

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL
September 11, 2017**

A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held Monday, September 11, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor Jeff Grove presiding and with proper notice being duly and continuously posted.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present- Mayor Grove, Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

Absent: Alderman Ptak, Alderman Schneider

A quorum was present.

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds that the minutes of the regular City Council meeting held on Monday, August 28, 2017 are accepted and placed on file. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

PETITIONS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Herndon to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and donate \$250 to the Illinois Valley Community Hospital Foundation Golf Scramble being held on Friday, September 15, 2017. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL: AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Ptak, Schneider Abstain: None

Motion Carried 6-0

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to grant the request of P&D Signs Company for a Sign Permit to install a 3.25' x 10.81' non-illuminated, single-face wall sign for SAS (Style & Sophistication) located at 757 First Street. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Herndon to grant the request of Aimee Taylor on behalf of the La Salle Peru High School Chamber Singers to hold a Tag Day collection on Sunday, October 8, 2017 and Saturday, October 28, 2017 at the intersection of 11th and Bucklin and at area businesses. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

In regard to the potential acquisition of the former Jackson School, the Mayor indicated that he invited several residents from the neighborhoods of Jackson School and the former Mathiessen School to give their input. Mayor Grove explained that he also asked the council members and those who are in support of acquiring the Jackson School property to wear blue this evening. The color blue represents something that is beneficial to the mind and body and also signifies trust, loyalty, wisdom, confidence, intelligence, faith and heaven. Mayor Grove stated that he wants this council to focus specifically on the areas of stability, loyalty, wisdom and confidence. Mayor stated the voters have placed their confidence into the hands of the council and that sometimes means that tough decisions have to be made. Mayor referenced the circumstances that revolved around the old Matthiesen School. He stated that the council at the time had an opportunity to acquire the school, but made the decision not to. The School District then sold it to a developer. In 1992, the new owner sought a zoning change from the City with plans to use the

building for a commercial use. The zoning change was approved, yet the developer failed to follow through on his plans and the school sat empty. As the building continued to fall into disrepair, the City, for years had to resort to taking costly legal action against the owner for various nuisance violations. The abandoned building invited vandalism and other issues and became an eyesore and safety concern for neighbors. Mayor Grove stated that he does not want a repeat of this type of situation and fears if we do not acquire Jackson School the same situation could result.

Mr. Hank Lushina, resident of 510 Baker Avenue, confirmed the Mayor's portrayal and stated that the Matthiesen School situation was a horrible mess for many years.

Mayor Grove outlined the potential benefits of taking control of Jackson School :

- The City would have control of the school
- The neighborhood would be better protected from it falling into the wrong hands
- The City has experience with developers and can better vet them
- The City could be spared from potential litigation costs
- The purchase establishes a good partnership with the school district
- There is the possibility of turning the building into a functioning community center or other use.
- With the City having control, there is less chance of property values in this neighborhood declining.

Mayor outlined the potential downsides of taking control of Jackson School:

- The building will sit empty for some time regardless if the School or City has control. However, the City will make sure it is taken care of.
- Any empty building can be a potential magnet for looters or crime.
- No guarantee demolition may not be a possibility in the future.
- Costs to maintain and provide heat, liability, etc.

Mayor Grove stated that it took years to get the Mattheissen School in the City's control which led to many legal fees that and continued deterioration of the school. Also, in 2012, the City was able to utilize a CDAP grant to help with the demolition costs of the school. If the Jackson School were to end up in a similar situation, the Mayor indicated that he does not believe assistance would be available from Federal or State government due to the current economic situation leaving the City with a potential large expense.

Residents Wayne and Lynn Howarth who reside at 640 Bucklin were present at the meeting. Mrs. Howarth stated that they are absolutely worried that the building will end up in the wrong hands and they will end up with a Matthiesen School situation. Mayor Grove reassured her by stating that the City, even if it does not acquire the school, still has control over zoning and what type of uses would be allowed. He added that if the situation were to arise where a developer is found, the public is always given an opportunity to be heard and give input as to zoning. Mr. Howarth expressed concern that again it could fall into the wrong hands. He asked Mayor Grove if the City gained ownership would they then sell it to a developer. Mayor Grove stated that the City would, but would do its best to ensure it is sold to a developer with a solid reputation that has been thoroughly vetted. One resident in attendance asked if City personnel have been in the building so they have an idea of what they would be getting. Mayor Grove stated that he and other City staff and Alderman Schneider toured the building.

Mr. Lushina stated that neighbors were upset back in 2012 when the zoning was changed. Mayor stated that is why we have open hearings where residents can come out and be heard on zoning matters.

Mayor showed a seven minute YouTube video that toured the old Matthiesen School and highlighted the deterioration and damage caused by vandals.

Alderman Duncan asked what the school district's plans are if we do not take it on. Mayor stated they will continue to look for a buyer or keep it until they find a buyer. He asked if there was a way the City could work with the school to find a buyer. Mayor stated that was a possibility.

Alderman Bacidore suggested that if the police simply patrol the building often that will discourage vandalism. Mayor Grove stated that the police did patrol the Matthiessen School and vandalism still occurred.

One resident in attendance stated that if neighbors see something unusual they would contact the police. Brief discussion followed regarding the playground equipment in the rear of the school. Mayor said the equipment could possibly be relocated elsewhere in the City to help avoid loitering, etc.

