

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL**

April 4, 2022

A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held Monday, April 4, at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Jeff Grove presiding with proper notices being duly and continuously posted.

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present - Mayor Jeff Grove, Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

Absent: NONE

Others Present: Deputy Clerk Brent Bader, Finance Director John Duncan, Fire Chief Jerry Janick, Superintendent of Public Works Patrick Watson, Economic Development Director Leah Inman, City Attorney Jim McPhedran, Treasurer Virginia Kochanowski

A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept and place on file the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City Council held March 21, 2022. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

PROCLAMATIONS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to proclaim April 7, 2022 as Junior Achievement Day in the City of LaSalle.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

New Director of IVRD Brandon Miller-Guss was introduced to the City Council.

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to proclaim April 10 through April 16 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in the City of La Salle. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

PETITIONS

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the request from LP Cavalettes to hold a Tag Day Collection on Saturday, June 25, 2022 and Sunday, June 26, 2022 at the intersection of 11th and Bucklin Streets as well as Casey's General Store, Beck's and Save-A-Lot.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the request for a 2022 Raffle License from Hegeler Carus Foundation.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the request for a 2022 Raffle License from SBL Group LLC.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the request for a 2022 Raffle License from Citizens to Elect Greg Vaccaro.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the request of Chico Perez, of Abundant Life Fellowship, for a special event permit to allow the use of City-owned property at 885 Grant Street from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, April 11, 2022 for an Easter egg hunt with associated games.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve and place on file the monthly police income report for March 2022 showing total fees collected of \$6,507.22. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

RESIGNATIONS

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept the resignation of Police Detective Osvaldo Landeros. Alderman Herndon stated how Detective Landeros will be greatly missed and had done a great job as an Officer and Detective for the City of LaSalle. Mayor Grove wished him well.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to approve the hire of Police Officer Alex Doll for the LaSalle Police Department. This hiring is consistent with the Police and Fire Commissioners recommendation.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

STANDING COMMITTEES

Moved by Alderman Jeppson and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to approve the recommendation of the Public Grounds & Real Estate Committee regarding a proposal from Kmetz Architects relating to the renovation of the City's Public Works building, 146 Industrial Drive.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Engineer Brown stated that he contacted Kmetz in regards to beginning the first two phases from his proposal after this approval tonight.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding a request from Brandee Bell for a Redevelopment Incentive Program grant totaling \$12,500 for premises located at 1157 First Street for fiscal year 2023.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding proposals for city entry signs. These five signs will be purchased from P&D signs for \$19,661.00. Four of the signs will be purchased from TIF funds and the other sign will come out of the general fund.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Alderman Crane did ask if there is a life span on these signs. Engineer Brown stated that it is the same material as the 2nd St. Parking lot sign. That sign was put up at least 7 years ago and is still in good condition.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Herndon to approve the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys, and Traffic Committee regarding a request to reduce the speed limit on Richard Hallett Road from 45 to 30mph, from Rt. 6 to the LaSalle end.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Both Alderman Demes and Mayor Grove thanked the residents from Richard Hallett Rd for coming out and speaking in regard to the speed limit issue.

Alderman Crane asked to view Demes' video again. Alderman Crane and Demes discussed the distance from truck to garden. A city diamond is 80'x80'. Bacidore believes that if two cars are parked up to the garden fence, there is plenty of room for the garbage truck to pull in and out. Crane sees room for 3 vehicles.

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to return the two No Parking signs from to the south city diamond between Second, Third, Bucklin, and Lafayette streets.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson

NAY: Alderman Bacidore, Herndon, Crane

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-3

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to approve the recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding a request from Scott Clark, of Jake's Pour House, for variances including but not necessarily limited to from 25' side adjacent street setback to 0' relating to the construction of an outdoor pavilion by the rear of the building.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

OLD BUSINESS

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve and authorize the payment to John Pohar & Sons totaling \$14,520.00 for work completed to date on the Seventh and Sterling Slide Gate installation project.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Engineer Brown mentioned that the slide gate will reduce the velocity of the flow coming down the hill that may be creating overflow down by the Water plant that goes into the Little Vermillion. It was recommended back in 2010 by the Farnsworth group. Alderman Demes commended Engineer Brown for all his hard work.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Grove started the conversation in regards to the review of the gaming ordinance. Mayor mentioned how it always comes up this time of year so we are reviewing it and doing some fact-finding. Non-Home Rule is \$250 per machine. The city of La Salle is Home Rule so they are able to do what is fair.

