on the average it would be

approximately \$20.00 more per year on their taxes. If the referendum passes the changes would go into effect around July 1, 2026.

Aldersperson Oberlin commented that reading is critical to children, and she personally loves an actual book, and you cannot explain unless you have the passion, but it is a portal of knowledge which makes reading essential and very important.

Alderswoman Methvin commented that her family and her are avid users of the Libby App through the White Oak Library and anything they can do to further the audio/e-books they would be very appreciative.

Scott commented that he had ran some numbers and the e-book check outs had increased by 50%.

Alderman Albert asked if residents have more questions, where could they direct them to for the answers? Scott answered by saying they can go to the library's website at [whiteoaklibrary.org](http://whiteoaklibrary.org) and there is a section on the website that will help answer questions.

Scott then stated that our library district is 103 years old and the last time the public voted yes for operating money was in 1929 and that is when they became a tax funded entity from being private.

Mayor Soliman thanked Scott and his staff for the customer service the residents receive when at the library.

Aldersperson Oberlin commented that she has been talking to an author who is writing a children's book about Lidice and would love to do an author signing while she is here for the ceremony. Scott commented that to let him know that would be a wonderful thing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Soliman presented the minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on February 3, 2025, for Council approval per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#1) Motion by Alderswoman Gazal seconded by Aldersperson Oberlin, to Approve the Minutes from Regular Meeting Held on February 3, 2025, per the memo dated February 18, 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 Work Session Held on February 10, 2025, for Council approval per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#2) Motion by Alderswoman Gazal seconded by Aldersperson Oberlin, to Approve the Minutes from the Work Session Held on February 10, 2025, per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

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

Mayor Soliman commented that he sees many business owners in the audience and would like to deviate to the public comment portion of the agenda so they could address the City Council.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mrs. Adil, a representative of the business Adil Pediatrics, commented that her husband owns the pediatric business at 2226 Weber Road and has been in practice for over twenty years. She commented that she is always on time every year when paying for the business license and this year she was late. She commented that she was traveling and had completely missed the deadline. She has paid for the business license and the penalty fee which was a total of \$200.00 when it is normally \$50.00, and she is here to request a waiver of the penalty fee.

Mayor Soliman commented that the Council cannot act, but they can place this on the next agenda, which is February 24, 2025, for discussion.

Laura Boyne, a representative of the business Hendrickson Bumper, commented that she is here for a similar request to have the penalty fees waived.

Mayor Soliman commented that no action would be taken tonight but this would be placed on the agenda for February 24, 2025.

Raul Salazar, business owner for Prestige Brick Pavers and Landscapers commented that he is here for the same waiver of the penalty fees.

Mayor Soliman commented that he would be placed on the agenda for February 24, 2025, also.

Omar Ibarra, business owner for Del Toro Transmission, commented that he is here for the same waiver of the penalty fees and would like to be placed on the February 24, 2025, agenda, as well.

Mayor Soliman commented that Del Toro Transmission will be placed on the agenda on February 24, 2025.

CITY ATTORNEY: Attorney Mike Stiff commented that he has no agenda items but had thought about the four business owners. He commented that there needs to be a general discussion about the late/penalty fees since this is something that will impact those who have paid these late/penalty fees.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR: Interim City Administrator Tony Graff gave an update on his memo the Council had received.

City Center Facility – An additional downspout was installed to eliminate the overflow of the gutter causing ice.

STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER – Capital Development Board – No Update

Lockport Township Fire District Training Facility Proposed Project: The Planned Unit Development Application was submitted, and the Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for 3/13/2025 Planning Commission Meeting. Staff are conducting their final review and preparing a staff report working together with the Fire District consultants and staff.

Old City Hall Property Update: The application for the PUD Development Plan was submitted for review by staff and after reviewing it was found to be less than five (5) acres in size. This will not be for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) any longer, but they will still need variances and site design regarding the new building. The Public Hearing is tentatively being scheduled for 3/13/2025, Planning Commission Meeting. If any changes are being made this will come back to a work session so the Council can hear.

Aldermwoman Gazal asked when the public hearing would be advertised to the residents of Willow Falls? Interim Administrator Graff commented that it would have to be decided by Monday the 24<sup>th</sup>. Aldermwoman Gazal asked Interim Administrator Graff if he could notify her so they could make the residents aware.

Interim Administrator Graff commented that A&D Storage has turned in an application to go to the Plan Commission because they would like one of the conditions reconsidered which was to have concrete throughout the entire entrance and the storage units. They are now wanting to see if asphalt could be considered instead of concrete for the storage units. This will be a public hearing since there will be a change to the conditions for special use.

Alderpersn Oberlin would like to know what the current storage unit businesses use for their storage units because she does not see anyone wanting to store their belongings on asphalt. Interim Administrator Graff clarified that it would be concrete at the entrance and asphalt going to the storage units. Attorney Stiff commented that the Plan Commission application is to amend their special use since they are changing a major component of their prior submitted plans.

