

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL  
July 16, 2018**

**A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held Monday, July 16, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor Jeff Grove presiding with proper notice being duly and continuously posted.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

**Present-** Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Herndon, Schneider

**Absent:** Alderman Duncan

A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds that the minutes of the regular City Council meeting held on Monday, July 2, 2018 are accepted and placed on file. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

**PETITIONS**

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Demes to grant the request of Ameren Illinois to break ground at 2700 St. Vincent Avenue, Rear to install new pole for customer. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Schneider and seconded by Alderman Herndon to grant the request of Jose Medina on behalf of LP Football to hold a Tag Day Collection on Saturday, August 11, 2018 at the intersection of 11<sup>th</sup> and Bucklin and at La Salle businesses. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to grant the request of Mary Beth Beenenga on behalf of the Tonica Fire Department to hold a Tag Day Collection on August 4, 2018 and on August 18, 2018 at IV Food Center. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Schneider to grant the request of Servant's Heart Fellowship to close off 8th Street between Crosat and La Harpe Streets on Sunday, August 5, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for their sixth annual "Back to School" Block Party. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Herndon to grant the request of Jennifer Peters on behalf of the St. Hyacinth's Bazaar Committee to block of 11th Street between Hennepin and Tonti on Saturday, August 11, 2018 from 4:00 p.m. until 12:00 a.m. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Schneider to refer the request from B Brothers Real Estate, LLC for a Zoning Change from R-3 to R-4 to the Planning Commission and to the Zoning Board for any potential variances for premises commonly known as 905-11th Street. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

### **REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept and place on file the Building Inspector's Report for June 2018 showing total fees collected of \$2,228.32 with total value of construction of \$333,690.22. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept and place on file the Treasurer's Report for June 2018 showing cash balances in the La Salle State Bank of \$3,801,758.89 and in Hometown National Bank of \$5,253,019.79. Each and every alderman has copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Clerk Brown read a thank you from Ed and Barbara Schulte Lischewski and Illinois Valley Animal Rescue. It was then moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept and place on file the communications. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept and place on file the Illinois Department of Revenue Report showing sales tax collected for April 2018 of \$80,750.05 and referendum approved sales tax of \$35,478.76 for a total of \$116,228.81. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys and Traffic Committee to grant the request of Carus Corporation for no parking on Sterling Street between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Herndon, Schneider

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Duncan Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 7-0**

Moved by Alderman Bacidore and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept the recommendation of the Streets, Alleys and Traffic Committee and grant the request of Lindsey Leffelman for a "Caution Autistic Child Playing" sign in the vicinity of Prospect Avenue and Lincoln Avenue. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Herndon, Schneider

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Duncan Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 7-0**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

No old business was brought forth.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Due to time constraints with the Mayor's work schedule, Alderman Lavieri asked if the council might be interested in moving up the meeting time for the July 30 meeting.

A motion was made by Alderman Lavieri and it was seconded by Alderman Reynolds to change the July 30, 2018 City Council meeting time from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., with committee meetings being moved up thirty minutes, from 6:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and add to the agenda for a possible motion to permanently change the meeting times for the remainder of the calendar year.

**ROLL CALL: AYE:** Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Herndon, Schneider  
**NAY:** None **Absent:** Alderman Duncan **Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried 7-0**

Alderman Schneider announced that Lincoln Junior High School will be holding an Open House on Friday, July 20 from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. for students, families and the public to see the renovations.

Alderman Lavieri announced that tickets are on sale for the "Peek Into La Salle" event being held on July 20. Tickets are \$25.00 or \$20.00 if bought in advance.

**ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS**

Prior to the vote, Alderman Demes stated that he was not ready to move forward on this, but suggested that a questionnaire is developed and given to the rank and file in order to get the pros and cons of shared services from the officers. He suggested that it could be anonymous and dropped off in the water bill drop off box. The committee could then review the comments and get a general feel of the concerns or ideas of the officers and what it would take to get them on-board. He stated that he is in favor of shared police services, but is hesitant to move forward until we get the rank and file on board.

Mayor Grove responded by stating that the agreement under consideration allows a greater opportunity to get the word out and hold more meetings to discuss some of the lingering questions. Mayor stated that this ordinance basically authorizes the group to get to the point we are at already. He stated if the council has concerns about how money is spent they can express their views to the four representatives on the committee who will then vote on expenditures based on how the council advises.