Reynolds stated that he currently works for Suzi Gaming in Peru and has for the last 8 years. Reynolds believes that the people that have the locations and have the equipment that are being used, they are the ones "getting it in the neck." with the biggest expenses. Employees 455 hrs. to pay each month. Rent and everything else. Reynolds mentioned that the woman that he works for brought in \$10,870.73 for the month of January. She then has to pay help, which runs \$6,700/Month. He stated that this doesn't count rent, lights, gas, and everything else. Reynolds continued to run through different breakdowns of what most proprietors take home. Reynolds is against this tax. These business owners have a lot of other requirements to run these certain businesses. They may need bartender licenses, food handler licenses, sex harassment certifications renewed, and these are just some of the additional costs. He believes that these owners are not making as much money as the cities believe they are in the end.

Eddie Morarity stated that there are 29 different gaming locations in LaSalle and the City is receiving \$25,000-\$30,000 from these locations every month. Morarity has owned Mort's Pub for 8 years and has donated a lot of money to a lot of area causes. He would not be able to keep his doors open if it wasn't for the machines.

Alderman Bacidore owned a bar for 36 years and said things have definitely changed. Bacidore referred to the slide that compared the area bars and how much they bring in and how much they pay out. Bacidore feels that if we put this tax on the bars or gaming establishments, we are telling the owners that they are basically not going to get paid for a month when they rely on their monthly income.

Reynolds wanted to point out that the figures that are shown on the slideshow are not true figures to what the establishments are bringing in. They do not cover all the expenses that go into running such a business.

Herndon does believe that at least 50 percent of our local establishments would be vacant buildings in the City of Lasalle if the gaming wasn't part of their businesses. Herndon does

not want to see the city go after the small mom & pop businesses that are just surviving making all their payments. Herndon did ask Attorney McPhedran, since the city is a Home rule sales tax, would the city be able to hit up the bigger chain business like Pilot or Becks.

McPhedran did state that the Mayor raised the question to him. He was unable to review it fully right away. The State has rewritten many of the provisions in regard to the state gaming statutes. Prior to this time, the amount non-home rules that they could charge was \$25/terminal or machine. The licensing here could be a charge for the license, establishment owner, machine owner and also per machine. He has seen some draft ordinances going about those lines. Conferring with the Illinois Municipal League, the proper method is to charge per terminal. Prior to recent amendments, the Non home rule could only charge \$25/machine. That has raised to \$250, plus municipalities are short on revenue, just like establishments are. Many municipalities like La Salle are trying to be sensitive to everything. Unlike other municipalities, the City of La Salle is allowing the residents/establishment owners to be heard in a reasonable manner. The recent amendments include but are not limited to provisions, amusement machine taxes like they used to be. That gets into your tiers, pilot and based on the revenue they generate. If the City does base it upon revenue, the argument will be made that it's in the nature of the tax. When McPhedran spoke with the Municipality League Rep, Brad Cole, they stated that if the City chose to do a tier system, it would run a greater risk of being declared illegal. McPhedran is unable to give a final answer to that tonight because he was only able to check in on it for a short amount of time. He definitely believes that there would be a greater risk if the City decided to do a tiered situation and not a recommendation at this time. Cole concurred with McPhedran's' thoughts on the tiered system.

Herndon would like to see Pilot and Becks targeted with this tax and leave all the other "mom and pop" places alone.