BL DUKE FIRE: The Department of Public Works Staff have finalized the assessment of costs from the incident on 11/1/2024 at the BL Duke Scrap Metal Recycling Yard 2 Genstar Lane near Industry Avenue off Broadway Street (Unincorporated Will County). They will be working with the city attorney to prepare request for reimbursement, and it is approximately \$500,000.00 for this incident.

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

- Building Inspector Announcement: The two part-time candidates have signed their conditional offer, and human resources will begin the background check.
- City Administrator Search – There was some concern over the language and language will be added stating where certain departments report.

DCEO – Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has awarded \$250,000.00 for replacement of police vehicles. This is for purchasing four squad cars once approved. This will come to a work session for discussion on replacement.

Water Meter Replacement Project – (ON-GOING) Non-Compliance property owners' appointments are progressing. It is still a struggle with the homeowners to allow us to come in and replace the meters. Eventually there will be an extra charge on those water bills for the homes that do not allow the water meters to be replaced since there will have to be a manual read.

Places For Eating Tax – Delinquent Businesses: There are still non-compliant businesses and citations are going to be issued. They are working with a business on a date of March 16, 2025, to be compliant before we progress to the next level with a civil suit.

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

Training – Director of Public Works Julius Hansen is holding a training session. They also have gone through training for snow removal operations.

State of Illinois Crime Lab/State Police Headquarters Project – UPDATE – Nothing New to Report. The Council will be updated as information is received from the State.

City Website – We contacted our host to talk about updating our website and having an assessment done of our current website and see about a redesign. The first Teams meeting is February 26<sup>th</sup> and information will be provided to the Council.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that there is possibly a grant that will repair sidewalks in neighborhoods around schools and she would like this researched.

Alderman Dyke commented that he had heard that City Hall closed early and the next day they opened an hour late. He then commented that he looked into the other communities and no other communities near us closed early or had a late start. He then asked how the employees will be paid for this time. Interim Administrator Graff commented that he sent out an email explaining the weather was reviewed by the Chief of Police, Interim Public Works Director and himself and they decided to close early for the weather. He then stated the late start was to give the Public Works crew that was working 16 hours some more time to get the parking lot done.

Alderman Dyke stated that he contacted the National Weather Service and was told that we received 1.8 inches of snow. He then stated that employees at the City of Lockport that live a distance away were given the opportunity to leave early and use their benefit time if they chose, and he would like to see that done here next time.

Alderson Oberlin commented that there was not even enough snow to write citations for parking on the streets, but we sent employee's home.

Alderson Dyke also asked to have the discussion of the alderman's compensation on the next work session, and he was told it is going on the February 24, 2025, meeting.

Alderson Jefferson asked if there is a guideline to follow when closing the building and if not there needs to be guidelines.

Interim Administrator Graff commented that he used his best judgement. It was not the employees asking to go home early, it was the fact of the three department heads monitoring the storm. He commented that it would be nice to have the perfect storm and know what is going to happen, but the weather is unpredictable, and they were anticipating more snow than what we received. At the end of the day, the decision was made and not just for our employees but for the residents coming to the facility.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen requested to Approve the Repairs for the Three Influent Pumps at the East STP with Flygt for an Amount not to Exceed \$60,000.00 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#3) Motion by Alderson Oberlin seconded by Alderson Methvin, to Approve the Repairs for the Three Influent Pumps at the East STP with Flygt for an Amount not to Exceed \$60,000.00 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

On roll call, the motion was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

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

Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen requested to Approve Change Order #4 with Williams Brothers Construction, Inc. for the East Water Reclamation Facility Phosphorus Removal Upgrades per the memo dated February 18, 2024.

(#4) Motion by Alderson Oberlin seconded by Alderson Dyke, to Approve Change Order #4 with Williams Brothers Construction, Inc. for the East Water Reclamation Facility Phosphorus Removal Upgrades per the memo dated February 18, 2024.

On roll call, the votes was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

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

Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen requested to Approve an Agreement with Strand Engineering to Provide On-Call Wastewater Engineering Services for an Amount not to Exceed \$25,000.00 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#5) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to Approve an Agreement with Strand Engineering to Provide On-Call Wastewater Engineering Services for an Amount not to Exceed \$25,000.00 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

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.

Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen requested Approval of Pay Request #25 from Vissering Construction, Inc. with Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$866,374.75 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#6) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, for Approval of Pay Request #25 from Vissering Construction, Inc. with Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$866,374.75 per the memo dated February 18, 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.

Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen requested to Approve a Resolution Approving the January 31, 2025, Proposal for M.E. Simpson Co. Inc., for Leak Survey, Meter Testing, Valve Assessment, and Hydrant Assessment Services and the Release of Six Frozen/Seized Valves in the Amount of \$111,390.00 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#7) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to Approve a Resolution Approving the January 31, 2025, Proposal for M.E. Simpson Co. Inc., for Leak Survey, Meter Testing, Valve Assessment, and Hydrant Assessment Services and the Release of Six Frozen/Seized Valves in the Amount of \$111,390.00 per the memo dated February 18, 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.