Alderman Herndon asked if this agreement was exactly the same as Peru and Oglesby's. Attorney McPhedran confirmed that it was.

Alderman Lavieri stated that we need this in order to get the answers to tell the rank and file and we need to cooperate and move forward

Alderman Schneider added, and with no intention to offend the other communities, that we have all heard rumors that if the new station is not at IVCC, Oglesby is out and also if the new station is not at the old Jewel site, Peru is out. A lot of time is being asked of our Finance Director and Police Chief and others, so Alderman Schneider suggested that real discussions need to take place, because if this is the case we are wasting a lot of time and money. Alderman Schneider stated the other communities need to make clear if they are in all the way or if it is pending based on location.

Mayor Grove stated that he agreed and suggested that a location is selected at the next Shared Services meeting.

Alderman Reynolds stated that we need to move forward so rumors and misconceptions can be cleared up and questions can be answered.

Alderman Herndon asked if this ordinance had been approved by Peru or Oglesby. Attorney McPhedran stated that Peru did pass the ordinance authorizing this agreement which includes expenditures for legal and architect fees for Phase I only and it is on Oglesby's agenda for this evening. He continued by saying that as the Mayor indicated, the committee will also have input and vote on specific expenditures. This agreement does not give authority to buy land. That will require input and a vote from each City in the future. Attorney McPhedran indicated that per Attorney Jurusik, for this ordinance to pass it will require a simple majority and the Mayor's vote can be recorded.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to pass and place on file

**Ordinance 2744:** Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Cost Sharing Agreement Entered Into By the City of La Salle, the City of Oglesby and the City of Peru to conduct a Cost and Operational Feasibility Assessment to Explore and Pursue the Sharing of Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Services and Constructing and Operating a Centralized, Jointly Staffed, Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Facility to Serve as a Law Enforcement Headquarters, a Potential 911 Dispatch Center and a Jail Facility and related matters. (City of La Salle, City of Oglesby, City of Peru) Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Mayor Grove, Alderman Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Herndon

NAY: Alderman Demes, Alderman Schneider Absent: Alderman Duncan Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 5-0**

**Ordinance 2744: Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Cost Sharing Agreement Entered Into By the City of La Salle, the City of Oglesby and the City of Peru to conduct a Cost and Operational Feasibility Assessment to Explore and Pursue the Sharing of Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Services and Constructing and Operating a Centralized, Jointly Staffed, Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Facility to Serve as a Law Enforcement Headquarters, a Potential 911 Dispatch Center and a Jail Facility and related matters. (City of La Salle, City of Oglesby, City of Peru)**

## **COMMENTS**

Attorney Julie Ajster came forward and stated that she was in attendance to primarily address the Shared Services issue.

Alderman Bacidore interjected that Ms. Ajster and stated that Ms. Ajster had \$38 in outstanding charges for FOIA's she has received from the City. Ms. Ajster stated that she would take care of the bill this evening. The Mayor asked that the council remain courteous and respectful during public comment. Attorney McPhedran added similar comments to Mayor Grove's.

Ms. Ajster continued by referring to a statement read by Alderman Duncan at the last council meeting which referred to some people who oppose the Shared Services project, (which she

indicated she calls "SSLOP"- Shared Services La Salle, Oglesby, Peru) as misinformed, rumor mongers and people who are poisoning the minds of the public. Ms. Ajster stated that she has been in attendance at every Shared Services meeting and sub-committee meeting and has done her own research. She continued by saying that she does use FOIA as a tool to obtain information related to this process. She stated that her sole intent is to provide information to the public, not simply to oppose this just to oppose it. Ms. Ajster said she does understand that La Salle is facing a pension crisis, but from her standpoint, consolidation of the police departments is not the way to go. When this was first introduced in January by the four municipalities at that time, Ms. Ajster did some research and developed a four page list of questions and issues that she believed needed to be addressed. She forwarded the list to Mayor Marini of Spring Valley because her initial concerns were Spring Valley. She stated that she believes she also sent a copy to Mayor Grove or one was provided by to him by Mayor Marini.

