

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
May 12, 2025

The May 12, 2025, the City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:15 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 Treasurer Jamie Malloy, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman Deserio, 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, Community & Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Glenn Gehrke, Interim Public Works Director Julius Hansen, Community Development Consultant Ron Mentzer, Building Commissioner Don Seeman, Interim Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl.

TOPIC: Plan Commission Recommendation-Gordon Butler

Mayor Soliman commented that Mr. Gordon Butler's application and resume were included in the Council packet. Mayor Soliman highlighted that Mr. Butler has ten years of experience on the Plan Commission from 2005-2015, as well as six years of experience as an Elected Official on the White Oak Library Board.

The Mayor invited Mr. Butler to make comments to the City Council. Mr. Butler stated that he had stepped down from the Planning Commission previously to pursue personal goals but remained on the Library Board to finish his term. He also noted that he obtained his real estate license in 2019 and has been practicing since. Mr. Butler said he has been a resident of Will County for his lifetime and a Crest Hill resident for over twenty years. He expressed that Crest Hill is a great City with wonderful neighbors, and his wife has been a resident for over forty years. Mr. Butler stated he is still working as a meat cutter by trade.

Alderwoman Gazal reviewed Mr. Butler's credentials and expressed appreciation for his previous experience. Mr. Butler said he believes being connected to the community and being involved again is a good thing.

Mayor Soliman clarified this would be to replace Angelo Deserio's seat, as Mr. Deserio now sits on the City Council as a ward one alderman. He noted it would be for a two-year term appointment, with potential for reappointment after that.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote for Gordon Butler to be appointed to the Crest Hill Plan Commission.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

Mayor Soliman informed Mr. Butler this will be on the agenda for official vote on May 19th. He noted Mr. Butler had said he would be out of the country then, so the Mayor will keep him up to date after the vote. The next Plan Commission meeting would be the second Thursday in June if approved.

TOPIC: Discussion of Master Power Supply Agreement between the City of Crest Hill and MC Squared Energy Services, LLC

Mayor Soliman informed the Council that Adam Hoover was present to discuss the agreement and options for the City regarding the agreement with MC Squared Energy Services.

Mr. Hoover provided an overview of the municipal aggregation program currently run by the City. He explained it provides MC Squared as an alternative electric supplier for residents, who can opt in or out at any time with no fees. The current program provides the ComEd rate for residents with MC Squared, with no savings or extra costs.

Mr. Hoover stated the City receives \$9,000 annually for running the program. He noted the program is up for renewal in August, requiring a decision by mid-June. After going out to bid, they could not find a rate to guarantee resident savings.

Mr. Hoover recommended extending the same program with MC Squared, who doubled their offer to \$18,000 annually. He presented options for a 1- or 2-year deal, or potentially a longer 5–6-year deal that could be opted out of every two years. Mr. Hoover explained this would limit confusion from frequent notification letters to residents.

Council members asked clarifying questions about the payment amounts, lack of rate changes for residents, and details of longer-term agreement options. Mr. Hoover provided additional explanation on the ComEd rate fluctuations, lack of guaranteed savings, and benefits of limiting frequent communications to reduce resident confusion.

After discussion, Alderman Dyke recommended going with the six-year agreement option.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote in favor of the six-year agreement recommendation.

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

NAYES: Ald. Cipiti.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Amendment to Administrative Citations Ordinance (Chapter 1.20)

Deputy Police Chief Ryan Dobczyk addressed the amendment to the administrative citation ordinance, noting the transition to the DACRA platform, which has improved the processing of parking citations. Formerly adjudicated in state court, accruing trial costs, citations are now managed through efficient local administrative hearings. This amendment is designed to update ordinance language to accurately reflect current procedural practices.

City Attorney Mike Stiff provided additional clarification on the proposed changes, underscoring the alignment of the ordinance with the City's real administrative operations. He also committed to providing a red-lined document, comparing the original and revised ordinances for Council members' review. When queried on the obligatory presence of an issuing officer at hearings, the use of "shall" rather than "must" was discussed to allow for a representative of the City to attend instead of the issuing officer directly. Attorney Stiff pledged to correct the ordinance language accordingly.

Following a comprehensive discussion, Deputy Chief Dobczyk addressed all inquiries from Council members ensuring the clarity and documentation of the administrative hearing process.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the suggested amendments to the administrative citations' ordinance Chapter 1.20.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

These amendments are scheduled for formal ratification in the upcoming Council meeting.