Demes believed that the reasons the machines were brought in would be to generate some revenue for the bar owners. He believes that there is a loophole now that there are gaming parlors. He would like to see the gaming parlors charged more thinking that they carry possibly a different class of license. McPhedran is not aware if they hold a different license or not.

John Aden, owner of Lucky Cuts Gaming, stated that they choose the license they want based on what they sell. They still have a bar at some of these parlors, just possibly a different atmosphere. He has chosen to have his businesses in La Salle because of its individuality and they are not like other towns. He is concerned with how it was first presented to the owners from \$60, potentially jumping to \$500. Eiden does agree to growth and a little adjustment.

Mayor thought that the three possibilities for the council to discuss tonight would be for No raise, \$250, or \$500.

Morarity was told by his gaming people that it was going to be \$250, but then the owners were all starting to hear potentially as high as \$500.

The Mayor reminded the audience that the city of La Salle is home rule, which allows for the city to have that authority.

McPhedran did state that there was no ordinance prepared for the Council tonight. This was meant to be a discussion and to get input from the community.

Aden did want the council to know that currently they pay for the whole permit at the beginning, but possibly requiring the gaming pay half and establishment owners pay half. He suggested letting the owners pay \$65, double that, and then the gaming people would pay their half and the owners would pay half. That would take it up to \$130/machine.

McPhedran stated that it is required by State Law to pay 50/50 between the owner of the establishment and the gaming people.

Duncan clarified that there actually 156 terminals within those 30 establishments. Mayor stated that the money that does come in from the gaming institutions could be earmarked to alleys.

Demes agrees to do some sort of fee increase. McPhedran reminded the council that this is just up for discussion. He reminded council members that there is no ordinance prepared for tonight to officially vote on. Bacidore wanted to make a motion to leave it as is for this current year. An audience member did ask about the potential increase to pool tables, darts, juke boxes from \$60 to \$100. Ptak is open to an increase. Reynolds wants to leave it alone. Lavieri and Jeppson are open to an increase. Herndon suggested to keep machines \$120 and then owners will only be paying out their \$60 that they are used to. This would only be on gambling machines, and leave dart boards, juke box, pool tables alone. Crane asked if the vendor had the right to reduce the number of machines. Vendors do have the right but seemed to be highly unlikely because they are still making money and not going to let that happen. Mayor believes that businesses will still continue to make money whether they increase their juke box prices or not.

Alderman Bacidore did not receive a second on his motion.

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Crane to increase from \$60 to \$120 on gaming terminals due to the fact the vendors are paying half, owners will be back to their original amount of \$60, and to leave other machines (juke box, dart boards, pool tables, etc.) exactly the same with no increase.

John Aden wanted to clear something up with the council. The owners were originally paid the full amount at the beginning but then get paid half in the end. Now within home rule, the gaming will pay half and the owners will be paying half from the beginning.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Lavieri, Herndon, Crane

NAY: Alderman Ptak, Reynolds, Jeppson

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-3

Ordinance that will be prepared for next meeting and be consistent with the language from the Motion from Alderman Herndon.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Lavieri asked about the street sweeper. Mayor advised all residents to be patient. There will be a schedule out soon.

The Leaf Drop off is now open every Saturday in April and Wednesdays till 6pm. Mayor wanted to remind residents that only yard debris is only allowed. There will be zero tolerance for garbage dumping. One resident recently was caught and ticketed.

Alderman Bacidore asked in regards to the cameras going up. Mayor stated that it does come down to weather and it's on the list to get done.

Deputy Clerk Bader stated that the E-Recycling event went really well and the city had hoped to do this again in the near future, hopefully every two years.

Alderman Bacidore is concerned with the amount of time going into the Celebration of Lights but the street dept work is not getting the attention it should.

Mayor asked for a straw vote on the council to see who was in favor of the lightshow. All that were asked were in favor of the lights but Mayor mentioned that Bacidore and Crane bring up the Celebration of Lights discussion every meeting. Crane did not go through the lights this year.