Resolution #1288

CITY ENGINEER: On behalf of the City Engineer Ron Weideman, Mayor Soliman requested to Approve a Resolution for a Professional Service Agreement for Design Services for the Churnovic and Lidice Curve Widening by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois, and Christoher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. Not to Exceed and Amount of \$9,950.00 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#8) Motion by Alderwoman Methvin seconded by Alderman Dyke, to Approve a Resolution for a Professional Service Agreement for Design Services for the Churnovic

and Lidice Curve Widening by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois, and Christoher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. Not to Exceed and Amount of \$9,950.00 per the memo dated February 18, 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.

Resolution #1289

On behalf of the City Engineer Ron Weideman, Mayor Soliman requested to Approve a Resolution Approving Amendment No. 2 to the September 21, 2022, Agreement for Design and Bidding – Related Services for Well No. 14 by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Strand Associates, Inc. for an Amended Contract Amount of #137,000.00 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#9) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to Approve a Resolution Approving Amendment No. 2 to the September 21, 2022, Agreement for Design and Bidding – Related Services for Well No. 14 by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Strand Associates, Inc. for an Amended Contract Amount of #137,000.00 per the memo dated February 18, 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.

Resolution #1290

On behalf of the City Engineer Ron Weideman, Mayor Soliman requested to Approve a Resolution Approving an Agreement for 2025 Sidewalk Cutting Program-Construction by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Safe Step, LLC per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#10) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Albert, to Approve a Resolution Approving an Agreement for 2025 Sidewalk Cutting Program-Construction by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Safe Step, LLC per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

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

Resolution # 1291

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: There were no agenda items for discussion.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk commented that he has no agenda items but would like to announce that the new FOIA Software Program, JUSTFOIA, has been launched and is live on the city website. He also thanked the Police Records



Supervisor Lisa Kikkert and FOIA Specialist Alex Schmeckpeper for all their help with this software and updating the website.

Alderwoman Gazal asked for an update on the incident that happened last Monday.

MAYOR'S REPORT: There were no agenda items for discussion, but he wanted to inform the council that he spoke with the Finance Director, and they are on schedule for the property tax rebate checks on March 17, 2025.

Alderwoman Gazal asked why the Community Development Department is not at the meetings, especially since we have full-time and an interim. Interim Administrator Graff commented that the Community and Economic Development Director had a prior commitment but will be attending the meetings in the future.

Alderman Dyke asked how much longer the Interim Community Development Director will be here now that we have a permanent Director? Interim Administrator Graff commented that they will be giving an update at the next work session with the reasons we need to keep the interim, but we are using him in a consulting manner.

Alderman Cipiti asked how keeping both Community Development Directors on staff would affect the budget.

Alderwoman Gazal would like to know how much both cost the city.

CITY CLERK: City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall had no agenda items for discussion.

CITY TREASURER: City Treasurer Glen Conklin requested to Approve the List of Bills Issued Through February 18, 2025, in the Amount of \$567,669.84 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

(#11) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin, seconded by Alderwoman Methvin, to Approve the list of bills issued through February 19, 2025, in the amount of \$567,669.84 for Council approval per the memo dated February 18, 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.

City Treasurer Glen Conklin presented the Regular and Overtime Payroll from January 27, through February 9, 2025, in the amount of \$247,930.39 per the memo dated February 18, 2025.

Alderwoman Gazal asked the Finance Director if he looked into minimizing the billing. Finance Director Glenn Gehrke commented that he would be looking into it in more depth so he can present options to the Council and see what they should do going forward.

He also commented that a concern they have with the water bills going to monthly is the amount of reads they will have to do and the shut offs and turn-ons will be much more and

he would like to discuss this with the Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen to make sure there is the manpower to do this.

Alderman Albert asked Treasurer Conklin if we could have the persons name on the list of bills that we pay to MGT/GovHR, so we know exactly who the bill is for. Finance Director Glenn Gehrke commented that he would discuss this with A/P.

Alderman Dyke asked if we were ever reimbursed for the guardrail from the accident back in October of 2024? Finance Director Glenn Gehrke commented that he would look into that and get back with him.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS: There were no committee/liaison reports.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS: Alderperson Oberlin wished the Building Commissioner Don Seeman a Happy Birthday.

Alderwoman Gazal reminded the residents that Crest Hill has a new coffee shop and asked the residents to please help support the new business, which is called Sumerce Coffee Roasters located in the Hill Crest Shopping Center.

Alderwoman Gazal also commented that she wanted to remind everyone that they have freedom of speech, and it is their right to express ideas and opinions without feed or punishment within the government. She then commented that if the Council wants to speak, they have the right if it is done with respect.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Linda Dyke, a resident, commented that she would like to know how much money was spent to pay employees for going home early on a day when we only had 1.8 inches of snow. She also commented that her city was the laughingstock of social media because someone in charge of her city chose to send home employees when there was not even two inches of snowfall.

She then commented that she wanted to know how many accidents there were in the city that day.

She also stated that she is going to FOIA employees' addresses, so she can find out what is the furthest point away that an employee lives.

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

(#12) Motion by Alderman Dyke seconded by Alderman Albert, to adjourn the February 18, 2025, Council meeting.

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.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Approved this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

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

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

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

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