Ms. Ajster expressed that she believes each community needs to determine what their deal breakers are. She indicated that every time she sits through these meetings and asks questions, she is told they do not have an answer. Ms. Ajster stated that she has not received an answer to one single question. Ms. Ajster commented that from the beginning this has been a full steam ahead push toward consolidation, even though she is criticized by Chief Bernabei for referring to it as a consolidation. Ms. Ajster stated that she uses the word consolidation because Chief Bernabei used that word. She stated that in an Executive Session before the Peru City Council in November or December, Chief Bernabei stated that this could be anything from sharing the services to an absolute consolidation. Ms. Ajster stated that this is information she received through FOIA and said that is why FOIA is so important. Ms. Ajster believes that for all intent and purposes it is a consolidation, whether now or at some point down the road.

One of the questions that Ms. Ajster said she has not received a definitive answer to is where the savings are coming from. It was posed to the councils of Peru, Oglesby, La Salle and Spring Valley that the communities could potentially save \$250 million over the next several decades. She stated that when she asked where that figure comes from, no one has given her a definitive answer. She stated that knows projections were put together by the Finance Directors of La Salle and Peru. However, she added, that the only evidence six months into "SSLOP" is that the majority of savings will come from the reduction in the number of officers.

According to Ms. Ajster, Chief Bernabei stated at one Shared Services meeting that we need to determine the least amount of officers needed without risking public safety. Ms. Ajster indicated that this was a huge red flag to her. With crime on the rise, or equalizing, you would not want to reduce the number of officers. Ms. Ajster referenced a study that was used by Finance Directors Duncan and Miller to determine the standard with regard to savings where the cities could reduce down to 1.8 or 1.9 officers per 1,000 residents. She stated that if you look at this study conducted by the International Association of City Managers, the study states that the nationwide the average is between 1.8-2.6 officers per 1,000 residents. However, Ms. Ajster stated the Finance Directors left out the part of the study that states throughout the nation, the average number of officers is 2.5 per 1,000. She continued stating that if you take the population of La Salle, Peru and Oglesby and multiply it by 2.5 per 1,000 that equals 57 officers. At this time, there are 56 officers, leaving La Salle, Peru and Oglesby at the national average of 2.5 per 1,000. In May, Chief Bernabei came in with a study that he conducted that selected certain municipalities near the suburbs as examples that are using less than 2.5 offers per 1,000. She referred to other studies from the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the FBI that also recommend 2.5 officers/1,000. She continued by saying that, in her opinion, the question that needs to be answered before moving forward, is are you municipality willing to

go below the national average of 2.5 officers per 1,000 residents? If you are, then move forward. If you are not, then you cannot reduce the number of officers, as currently it is at 2.5. If no reduction is made, then no savings can be had. She encouraged the council to think about this question. She asserted that once this question is answered, then other questions like location, structure and the laundry list of questions that she has posed can be answered.

Ms. Ajster referenced Alderman Demes' suggestion to develop a questionnaire to determine if you have officer buy-in. She stated that no one has discussed shared services plans with the officers. When she questioned why this is at a "SSLOP" meeting, she was told that they could not meet with the police officers because it would violate the Open Meetings Act. Ms. Ajster stated that she did not believe that to be correct.

Ms. Ajster repeated that her intent is to give information to the public in order for them to make decisions for themselves. She believes that seven months in there should be answers to questions. If it is not going anywhere, the City is just wasting time and effort it is very taxing on staff who have to attend meetings and have discussions. She indicated that she does understand that the City needs to explore this (shared services concept) out of fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayer, but at some point in time the council needs to decide if they are in or out.

Ms. Ajster stated that she does not operate on rumors. She said usually she will not say something unless she has a document to back it up. In regard to rumors about the various cities pulling out depending on which location is selected, she stated that she does not know much about that. However, she added that at the last meeting, Finance Director Duncan raised good questions about location. He inquired about how costs would be passed on if the Peru location is selected. Peru has spent \$400,000 on this property so Finance Director Duncan was inquiring if the property will be leased to the other communities or donated. Ms. Ajster stated that again, this is another question that has not been answered. She reiterated that at some point in time, if questions cannot be answered, then time is being wasted. She added that contrary to what some people say, she is not unreasonable but she likes to be informed and share information with people so they can make their own decisions. She stated this is why she came before the council this evening, to make them aware of some of these issues.