Alderman Crane asked the Mayor why Cruz Concrete was hired for the 7th and Sterling project. Crane wanted to know why city employees were unable to do that job. Supt. Watson stated that they were working on the sewer on 1st St. Watson can provide the proper documents to show where all street employees were that week.

Mayor reminded the council how to properly put in a request for a work order. Aldermen can use the app or call down to Beth. Bacidore is upset that two work orders did not get taken care of because lights had to be taken down first before the weather was nice and the park was open.

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to approve the ordinance authorizing the City of LaSalle, LaSalle County, Illinois, to borrow funds from the Water Pollution Control Loan Program regarding construction of Wastewater Improvements, also superseding prior Ordinance Number 2914. Each and every alderman has a copy.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded Alderman Reynolds to approve the ordinance authorizing variances concerning premises as requested by Sott M. Clark regarding premises

at 201 Ninth Street (Jake's Pourhouse) within the City of LaSalle. Each and every alderman has a copy.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Engineer Brown gave update on 24th St project. They milled the road, will be starting pipe soon and it is moving along. It will be a few months but will be nice when complete.

Finance Director Duncan mentioned that at the next Finance Committee, April 18th, meeting that he would like to go over potentially approval of four union contracts with the committee. The Finance Meeting will be held 5pm on Monday, April 18th.

Engineer Brown did mention that the project on 7th and Sterling was a quick project that needed to happen and Patrick was unable to pull anyone to get that job done. Brown just wanted council to know that it was his doing more than anyone else's.

Alderman Jeppson wanted to share with the council and the public that the Library has now four apps that patrons can now access with their library card; LIBI, Access 360, PrairieCat, and Hoopla.

Mayor Grove asked the audience their opinion on the Celebration of Lights. John Aden commented that he thinks it is great for the city. It is a great extra source of revenue. Families come in see the lights and hopefully take a ride to get a bite to eat.

Mr. Hammers asked the revenue that the City of La Salle brings in for the Celebration of Lights. Mayor quoted last year's number to be about \$160,000. Mayor stated that most of the money gets earmarked for the Parks and to that Park itself.

Reporter Tom Collins had some facts in regards to the Celebration of Lights. In 2013 city brought in \$121,000.00 and in 2021, \$170,000. Collins is very much in favor of the Celebration of Lights and the revenue it generates for the city.

Hammer is in favor of the Celebration of Lights. He would love to see a way to get others into the downtown, not just the highway. Economic Development Director Inman and Deputy Clerk Bader are working on different ways to promote the downtown during the Celebration of Lights.

Mike Bird mentioned how Princeton is trying to do something different, similar to the Celebration of Lights but La Salle has done a great job with what they have already accomplished. Bird is in favor of getting them downtown also.

Crane stated that no one on the Council wants the lights to shut down. Crane believes that the city is down employees. The problem does not lie within the lights, he believes it lies in how the city handles the setup and take down of the lights. He believes too much manpower is being used for the Lights and not on the streets or within the City. Crane

stated that both Bacidore and himself are trying to utilize the labor more efficiently by bringing up this issue.

Aden suggested bringing in veterans and volunteers to help out with the setup and dissembling of the lights.

Bacidore doesn't believe that the City is making money off the lights to bring out of towners in from the highway and they go right back out to the highway. He does think the City is getting the return on the light show. He suggested hiring two more workers so they could be designated to have those workers always available for in town jobs.

Bird suggested a fun, festive downtown light competition between the downtown businesses. Mayor did mention that Deputy Bader is working on tying in the downtown to the Lights.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept, pay, and place on file bills for March 21, 2022 with Total Submitted: \$401,666.51 (Total Payroll \$172,064.23, Bills to be paid \$110,711.35, Total Bills Paid \$118,890.93). Each and every alderman has a copy.

AYE: Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None

Absent: None **Abstain:** None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Crane to adjourn the meeting.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

ADJOURNED 8:13 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Quinn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Amy" on the first line and "Quinn" on the second line.

Amy Quinn, City Clerk