TOPIC: Discussion Regarding the Motorola Quote for Patrol Vehicles - In Car Cameras

Deputy Police Chief Ryan Dobczyk addressed the Council concerning a quote from Motorola for new in-car cameras to be installed in their patrol vehicles. He confirmed that due to securing a grant for four new squad cars, the Police Department had acquired other essential equipment, such as radar detectors and in-car computers, benefiting from previous grant funding. However, for compliance and integration with the existing camera systems, they require an update, with three new Motorola M500 in-car cameras identified as necessary components.

The current equipment, specifically the 4RE model used since 2018, is being phased out for a newer model, the M500. These new cameras boast advanced features such as approximately four times the storage capacity and a 4K camera for superior image quality.

Deputy Chief Dobczyk itemized the expenditure for these three cameras, totaling \$29,410, advising the Council of a scheduled increase in prices after June 28th due to tariffs. The recommendation was clear: proceed with approving the quote to avoid the impending price rise.

Council members raised several inquiries regarding ensuring these new cameras' compatibility with existing equipment and installations in their vehicles. Deputy Chief Dobczyk reassured them of the seamless compatibility and reiterated the importance of maintaining a consistent and interoperable system, given Motorola's proprietary influence over their current body cameras and in-car equipment.

Although Deputy Chief Dobczyk acknowledged being slightly under the weather, he methodically responded to questions raised concerning the City's commitment to this equipment over the next five years. He assured the Council of their intent to use the cameras

over the contracted period, having successfully utilized previous models for several years beyond initial expectations.

Alderperson Oberlin raised questions about the logistics of installation, pointing out elements like the security awareness training outlined in the documents. Deputy Chief Dobczyk conveyed that these aspects pertained to IT processes, including wireless data downloads from patrol vehicles. He confirmed that the City's current IT provider is well-versed with the setups, although training would be available as needed. Additionally, it was stated that he would serve as the project's principal contact, with additional support from the IT provider in his absence.

After addressing all concerns, Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to approve the acquisition of the three Motorola M500 in-car cameras.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

The matter will appear on the agenda for formal approval at the Council meeting set for May 19th.

TOPIC: Ordinance Amending Section 5.68.110 regarding Towing Company Fee Schedule

Deputy Police Chief Ryan Dobczyk presented detailed information on the proposal to update the towing company fee schedule, which had remained unchanged since 2008. The aim was to ensure that the updated fee schedule would make Crest Hill's towing fees more competitive with those of other jurisdictions, while still being lower than the fees charged by some nearby agencies such as the Illinois State Police and Will County, which charge higher prices.

Deputy Chief Dobczyk elaborated those conversations with representatives from Don's Body Shop, Car Care, and Todd's Towing—the three tow companies operating within Crest Hill—had influenced the development of the updated fee schedule. These discussions highlighted the need for adjustments to accommodate the operational realities of towing services, particularly during off hours. He explained that the revised fees would consider instances requiring services during late-night hours or inclement weather, where the cost to the towing companies increases due to the need to pay staff competitively for inconvenient shifts.

Ryan Dobczyk outlined some additional services that would be included in the updated fee schedule. New items such as crash wrap—a service that involves wrapping windows after collisions to protect the vehicle's interior—and the cleanup using oil dry for massive spills were specified. Moreover, a safety battery disconnect service was also proposed, which involves safely disconnecting vehicle batteries at the scene to prevent fire risks. These inclusions reflect Crest Hill's aim to align its fee structure with modern service requirements and comparable municipalities such as the Village of Plainfield and the Village of Romeoville.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the proposed updates to the towing company fee schedule.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

Attorney Stiff commented that June 1, 2025, if approved, would be the effective date.

TOPIC: Present the Well 10 Emergency Repair - Change Order

Interim City Administrator Tony Graff presented an update on the Well 10 emergency repair change order. He noted that the memo provided needed to be updated with correct spelling and address information, which would be corrected for the next meeting.