Ms. Ajster then brought up what she referred to as two little, minor issues. She stated that recently she requested through FOIA the City's policy regarding the use of City vehicles for personal use. She stated that she was advised that there is not a policy. Ms. Ajster strongly encouraged the council to explore this because of a trend locally and nationally where taxpayers are starting to watch the dime a bit more closely. She stated that Edgar County Watchdog includes has a site ([govplates.com](http://govplates.com)) where the license plates of every municipal vehicle are listed. She suggested La Salle pass an ordinance regarding this matter. When employees use city vehicles for personal use, it results in gas expenditure, upkeep and maintenance costs to the taxpayer.

Ms. Ajster continued by giving her personal experience where on several occasions she has noticed Detective Smudzinski having his squad car in places where it shouldn't be. She stated that on Sunday, June 24, 2018, Detective Smudzinski was dressed in flip flops doing some shopping at the Dollar Tree. In March, there was an incident report where Detective Smudzinski indicated he was in Walmart picking up some groceries while off duty and in plain clothes. Later in the report he indicated he entered his squad and activated his lights. Ms. Ajster stated that she understands he is a detective and is on call 24-7, however in her opinion if an officer does not have their badge or gun, maybe the vehicle should be left home as well. Otherwise, the

taxpayer again is paying for gas, upkeep and maintenance for a vehicle being used for personal reasons. She continued by saying that this is a sticking point with her and she made a big deal about this with the former State's Attorney for using a county vehicle as his personal vehicle. She stated that she wanted to bring this to the council's attention as maybe they were not aware this was happening. In addition to the costs of it, she said there is no such thing as a perk for a public official. It is the taxpayer money. There are also liability issues that come with employees using City vehicles for personal use as well as insurance issues.

Along those lines, in addition to attending "SSLOP" meetings, she stated that she also attends IVRD meetings. It is her understanding that most squad cars and emergency vehicles are equipped with GPS, except for the Chief's cars and certain detectives and other officers' cars. Ms. Ajster suggested that every vehicle is equipped with GPS, so IVRD can see where everyone is at when a call comes in. This also serves as a check on what a car is being used for. She stated she understands with certain undercover detectives this may not work, but for most, GPS should be required. This would ensure a car is not being used for personal use and as a check that they are where they are supposed to be.

Ms. Ajster thanked the council for their time.

Mayor Grove clarified that the City of La Salle has two John Duncans and at times the public can get confused between John Duncan III the alderman and Finance John Duncan IV. He said there are definitely two John Duncans.

Mayor thanked Ms. Ajster for being respectful to the council and stated that it was appreciated. Mayor Grove added that he wants to make sure this council is respectful in return to anyone who chooses to speak. He continued by saying that he would be remiss if he did not say something about Detective Smudzinski. Mayor Grove explained that Detective Smudzinski has been with the force for 20 years and has an impeccable record. He described Detective Smudzinski as a guy who never takes time off even though he is encouraged to do so. Mayor Grove assured Ms. Ajster that if Detective Smudzinski has his vehicle he is certain his badge is in the vehicle, if not actually on him. Mayor Grove stated that he wants the public to realize that they may see a car at a personal residence from time to time, but that the City does allow our officers to go home for lunch.

In regard to Detective Smudzinski, he told Ms. Ajster that everyone can rest assured that he never takes time off, has an impeccable record and does a great job.

Ms. Ajster stated that she understands that, but in regard to the incident at Walmart, she has the CAD written by Detective Smudzinski. He clearly stated in the report that he was an off-duty La Salle police officer and did not have his badge. Mayor Grove stated that he may have been at an investigation and stopped there on his way home. Mayor Grove stated that he does not have a problem with that. He explained that our Superintendent takes his car home, because he never knows when he will get called out. He said our employees are aware that no family members can ride in city vehicles.

The Mayor stated that it is disappointing to him when certain officers express to him that when off-duty they would instruct someone to call the police instead of dealing with a situation even if it was two doors down from them. Mayor stated that he is happy Detective Smudzinski is not like that. Ms. Ajster stated that as an attorney, she just worries from a liability standpoint, that if the officer is plain clothed and cannot identify himself as an officer with a badge, then the City is opening themselves up for liability.

Alderman Bacidore stated that Ms. Ajster presented many reasons as to why the cities should not go through with shared services, but asked if she had a better plan to address the pension crisis.