Alderman Reynolds stated that he thinks we need to do something now or it will drag on forever. He added that we need to make progress now and we will not be sorry. Katherine Toraason stated that many times someone will buy a building with good intentions, but then it sits there forever with nothing being done.

Because two aldermen were absent, Mayor stated that a vote will be taken at the September 25 City Council meeting. He encouraged the council to do the right thing and ensure another Matthiessen School situation does not happen.

In regard to potential amendments to Ordinance 2597 regarding the Redevelopment Incentive Program, the Economic Development Committee met last week. The program was reviewed and the committee felt payment for signage should be removed as a qualifying expense. Mayor stated that he believes signage should be retained as it assists owners and is an incentive for owners to improve and update. Brief discussion followed. Alderman Duncan stated that it was also decided that moving forward in 2018, applicants must provide all required documents in order for grant applications to be considered and awarded.

BIDS

A bid opening was held this morning for the Emergency demolition of the Vendome located at 540 First Street. Bids were requested for both the front and rear portions of the building. Brief discussion followed about the condition of the building and the costs and processes involved with the demolition. Mayor Grove stated the issue will be further discussed at the next City Council meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

Moved by Alderman Duncan and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept and place on file a thank you from the family of Sergeant Jason Brokaw. Each and every alderman has a copy.
Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Duncan to accept and place on file the recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant the request of Jim and Lynn Jakse for a rear yard variance from 25 feet to 11 feet on the north side of the property and a reduction in the side yard setback from 7 feet to 6 feet on the east side of the property to construct an accessory building (garage) at premises commonly known as 101 Edwards Avenue and related matters. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL: AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Ptak, Schneider Abstain: None

Motion Carried 6-0

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Duncan to approve Redevelopment Incentive Program Grant to the following applicants. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL: AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Ptak, Schneider Abstain: None

Motion Carried 6-0

RIP Grant Awards
Nacho Realty- \$6,737
Turk Furniture- \$6,139.32
Camden-GHG Holdings, LLC-
\$4,400
Content Gift & Homes- \$3,000
Marty's Barber Shop- \$2,600
Amia Boutique- \$2,000

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to pass and place on file **Resolution 201710** to Enter into an Agreement for Application Services for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) on behalf of the City of La Salle. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL: AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Ptak, Schneider Abstain: None

Motion Carried 6-0

Resolution 201710: to enter into an Agreement for Application Services for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) on behalf of the City of La Salle.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to pass and place on file **Ordinance 2701**: an Ordinance Approving and Adopting an Extension for the Completion of the La Salle 351 Tax Increment Financing District Redevelopment Project Area, Plan, Projects and Obligations. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL: AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Ptak, Schneider Abstain: None

Motion Carried 6-0

Ordinance 2701: Approving and Adopting an Extension for the Completion of the La Salle 351 Tax Increment Financing District Redevelopment Project Area, Plan, Projects and Obligations.

Moved by Alderman Duncan and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to pass and place on file Ordinance 2702: An Ordinance authorizing variance concerning premises as requested by Jim and Lynn M. Jakse regarding premises at 101 Edwards Avenue within the City of La Salle. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL: AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Ptak, Schneider Abstain: None

Motion Carried 6-0

Ordinance 2702: Ordinance authorizing variance concerning premises as requested by Jim and Lynn M. Jakse regarding premises at 101 Edwards Avenue within the City of La Salle.

COMMENTS

Alderman Lavieri stated that the Economic Development Committee would like to meet every two weeks after the Finance Committee meeting. It was agreed that for the remainder of 2017, meetings will be duly noticed as needed. For 2018, the Committee meetings will be regularly scheduled to meet every two weeks following the Finance Committee meeting and will be added to the official 2018 calendar.

Marla Repsel resident of 120 Crosat complained to the council about loud parties being held on the 1100 Block of Second Street lasting until the early hours of the morning. She has contacted the Police

Department and they have responded, but the noise starts up as soon as the police leave. The parties have been on 6/2, 8/26 and 9/10. Mayor Grove stated that she needs to continue to call the police. Chief Uranich stated that circumstances (noise levels, neighbor complaints) will determine what the police can do. He, too, stressed that it is important that she call each time. Mayor asked if she would be willing to sign a complaint if needed and Mrs. Repsel stated that she would.

City Engineer Brian Brown stated that striping in the crosswalks near LP High School will be completed this week. He also added that the resolution passed this evening is to assist in securing the \$500,000 grant that with help with the USEPA mandates to separate sewers as part of the long term control plan.

Mayor Grove thanked the Public Works, Fire and Police Departments for their assistance over the weekend with the BBQ n Blues and Jazz in the Streets events. Mayor also announced there will be a free movie in the park at Hegeler Park on Friday, September 15 beginning at dusk.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Duncan that bills submitted totaling \$406,053.87 (Total Payroll \$172,000.31, Bills to be Paid \$191,456.77, Total Bills Paid \$42,596.79) be accepted, paid and placed on file. Each and every alderman has a copy.

ROLL CALL: AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Reynolds, Lavieri, Duncan, Herndon

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Ptak, Schneider Abstain: None

Motion Carried 6-0

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

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

ADJOURNED 8:15 p.m.



Carrie L. Brown, City Clerk