Interim Administrator Graff clarified that the claims adjuster and claims company approved the amount over \$89,000. He stated the city has a \$50,000 deductible, so they will get \$38,951.90 reimbursed from the insurance company.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to approve an amount not to exceed \$80,000 in total for Lane Christensen and Company to complete the work on Well 10.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Pay Request #28 from Vissering Construction Inc. with Direction to Send it to the IEPA for Approval and Disbursement for a Total Amount of \$571,023.23

Interim City Administrator Tony Graff presented pay request #28 for the west plant project. He noted it was reviewed by Strand & Associates with a recommendation to pay the invoices presented, which would come out of the City's IEPA loan.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on approving pay request #28.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Request to Approve a Resolution for an Agreement for 2025 Sidewalk Cutting Program-Construction by and between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and Safe Step, LLC. for a cost of \$65,975.74

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented information on the 2025 sidewalk cutting program. He noted that Safe Step had surveyed each ward, identifying approximately 1,300 sidewalk defects across nearly eleven miles of sidewalk inspected. Of these defects, 874 locations were deemed suitable for saw cutting, while 426 other locations were identified for removal and replacement, which would be addressed in future projects.

Engineer Wiedeman elaborated that the cost for the 874 repairs required to bring the sidewalks into compliance was set at \$65,975.74, an amount that was below the \$85,000 previously budgeted in Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) funds for this purpose.

During the discussion, Council members inquired about the details of the project, including the number of locations identified and the process involved. Engineer Wiedeman provided

additional insights, explaining that the survey conducted by Safe Step resulted in the identification of these critical areas, and he ensured that the process included a careful review of photographic evidence to determine the necessary scope of work for each sidewalk defect. This comprehensive review was carried out to ensure that all defects meet the criteria for repair or replacement.

Engineer Wiedeman also mentioned that the 426 locations requiring removal and replacement would be integrated into future concrete programs, either coinciding with roadway projects in the same areas or included as part of the City's concrete flatwork program. This strategic planning was aimed at maximizing efficiency and cost-effectiveness in repairing and updating the city's sidewalk infrastructure.

After reviewing the information and addressing Council members' questions, Mayor Soliman called for a straw vote to gauge support for approving the agreement with Safe Step, LLC. for the proposed cost.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Present the contract from Scanlon Excavating, Inc. in the amount of \$2,449,836.10 for the Phase 1-Oakland Avenue Water Main Replacement and Road Reconstruction Improvement
Combined with topic below.

TOPIC: Discussion to Approve A resolution and Agreement for Phase 1-Oakland Avenue Water Main Replacement and Road Reconstruction Improvement by and Between the City of Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois and V3 Companies of Illinois, Ltd. for an Amount of \$193,319.00

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman combined the presentation of topic items six and seven since they relate to the same project. Topic six involved awarding a construction contract, and topic seven focused on construction engineering services.

Engineer Wiedeman elaborated on the bidding process, which attracted bids from five local contractors, with four eventually submitting proposals. He highlighted that due to CDBG funding requirements, the lowest bidder was rejected for not being properly registered with the SAM.gov federal agency. The rejection was due to their lapsed subscription, which meant they did not fulfill a crucial requirement for CDBG funds. As a result, the contract was recommended for the second-lowest bidder, Scanlon Excavating, pending verification of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements. Engineer Wiedeman mentioned both the City's consultant and Will County confirmed the DBE requirements were believed to be met, and he would verify this prior to the next Council meeting.

The overall project costs came to \$2,643,155.10. Of this, \$2,246,253.08 is allocated from the water fund, with an additional \$396,902.02 coming from the capital fund. The project budget included \$2,600,000 from the water fund and \$1,300,000 for capital funding of the resurfacing work, particularly for the side streets to ensure no gaps were left following project completion.

Additionally, Engineer Wiedeman outlined that the project included CDBG funding for specific parts, which emphasized the need for adherence to certain federal requirements. Had the second bidder been non-compliant similarly, they might have considered foregoing CDBG funding due to the added costs. However, with Scanlon allowed under current compliance checks, continuation was deemed appropriate.

For item seven, V3 Companies were assigned to perform construction inspection services for a fee of \$193,319.00. The increase in costs from previous projects stemmed from a longer estimated project schedule of five months as opposed to the standard three months. Their work would include activities from field meetings and resident coordination to comprehensive inspections ensuring compliance with project specifications.

