



**MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday, July 14, 2025 at 6:30 PM**

**City of Rochelle Council Chambers—420 North 6th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068**

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- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Pledge to the Flag and prayer were led by Mayor Bearrows.
- II. ROLL CALL:** Present were Councilors T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor John Bearrows. Absent were Councilors Arteaga and Valdivieso. A quorum of five were present. Also, present were City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh, City Clerk Rose Huéramo, City Attorney Dominick Lanzito.
- III. PROCLAMATIONS, COMMENDATIONS, ETC:** None.
- IV. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**
1. Mayor's Report: None
  2. Council Members: None.
  3. Golf Course Advisory Board Resignation - Mark Gillis: Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Hayes, **"I move the Council accept the Resignation of Mark Gillis from the Golf Course Advisory Board effective immediately."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.
- V. PUBLIC COMMENTARY:** None.
- VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS:** None.
- VII. BUSINESS ITEMS:**
1. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS BY OMNIBUS VOTE with Recommendations:
    - a) Approve City Council Meeting Minutes - 6/23/25
    - b) Approve Payroll - 6/9/25-6/22/25
    - c) Approve Check Registers - 6/20/25, 6/23/25, 6/30/25, 7/7/25
 Motion made by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move consent agenda items (a) through (c) be approved by Omnibus vote as recommended."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.
  2. **A Motion to Accept and Place on File - Audit for January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.** Sikich, LLP. planned and performed the audit in order to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatements. This included performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The audit also included evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used, significant estimates made by management, and evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. The auditor's opinion, as noted on page 2 of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, indicates that the financial statements "present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City of Rochelle, Illinois, as of December 31, 2024, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable cash flows thereof for the year ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." Lindsey Fish, Principal of Government Services for Sikich, will attend the meeting to provide an overview of the City's Financial Statement and respond to questions from the Mayor and City Council. Finance Director Chris Cardott and Lindsey Fish from Sikich were available for questions. Motion made by Councilor D. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Hayes, **"I move Council Accept and place on file the Audit Report for the Fiscal year January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, as prepared and presented by Sikage LLP."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.

3. **An Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 and Chapter 26 to add a Class L (Recreational) Liquor License.** The City of Rochelle was recently approached by a new local business offering indoor golf simulators about the possibility of obtaining a liquor license. Currently, there is no classification in Rochelle Municipal code for this type of business. Creation of a new liquor license classification, designed specifically for recreational venues offering unique recreational experiences, will facilitate the development of new businesses in our community. This proposed license would allow the controlled and limited service of beer and wine only, in full compliance with Illinois Liquor Control Commission regulations. Under the new classification, eligible facilities could serve wine by the glass up to 6 ounces and beer by the glass up to 12 ounces. To promote responsible consumption, all alcohol must be consumed within clearly marked, designated service areas for on-premises consumption only. For indoor recreational activities, the ILCC requires that all alcohol be consumed within licensed indoor areas. These facilities must ensure responsible operations through employee supervision and proper training on alcohol service. Alcohol must not be carried outside the designated areas, and service must be offered only when patrons are actively engaged in the facility's core activity. Best practices like video surveillance, age verification, and staff BASSET certification are strongly encouraged to ensure ongoing compliance and to prioritize public safety. Alcohol service would only be allowed during hours when a paid recreational service is actively being provided. Food service is permitted, provided it meets all health department regulations and licensing requirements. The proposed annual fee for this license is \$750, reflecting the limited scope of alcohol service and the emphasis on a relaxed, experience-driven environment rather than a traditional bar or restaurant setting. It's important to note that this proposal does not impact on the existing moratorium on Class B liquor licenses, which remains in effect. By creating this new license category, facilities like indoor golf simulators would have a responsible way to offer limited beer and wine service. The goal is to enhance the guest experience in a way that aligns with ILCC standards and prioritizes public health and safety. City Clerk Rose Huéramo was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move Ordinance 2025-42, an Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 and Chapter 26 to add a Class L Recreational Liquor License, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.
4. **An Ordinance Creating a Class L Liquor License for Ordinary Golfer at 425 Lincoln Highway.** The City has received a formal request from local business owners Sam Volkert, Craig Baker, and Erik Garcia regarding their new business, Ordinary Golfer, located in the Lincoln Mall at 425 Lincoln Highway. Ordinary Golfer is a newly established indoor golf simulator business aimed at providing a fresh, family friendly entertainment option in the downtown area. The business offers a reservation-based golf experience featuring two state-of-the-art simulator bays. Each bay accommodates up to four players, with a maximum occupancy of eight guests at a time. Bookings are limited to four hours, and the business does not operate past 10:00 PM. The owners are requesting a Class L liquor license, which permits the retail sale of beer and wine for on-premises consumption within clearly designated service areas during indoor recreational activities. Under the terms of the Class L license, beer may be served by the glass in quantities up to 12 ounces, and wine may be served by the glass in quantities up to 6 ounces. Liquor Commissioner John Bearrows has reviewed the request and has expressed no objections to the issuance of the license. City Clerk Rose Huéramo, business owners Craig Baker and Erik Garcia were available for questions. Motion made by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, Seconded by Councilor Hayes, **"I move Ordinance 2025-43, an Ordinance Creating a Class L Liquor License for Ordinary Golfer at 425 Lincoln Highway, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.
5. **An Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 and Chapter 26 to Amend Class C Liquor Licenses.** To help support community organizations and inclusive access to liquor licensing, we are proposing that the current definition and fee for Class C licenses be amended to include both clubs and not-for-profit organizations, remove the language of kitchen requirements, and offer flexible licensing