**Mayor Grove left at 7:42 p.m.**

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to appoint Tom Ptak as Mayor Pro-Tem for the remainder of the meeting in the absence of Mayor Grove.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Herndon, Schneider

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Duncan Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 7-0**

Ms. Ajster stated that she is still sending FOIA requests for certain pension documents in order to further evaluate. At the last "SSLOP" meeting she asked Finance Director Duncan what is required. Until she sees the numbers it is hard to determine. At this point in time, she stated that she does not have a suggestion, but what she has gathered is that a new building could potentially cost 20-30 million dollars. In her opinion, you do not save money by spending more money on a building. She continued by stating that if you can reduce the number of officers without risking public safety then you can save money, if you can't then you are just spending money on a building. Personally she feels the most untapped resource is the officers themselves. She indicated that by asking them, they may know ways to reduce costs and hours. Ms. Ajster stated that the officers are not against reducing officers or cutting back hours, they are more concerned about the idea of the complete consolidation where they do not know who they could be working for or where they could be out of.

Alderman Bacidore stated that we have to do something otherwise raising taxes is the option and nobody wants that. He asked Ms. Ajster if Chicago is different than us in regard to the 2.5 officers/1,000. She said they are a little different because they are more zoned. Chicago may have more residents, but they are also more condensed. Ms. Ajster said the studies do not recommend basing the number of officers needed on population only. There are also other factors that come into play. She stated that Chief Bernabei compares us to Ottawa as it has the same population roughly as La Salle, Peru and Oglesby and they only utilize 36 officers, but geographically they are half the size. Typically, these studies look at similarly situated populations.

Alderman Bacidore said that he does not think we have enough crime to justify not considering going below the national average of 2.5. Ms. Ajster said that crime rates are increasing, not decreasing and it would be her recommendation to increase the number of officers or at the least patrols. From what she has learned in talking to people, getting FOIA reports and instant reports, the average citizen has no idea what is going on. She stated that maybe the council is not privy to how many calls the police department receives each week and suggested that the council is provided with CAD and incident reports so they know exactly how many calls come in. She reported that in regard to police consolidation, this has never happened in the State of Illinois. It has failed in other areas. Shared services was attempted in Clarendon Hills and Hinsdale where the average home is 1.1 million dollars and more resources are available. It has been stated that it failed due to political reasons. Ms. Ajster stated that she does not take anyone's opinions so she reached out to the attorneys involved and was informed it did not fail because of political motivations, it failed because they could not work out the social security and police pension issues.



Alderman Bacidore then asked Ms. Ajster where she lived. She stated that she lives in Dalzell. He asked why she cares about La Salle, Peru and Oglesby. Ms. Ajster responded by saying that he cannot ask where she lives based on the Open Meetings Act. Attorney McPhedran stated he was not sure Alderman Bacidore could not ask her the question, however, he indicated that whether or not she responded to that question could not be determinative of her right to speak or for how long she could speak. The council respects the right of anyone to speak. Attorney McPhedran stated that he knows there is some authority that suggests it would be improper in making it a pre-requisite to speak, but that does not necessarily mean that where one resides may not be otherwise relevant as a factor.

Attorney McPhedran continued by saying that with all the meetings Ms. Ajster has attended it has already been made clear where she resides. Attorney McPhedran added that he was unaware Alderman Bacidore was going to ask that question and if he had been he would have discouraged him, as she is certainly entitled to speak. As he has shared with Ms. Ajster, La Salle wants a transparent administration and we do not want anyone to feel that they are in any way being questioned or made to disclose undue personal information. Attorney Ms. Ajster was advised earlier in the day by Attorney McPhedran that there was no set time limit as far as addressing the council as long as it remained respectful. Mr. McPhedran further elaborated on these points.

Ms. Ajster stated that with regard to this, at previous "SSLOP" meetings she has been asked where she resides. She said she has always responded that she has had an office in Peru for 15 years, so is invested in what happens. She said she also owns property in Spring Valley, so when they were in, it was of particular interest to her. She continued by saying just because she resides in Dalzell does not mean that she is not interested as a member of the public. With regard to asking someone where they reside, again she stated that she has been asked that before at "SSLOP". She said she did respond, but she then filed a complaint with the Attorney General's Office under the Open Meetings Act. So the council is aware, Ms. Ajster said that the ordinance just passed this evening allows spending for attorneys' fees, some of which could be used for attorney's fees to respond to her complaints to the Attorney General's Office for violations of the Open Meetings Act. She said she believes government should be transparent. She stated that in dealing with the City of La Salle she has sent FOIA requests to Carrie and she is prompt in her response and if it is a more in depth request then Attorney McPhedran has called her to request an extension allowing time for further review. In terms of "SSLOP" and its origination, the City of La Salle and the City of Peru discussed it in closed session. She filed a complaint with the Attorney General's Office stating that it was not an exemption and the Attorney General's Office agreed. The reason she did not file a complaint against the City of La Salle is because she believes the City of La Salle is considerably more transparent than the City of Peru. She stated that she has discussed this with Attorney McPhedran. When she receives the minutes, they are thorough and she knows what was discussed. In the City of Peru, they will go into closed session for an hour and a half and the minutes will be three lines. She continued by saying at times she can be a pain, but it is not intentional. The rules are there and are meant to be followed. At times, she will give one municipality a pass, which she has done to La Salle, because she does not believe there is ill intent in entering closed session and the minutes are thorough. In addition, the City of La Salle does not have rules limiting time on public comment, where other municipalities do. She stated that this is because the administration favors a transparent government. She acknowledged that FOIA requests can be expensive and time consuming but indicated they are necessary. The government created the FOIA for the purpose of having an open and transparent government because people are entitled to know what their elected officials are doing. Ms. Ajster stated that she does not send

FOIA requests frivolously. She stated that she has sent approximately 50 requests this year to various municipalities and has used all the information in the documents received except for maybe two. This information is used for her to stay informed, to make decisions, and to comment at public meetings.

Alderman Bacidore said that she still has not explained her interest in shared services if she is not paying taxes here. With regard to her interest, originally she stated it began because she owned property in Spring Valley. She explained that then she was approached by several law enforcement officers to advocate on their behalf because at that point in time, no one had spoken to them. There was the meeting at Celebrations where they were told what they were going to do, take it or leave it. She stated that the officers do not go to public meetings and speak up for fear of retaliation.

Alderman Bacidore asked who these officers are. Ms. Ajster stated that she was not going to disclose that information. Alderman Bacidore then asked if it was possible for him to FOIA her for the information. Attorney McPhedran stated that he could not.

Alderman Schneider suggested to Ms. Ajster that she reconsider referring to Shared Services as "SSLOP." He stated that whether she intends it to or not, it is degrading and makes it sound like the process is a mess. He said maybe she does not mean it to, but she could easily say Shared Services Committee or another term, but by continuing to call it "SSLOP" Alderman Schneider stated that it will offend people who are making the decisions. He continued by saying that if Ms. Ajster wants those making the decisions to hear her out she should stop using this term as it will only close ears and shut them down.

Ms. Ajster said she understood his point, but stated that "SSLOP" was developed when it was just shared services. She said people in the public understand that "SSLOP" is Shared Services La Salle, Oglesby, Peru. She continued by saying that in her mind, it is a complete and total mess..a slop. She said there has not been no clear consensus or documents presented saying this is what we are going to do or a feasibility done. She said perhaps at some point in time, when questions are answered and some issues are resolved and direction is given, she may consider using another term. She said usually she will use Shared Services La Salle, Oglesby, Peru with "SSLOP" in parentheses, but many people in the community know it as "SSLOP".

Rodney Perez from the City of Peru thanked the council for being a transparent council and for considering developing a possible questionnaire. As a taxpayer in the City of Peru, he said if it wasn't for Julie doing the research, notifying the public and giving updates, they would be lost. He stated that there was no doubt the City learned some things this evening. He stated that he has fact checked her research and any research Julie has done is always spot on. Mr. Perez thanked Ms. Ajster for all the work she has done.

### **APPROVAL OF BILLS**

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Herndon that bills submitted totaling \$533,146.05 (Total Payroll \$192,121.36, Bills to be Paid from \$239,685.90, Total Bills Paid \$101,338.79) be accepted, paid and placed on file. Each and every alderman has a copy.


**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Herndon, Schneider

NAY: None Absent: Alderman Duncan Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 7-0**

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Herndon to adjourn the meeting.  
Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

**ADJOURNED 8:08 p.m.**

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Carrie Brown, City Clerk