City Attorney Mike Stiff prompted further discussion clarifying that a resolution to formally reject the initial low bidder's submission as nonresponsive would be incorporated in the resolution, given the specification failures against CDBG criteria.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Ordinance Amending Section 10-01-10-501-Size Restrictions Eastbound

McGilvray Drive City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented a detailed briefing on amending size restrictions for eastbound McGilvray Drive, which is critical to the design of intersections at Ryan Road and McGilvray Drive. The primary focus is to incorporate changes that accommodate full-size interstate trucks, known as WB 50s. The current intersection's design constraints necessitate these changes, as Engineer Wiedeman explained, to prevent the costly right-of-way acquisitions and utility relocations that would otherwise be required for accommodating such large vehicles in the existing infrastructure.

During his explanation, Engineer Wiedeman proposed that truck movements from the shopping center to McGilvray be restricted to smaller delivery trucks, specifically SU 20s, that can navigate within the current geometry of the roadway. This adjustment would obviate the need for significant modifications, preserving existing delivery practices for businesses trailing over twenty years of operation in the area without necessitating extensive construction. He demonstrated the contrast between scenarios with full-size trucks against the permissible SU 20, which could maneuver without impinging on additional road spaces.

Council members engaged Engineer Wiedeman with meticulous questions regarding the potential traffic flow implications and the consequences that might arise from these proposed alterations. Through this interaction, features of advanced simulation were illustrated to depict the vehicle movements in question. Engineer Wiedeman brought clarity to concerns around the right-in/right-out access near the intersection—often a point of congestion during rush hours. He expressed the need for further assessment, looking into possible patterns that might arise from the changes, and the Council agreed to his proposal of doing more studies on that particular entry and exit to understand its impact on traffic fluidity and public safety.

Other Council members shared their observations about traffic congestion and routine user complaints in that corridor and aired inquiries on whether doing so might impede existing traffic conditions or perhaps redirect it unfavorably. Engineer Wiedeman provided comprehensive feedback, noting their evaluations indicate current delivery pathways remain feasible and there is lesser risk identified in pushing this proposal forward than suggested otherwise.

Mayor Soliman supported this proactive step, confirming Engineer Wiedeman's approach in maintaining logistical sanity and proposed that further deliberations on the findings surrounding the access points be a topic for future assessments.

After a thorough discussion, Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the recommendation to amend the ordinance for size restrictions on eastbound McGilvray Drive.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Present for Approval and Authorization of the Replacement for the Completion Bond 30168303 Issued by Western Surety Company to the City of Crest Hill on behalf of Executive Construction for the Gas n Wash Major PUD Project with Site Improvement Bond 7471749 Issued by Old Republic Surety Company to the City of Crest Hill on behalf of Austin Tyler Construction, Inc. for the Remaining Site Improvements Contained in the 2/10/25 Engineer's Opinion of Probably Cost

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman presented details about the approval and authorization for replacing the completion bond associated with the Gas n Wash Major PUD project. He clarified that the main outstanding task from the original surety is the widening of the right-hand turn lane on Weber Road to accommodate westbound Street traffic. This specific scope of work is necessary to adhere to initial project requirements.

Engineer Wiedeman further explained that they have obtained the necessary approval from the pipeline company, clearing a significant hurdle that has delayed the project. With the pipeline's approval, they can now move forward and are waiting for the new surety to be finalized and put in place. This action would effectively terminate the original surety agreement and replace it with a new site improvement bond specifically covering the remaining work on the required roadway improvements.

He noted that they have coordinated with Austin Tyler Construction Incorporated to oversee and execute this final phase. According to Engineer Wiedeman, Austin Tyler is currently scheduled to commence the work in June, with expectations of completing the widening process in approximately two weeks, assuming favorable conditions and no unforeseen complications.

Mayor Soliman called for an informal vote on the recommendation to proceed with replacing the existing completion bond as aligned with the presented conditions.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Discussion and Consideration of a Special Use and Variation Application for 501 Caton Farm Road

Economic and Community Development Director, Patrick Ainsworth introduced the discussion regarding a special use and variation application for 501 Caton Farm Road. The application sought approval for the installation of a solar array operated by Hendrickson Bumper. The applicants, Chris Batch, General Manager of Hendrickson Bumper, and Grace Rasmussen, Project Engineer with Verde Solutions, were present to discuss the proposal.