options non-for-profit entities. The Proposed Changes: 1. Including Not-for-Profit Organizations The updated definition would specifically include not-for-profit entities. These organizations often serve the public and should be recognized as eligible for Club licenses. 2. Verifying Tax-Exempt Status Not-for-profits would need to submit a copy of their IRS Determination Letter. This document proves they are officially recognized as tax-exempt. This step helps confirm they qualify for the reduced license fee. 3. Removing the Kitchen Requirement The current definition requires Clubs to have full kitchen and dining room facilities, along with staff to prepare and serve meals. This requirement would be removed. Many modern not-for-profit organizations do not need or use full kitchens, so this change makes the definition more flexible. 4. Following All Other Licensing Rules Not-for-profit must still meet all other requirements that apply to any license holder. Best practices like age verification, and staff BASSET certification are strongly encouraged to ensure ongoing compliance and to prioritize public safety. This ensures fairness and keeps standards high for everyone. 5. Annual Fee Change The current Club license fee is \$1,200. The new fee for not-for-profit organizations would be \$250 per year. This lower fee reflects the limited budgets of many not-for-profit organizations. City Clerk Rose Huéramo was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor D. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Hayes, **"I move Ordinance 2025-44, an Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 and Chapter 26 to amend Class C Liquor Licenses, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.

6. **An Ordinance Amending Section 32 "Meetings," of Article II – Planning and Zoning Commission, of Chapter 74 – Planning.** While reviewing additional information related to the operations of boards and commissions, I identified an inconsistency between the Municipal Code and the actual practices of the meetings for the Planning and Zoning Commission. The city code Chapter 74 – Planning, Article II, Sec. 74-32 - Meetings, states that meetings are held on the third Monday of each month and are to begin at 7:00 PM. However, in practice, the Commission has consistently held its meetings on the first Monday of each month and at the hour of 6:00 PM for many years. Sec. 74-32. - Meetings. (a)The planning and zoning commission shall hold a regular monthly meeting on the third Monday evening of each month, at the hour of 7:00 p.m., at the city hall. In the event the regular meeting would fall on a legal holiday, the same meeting shall be held on the next day following, at the same time. Special meetings of the planning and zoning commission may be called by the chairperson upon a 48-hour advance notice to all members and interested parties. City Clerk Rose Huéramo was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move Ordinance 2025-45, an Ordinance Amending Section 32 meeting of Article 2, Planning and Zoning Commission of Chapter 74 planning, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.
7. **A Resolution Approving the Recommendations of Utility Financial Solutions, LLC.** UFS presented the findings of the cost-of-service study to the council on June 23rd, 2025. The findings revealed the need to adjust the customer charges and lower the overall kilowatt hour charges on customers bills. These changes will take place over the next 5 years and will begin January 2026. These changes amount to less than a 1% per year increase in customers bills. This increase is far less in comparison to our neighboring utilities. City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move Resolution R2025-34, a Resolution Approving the Recommendations of Utility Financial Solutions LLC, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.
8. **An Ordinance Accepting the Proposal from Helm Electric for the Downtown Underground Installation Project.** The city received competitive bids for constructing the Downtown UG Conversion project on June 17, 2025, at 2 p.m. A total of three (3) bids were collected and received on time. A summary of bids is shown below: Contractor Proposal JF Electric \$2,166,455.00, Utility

Dynamics Corp \$1,733,000.00, Helm Electric \$895,014.79. The bid from Helm Electric was the apparent low bid for Specification 3303K001 which did not include any noteworthy clarifications, exceptions, or price escalators. Although we have not had any past projects with Helm Electric, we have contacted their listed references for prior projects, and their references all provided positive reviews. Additionally, the company appears to be in good standing and employs certified and trained craftsmen. Helm Electric's bid is lower than the engineer's estimate for the project of \$1,181,874.91 completed on 03/12/24. BHMGM recommends awarding the contract to Helm Electric for the installation with it being the low bid. We are asking that council approve a 15% contingency to allow for any issues that may arise throughout the project while construction takes place. City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor D. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, **"I move Ordinance 2025-46, an Ordinance Accepting the Proposal from Helm Electric for the Downtown Underground Installation Project, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.

9. **A Resolution Authorizing a Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Fehr Graham for the Phase Three Transload Yard and Railroad Extension Project.** City Council approved a Joint Funding agreement with IDOT on 3/10/2025 for the City of Rochelle Transload yard and Railroad extension, east of Steward Rd, on the City of Rochelle Railroad with Section No. 23-00118-00-RP and State JN#C9201024 Contract #85778. As part of said agreement in schedule 1 (division of cost) the Federal funds allotted to the project will account for approximately 80% of the actual Phase 3 Construction Engineering Services upon invoicing and supporting documentation as submitted by the Local Agency (City of Rochelle). An RFQ for Phase 3 Construction Engineering Services was advertised on the City Website April 26th and in the Rochelle Newsleader. After evaluation of the Fehr Graham submittal of qualifications (SOQ) the City Engineer and staff have determined that they are qualified to provide the Phase 3 Engineering Services. IDOT has also been informed of the selection process and concurs with negotiating and entering an ESA with Fehr Graham Engineering. Fehr Graham Engineering has submitted a proposal for an Engineering Services Agreement Phase 3 Construction Engineering which includes a defined in the scope of services. The funding for the Engineering Phase 3 will be paid through Federal Funds (after reimbursement) and the remainder will be paid by the City of Rochelle (LPA) through the Railroad fund. This agreement will be subject to final review and acceptance and/or revision by the State of Illinois Department of Transportation. City Engineer Sam Tesreau was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move Resolution R2025-35, a Resolution Authorizing a Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Fehr Graham for Phase 3 of the Rochelle Transload Yard and Railroad extension project, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.
10. **An Ordinance Ordering the Sale Of 1414 Pickwick Drive.** We recently completed the demolition of the substation located at 1414 Pickwick Drive. Following internal discussions, it has been determined that this property is no longer needed for municipal use and may be returned to the public market. A Request for Proposals (RFP) has been drafted to solicit interest and proposals for the purchase of this site. This ordinance grants the City Manager the authority to execute a sale to the highest qualified bidder. The property is legally described as follows:  
**Address:** 1414 Pickwick Drive, Rochelle, IL 61068  
**Parcel Size:** Approximately 0.29 acres  
**Zoning:** R-1 (Single-Family Residential) Current Use: Vacant (former transformer site)  
**Legal Description:** Part of the Southeast Quarter of Section 14, Township 40 North, Range 1 East of the Third Principal Meridian bounded and described as follows: Beginning at the Southwest corner of Lot 63 of Sunset Fields Subdivision No. 5 according to the plat thereof recorded on August 31st, 1988 in Plat File A, page 78 as Document No. 557556; thence North, along the West line of said Sunset Fields Subdivision No. 5, a distance of 97.00 feet; thence South 89° 50' 30" West, 130.00

feet; thence South 97.00 feet; thence North 89° 50' 30" East, 130.00 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 0.29 acres more or less. Situated in Flagg Township, Ogle County, Illinois. Subject to the lien of taxes for the years 1988, 1989 and subsequent years. Subject to roads, highways, easements, and restrictions of record. City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor D. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, **"I move Ordinance 2025-47, an Ordinance ordering the sale of 1414 Pickwick Drive, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.

- VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** At 7:22 P.M. Motion made by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move the Council recess into executive session to discuss the minutes of the meetings lawfully closed under the act for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semiannual review of the minutes as mandated section 2021."** Voice vote all in favor. Motion passed 5-0.  
At 7:50 P.M. Motion made by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move Council return to open session."** Voice vote all in favor. Motion passed 5-0.
- IX. ADJOURNMENT:** At 7:50 P.M. Motion made by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, Seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **"I move Council adjourn."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 5-0.

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John Bearrows, Mayor

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Rose Huéramo, City Clerk