

CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HOMETOWN
 JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS
 January 27, 2026

Call to Order: The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Hometown was called to order by Mayor Frank Finnegan on Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alderman Weber.

Roll Call: Roll call indicated that the following were present: Aldermen Forney, Weber, Barnhouse, Dolan, Rivas, Zak, Reynolds, Brookman and Kurysz.

Absent: Alderman Grochowski

Also present: Elizabeth Blood, City Attorney, Salvatore Roti, City Treasurer,

Press: Jan Forney, Hometown Hi-Lites.

Journal January 13, 2026 Moved by Alderman Kurysz seconded by Alderman Zak to approve as published the Journal of January 13, 2026 regular City Council Meeting.

Roll call, the vote was:

AYES: (8) Aldermen Rivas, Barnhouse, Reynolds, Zak
 Weber, Brookman, Dolan and Kurysz.

ABSTENTION: (1) Alderman Forney

ABSENT: (1) Alderman Grochowski

MOTION DECLARED CARRIED

CITIZEN’S HEARING

Phil Mottl, 9054 S. Corcoran, voiced his concerns about the lights from the car dealership shining into the backyards of the residents on Corcoran. Mayor Finnegan responded that he had spoken to Tom Phelan with the Village of Oak Lawn and they had adjusted them but that he would speak to Terry Vorderer, the Mayor of Oak Lawn, and he would talk to the dealership. Phil also asked about getting notified before Nicor starts their project. Mayor Finnegan responded that they are notifying residents before they start any work. Jan Forney, 8765 S. Kilbourn, addressed Treasurer Roti noting that she has noticed the gaming machines are bringing in more money every year. Can we increase the cost per machine to bring in even more revenue? Mayor Finnegan responded that it has been discussed and we are increasing those fees with the next budget. Jan also asked about increasing the gas tax. Treasurer Roti responded that we were against that. She also asked about the property taxes and Treasurer Roti responded that everything is pushed back right now. Jan asked about the Veteran’s Flags and Mayor Finnegan responded that we want to have at least 50 participants, and we are hoping to get it up and running by May.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Office of the Mayor

Mayor Finnegan stated he hopes everyone is staying warm. City Hall and the Library were open as warming centers. I want to recognize and commend Public Works with all the plowing they have been doing, and they also had a water break. They have a small crew and limited equipment. They do great with what they have. Make sure to thank them. We received a CDBG grant, we are going to pursue repaving Southwest Highway frontage road. Kolmar will be done this year from 87th Pl. to Kostner. We

just received communication for a \$300,000 sewer grant. We will address the sewer by Patterson.

Back to Public Works, they are having to get trucks fixed every month. We need to think about getting a loan to get a new truck or 2. Let's think about this and consider it. Alderman Barnhouse responded it is very much needed.

Mayor Finnegan reported that he has received a lot of inquiries about businesses to open at the plaza. Most of them are smoke shops and there is nothing for kids or they are tax free businesses. I want businesses that will bring in revenue for the City or something for kids. Also, the plaza does not maintain their property very well, and when the City helps, residents get upset.

Office of the City Clerk:

No report

Office of the Treasurer:

City Treasurer Salvatore Roti introduced Katie Marr from John Kasperek, Co.. She introduced herself, she is a senior auditor and she introduced Steven Shield, who does his work behind the scenes. They thanked Treasurer Roti, Clerk Walker, Eileen and all the staff at City Hall. Katie quickly went through the audit and did a quick explanation. She said to please reach out with any questions. Mayor Finnegan thanked her and said it was nice working with them.

Treasurer Roti wanted to inform everyone that if they are waiting for a refund from the County for their property taxes, there is a delay and the County is trying to figure out how to fix the issue.

REPORTS FROM CITY APPOINTED OFFICIAL

City

Attorney: Attorney Elizabeth Blood had no report, but she did announce that Michael is retiring and the next meeting will be his last.

Police: Louis Dominguez, Chief of Police, was not present.

Public Works

Department: Mark Trlak, Director, was not present.

Building

Department: James Melnik, Commissioner, was not present.

Code: Chris Gatch, Director, was not present.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Accounts Payable Payroll
Moved by Alderman Forney, seconded by Alderman Dolan, to approve for payment the accounts payable vouchers in the amount of \$91,300.52 and payroll vouchers in the amount of \$83,873.67 for a total expenditure of \$175,174.19.

January 27, 2026: *Alderman Forney questioned the payroll totals and the dates on the support.*

Roll call, the vote was:

AYES: (9) Aldermen Rivas, Forney, Barnhouse, Zak, Dolan, Weber, Reynolds, Brookman, and Kurysz.

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (1) Alderman Grochowski

MOTION DECLARED CARRIED

STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND MUNICIPAL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Alderman Zak, Chairman, had no report.

WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE

Alderman Dolan, Chairman, reported that he spoke to Mark and Public Works received a call on Sunday about a water main break at the Mosque. They also found a second one and a locate will have to be done.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Alderman Tom Brookman, Chairman, had no report.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Alderman Brian Barnhouse, Chairman had no report.

LICENSE COMMITTEE:

Alderman Donna Grochowski, Chairman, was absent. Alderman Barnhouse had no report.

CODE AND ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

Alderman Robert Reynolds, Chairman, reported we had a meeting last Tuesday about creating a tree removal permit. We need to gather more info; we are working on this.

INSURANCE COMMITTEE:

Alderman Melissa Weber, Chairman had no report.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Alderman Luci Kurysz, Chairman had no report.

POLICE COMMITTEE

Alderman Rivas had no report. Mayor Finnegan said Chief Dominguez reported there were more attempts at break-ins in the plaza. They were scared away. They are using stolen vehicles. They did an active shooter drill at the school.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Library: Alderman Grochowski, Liaison to the Library Board, was absent. Alderman Dolan reported they are having a Valentines Story Hour on February 7 from 11am-12pm. Crafty Corner is on February 9 and a book discussion on February 23 at 2pm. Their next meeting is February 3 at 7pm.

Legislation: Alderman Weber reported Illinois has passed the Illinois Squatter Law-SB 1563. This law makes it easier for property owners to remove squatters. Police can now remove unauthorized occupants without waiting for a full eviction and treat them as criminal trespassers, who may face fines or arrest. Formal evictions are still required only for former tenants or anyone with prior legal access. The law speeds up property recovery and protects owners from illegal occupancy. Mayor Finnegan said we needed to use this law when a seller wouldn't leave a house after it was sold.

Fire Department

Liaison: Alderman Reynolds reported they did not meet in January, and he is waiting to hear when they will have the next meeting.

Personnel Review

Committee: Alderman Art Rivas commended Public Works on a job well done. As well as the Police Department.

**PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, RESOLUTIONS,
ORDERS AND ORDINANCES BY ALDERMEN**

Special Events Committee: Liaison Donna Grochowski was absent.

HEALTH, WELFARE & COMMUNITY EVENTS: Alderman Grochowski was absent. Alderman Dolan reported St. Germaine is having a Comedy Night on February 13. The VFW is having a Super Bowl party on February 8 at 4pm. They are also having a Trivia Night on February 20 at 7pm and an Italian Night on February 14 at 4pm. Worth Townships Food Pantry is on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am until 2pm. St. Germaine's next food pantry is February 17 from 9am-11am. Do not park on the street if there is 2 inches of snow. City Hall and the Library are closed on February 19 for President's Day.

Call Worth Township for more information. Alderman Kurysz reported that veterans can get assistance with their taxes. Call the VA or Worth Township for more information.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

CITIZEN'S HEARING: None

ADJOURNMENT: Motion made by Alderman Weber, Seconded by Alderman Reynolds to adjourn the regular meeting of the Hometown City Council.

MOTION STATED CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Christina Walker
City Clerk/Collector