Chris Batch provided a detailed overview of Hendrickson Bumper's operations, highlighting that the facility on Caton Farm Road is a critical site for the company's manufacturing activities. According to Chris Batch, Hendrickson Bumper specializes in manufacturing various types of vehicle bumpers that include garbage trucks, school buses, and fire trucks, among others. These operations necessitate substantial electricity consumption, a key reason for pursuing solar energy, as they aim to offset 100% of their electric consumption with the proposed solar array.

Grace Rasmussen detailed the project specifics, explaining that the solar array would cover approximately 4.8 acres and consist of just under 2,000 modules. In terms of output, the solar array is anticipated to generate approximately 1.5 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually. The proposed design includes a 6-foot fence with one foot of barbed wire to secure the perimeter, landscaping with 216 new plantings to screen the array from Caton Farm Road, and a gravel access path for emergency vehicle use, planned in consultation with the City Engineer and the Fire Department. Andy Fitzgerald from the Lockport Township Fire District confirmed that the Fire Department approved the proposed access plans as adequate for emergency situations.

Council members engaged in a robust exchange with the presenters, asking detailed questions about security measures, the impact of the solar array installation on wetland areas, and any potential influences on neighboring properties. The applicants and City staff clarified these concerns, emphasizing that all nearby property owners, including Stateville Correctional Center and neighboring businesses, were notified of the proposal, with no objections raised.

City Attorney Mike Stiff provided a summary of the legal implications, clarifying that the application was for a variance and special use permit, including the fire access and existing driveway width. Director Ainsworth mentioned that the Crest Hill Plan Commission had previously reviewed this application and voted 8-0 in favor of recommending approval.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to gauge the Council members' positions on granting the special use permit for constructing the solar array.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

Mayor Soliman clarified that this was a non-binding vote, with an official vote slated for the May 19th Council meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Kurt Fife, owner of Reasonable Tree Experts, appeared before the Council to discuss his plans regarding a special use permit for a proposed new location. Although initially uncertain about the agenda, Mr. Fife shared some insights into his business intentions. He explained that his mulch yard, formerly located at 2220 North Broadway, had been fully cleaned up and sold to a third party whose operations do not involve wood waste dumping, but rather the parking of trailers.

Mr. Fife emphasized that his focus now would be moving the tree business exclusively to the new location at 1642 north of the current street. He confirmed that the mulch company's activities would not be transferred to this new site, aiming instead to keep it dedicated solely to the tree service aspect of his enterprise.

In response, Director Ainsworth provided clarification and assurance. He noted that staff are actively drafting a text amendment that would lay essential groundwork required for progression toward a special use permit for Mr. Fife's new location. The Planning Commission is slated to review this text amendment during their meeting on June 12th, and subsequent decisions will eventually be brought forth to the City Council for consideration.

Director Ainsworth commended Mr. Fife for attending this meeting, affirming their readiness to provide assistance moving forward.

MAYOR UPDATES:

There were no Mayor updates.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES:

There were no committee/liaison updates.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

Interim City Administrator Tony Graff provided detailed updates regarding the status of water system testing and employee evaluations, alongside potential raises for non-union staff. He emphasized that the city is progressing with water quality testing across all wells. Specifically, Interim Administrator Graff confirmed that the City had identified a certified lab for PFAS and PFO testing and had ordered test kits, expecting delivery soon. While he could not yet provide a precise timeline for lab results, the testing of the City's own wells marks an initial key phase.

Further, Interim Administrator Graff engaged in discussions about including tests from different sources, such as various faucets around the City, possibly extending to municipal facilities or selecting private residences. In conversations with consultants, the City is exploring options for household filtration systems but stresses the importance of not disseminating unverified methods. Regulatory guidelines will be pivotal for this consideration.

Regarding employee evaluations, Interim Administrator Graff reported that evaluations for non-union management and supervisory personnel had been completed. He explained that these evaluations included setting goals for the upcoming year, acknowledging that with the delayed initiation last year, quarterly goals were not feasible at the time. The aim now is to include these goals within current evaluation discussions.

Additionally, Interim Administrator Graff touched upon non-union employee pay raises. Any decisions regarding potential raises will rest with the Council, following the submission and review of evaluation materials and accompanying recommendations in an anticipated executive session, potentially scheduled for May 19th. He confirmed that the only increases currently in effect are those defined by contractual terms, ensuring no premature adjustments have been applied.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.

Approved this ____ day of _____, 2025.

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR