

CITY OF PERU REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AUGUST 26, 2024

A regular meeting of the Peru City Council was called to order by Mayor Ken Kolowski in the Peru City Council Chambers on Monday, August 26, 2024, at 7:00 P.M.

City Clerk Dave Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O’Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno present. Alderman Sapienza absent. Mayor Kolowski present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alderman Payton asked for clarification regarding an email sent for an item to be placed on the agenda under Unfinished Business. Clerk Bartley stated that it is Mayor Kolowski’s agenda, and he asked for it to not be added.

PRESENTATION

MINUTES/FINANCIAL REPORTS/ACTIVITY REPORTS

Mayor Kolowski presented the Regular Minutes of July 29, 2024, Treasurer’s Report for July 2024, Peru Police Department Monthly Report for July 2024, Peru Volunteer Ambulance Service Inc. Activity Summary for May 2024 and Peru Volunteer Ambulance Service Inc. Activity Summary for June 2024. Alderman Payton made a motion the minutes and reports be received and placed on file. Alderman Ballard seconded the motion; motion carried.

FINANCE AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Alderman Ballard presented the following disbursements for payment on August 28, 2024:

<u>FUND NAME</u>	<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>
General Fund	\$512,074.44
Utility Fund	2,391,662.86
Landfill Fund	17,347.56
Airport Fund	<u>840.68</u>
Total	\$2,921,925.54

Alderman Ballard made a motion the disbursements be received, placed on file and bills paid in the usual manner. Alderman Tieman seconded the motion. Alderman Payton inquired about the \$3,200 disbursement for Gatorade. PSM/Fire Chief Jeff King reported the pallet of Gatorade is allocated to the streets department. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O’Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Tieman made a motion to receive and place on file the IPBC insurance renewal for health, dental, and vision rates. Alderman Payton seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O’Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

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Alderman Tieman made a motion to authorize 2025 property casualty and workman's compensation insurance with IMLRMA in the amount of \$443,265.00. Alderman Payton seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Payton made a motion to reinvest the following:
-\$250,000 in a 9 month CD @ 4.80% at North Central Bank
-\$250,000 in a 12 month CD @ 4.50% at First State Bank
-\$250,000 in a 15 month CD @ 4.30% at LaSalle State Bank
-\$250,000 in an 18 month CD @ 4.25% at First State Bank

Alderman Tieman seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Finance Officer Tracy Mitchell and Treasurer explained decision to go short (select shorter term CDs) based on the market and long-term capital needs.

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Alderman O'Sadnick made a motion to approve quote from Illinois Valley Fence & Pool Inc for \$19,000 for diamond improvements at Sunset Park. Alderman Edgcomb seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman O'Sadnick made a motion to approve quote from Ladzinski Cement Finishing Company for \$15,600 for diamond improvements at Sunset Park. Alderman Edgcomb seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Payton made a motion to approve quote from Ladzinski Cement Finishing Company for \$14,628 for 28th St Park. Alderman Tieman seconded the motion. Adam Thorson, Director of Parks, Recreation and Special Events reported there will be a concrete border and sidewalk around the new playground. Mr. Thorson reported that typically new playgrounds are surrounded by a black plastic border, but the concrete will eliminate the heaving and plastic borders, resulting in a nicer look and less maintenance as well. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Tieman made a motion to approve employee Tuition Reimbursement Agreement with Firefighter Ryan Frank. Alderman O'Sadnick seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

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PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Alderman Ballard made a motion to hire selected candidate for the position of Utility Technician within the Electric Department. Alderman Lukosus seconded the motion. Kevin Minnick, Electric Operations Manager reported the new hire will work on AMI, Scada, monitoring tech and power generation. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Ballard made a motion to approve purchase of 3-ton International WorkStar pick-up truck/spreader truck from Crysteel Truck Equipment, in the amount of \$68,950.00. Alderman Lukosus seconded the motion. PSM/Fire Chief Jeff King stated this truck will replace the current aging plow truck. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Moreno made a motion to approve proposal from Advanced Asphalt to resurface the public parking lot located at Calhoun St. and Rte. 6 in the amount of \$26,600.00. Alderman Edgcomb asked about the total of public parking spaces will remain after the resurfacing of the lot. Eric Carls, Director of Engineering and Zoning noted the addition of 4-5 all day public spots and multiple additional spots after Bab's hours. Alderman Lukosus seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Moreno made a motion to approve insulation testing for trucks, tools, and protective equipment with Kirby Tool & Safety for \$12,517. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

Alderman Lukosus made a motion to approve the purchase of 3 – 2500' rolls of 15kv 1/0 aluminum underground cable from Anixter for \$30,870.97. Alderman Moreno seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

REPORT OF CITY ATTORNEY/ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Corporate Counsel Scott Schweickert presented the minutes of the August 21, 2024, Planning/Zoning Commission hearing on the petition of AbyPeru Inc. concerning property commonly known as 1843 May Road, Peru, IL. Alderman Payton made a motion the minutes be received, placed on file and concur with the recommendation. Alderman Edgcomb seconded the motion; motion carried.

Corporate Counsel Scott Schweickert presented a proposed ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 6877

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A VARIANCE AS SOUGHT BY THE PETITION OF ABYPERU INC. CONCERNING PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1843 MAY ROAD IN THE CITY OF PERU, ILLINOIS

Alderman Edgcomb made a motion the ordinance be adopted as written and read. Alderman Payton seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, O'Sadnick, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman Sapienza absent. Motion carried.

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Corporate Counsel Scott Schweickert presented a proposed ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 6878

Alderman Sapienza made a motion the ordinance be adopted as written and read. Alderman Tieman seconded the motion. Clerk Bartley called the roll with Aldermen Ballard, Tieman, Payton, Edgcomb, Sapienza, Lukosus and Moreno voting aye. Alderman O'Sadnick absent. Motion carried.

PROCLAMATIONS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Alderman Payton noted his request for a town hall meeting to discuss the pool referendum. Mayor Kolowski stated he was not in favor since his previous proposed plan was rejected by the council. Alderman Edgcomb stated he believes the residents should understand the plan. Alderman Payton asked for a special meeting be scheduled for September 26th at 6pm. (Aldermen Payton and Edgcomb to lead)

NEW BUSINESS

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Clerk Bartley presented a communication from Summer Raches from The Center for Youth and Family Services requesting permission to hold a Trunk-or-Treat event for foster families at Washington Park on Wednesday, October 2nd at 5pm. Alderman Tieman made a motion the communication be received, placed on file and permission granted. Alderman Edgcomb seconded the motion; motion carried.

Clerk Bartley presented a communication from Jeanette Maurice requesting permission to use the east shelter at Baker Lake on Sunday, June 22, 2025, for a family reunion. Alderman Tieman made a motion the communication be received, placed on file and permission granted. Alderman Edgcomb seconded the motion; motion carried.

Clerk Bartley presented a petition from Augustin Ortega seeking annexation, resubdivision and zoning for the property located on Route 6 formerly known as the Peru Greenhouse. Alderman Lukosus made a motion the petition be received, placed on file and referred to Planning/Zoning Commission for review and recommendation. Alderman Moreno seconded the motion; motion carried.

Clerk Bartley presented a petition from Frank Schwab seeking variances for property located at 2702 5th Street. Alderman O'Sadnick made a motion the petition be received, placed on file and referred to Planning/Zoning Commission for review and recommendation. Alderman Tieman seconded the motion; motion carried.

MAYOR'S NOTES

Mayor Kolowski thanked the Peru CSO and American Nickeloid for the lunch they provided to city employees.

Mayor Kolowski recognized Stone Jug Barbeque for the Horizon House fundraiser.

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Mayor Kolowski asked Human Resource Director Kim Reese to report on the upcoming Health & Wellness Golf Outing benefiting the annual Blue and Red Christmas event. Ms. Reese reiterated the event and stated they are still seeking teams and sponsors. Police Chief Sarah Raymond reported the Blue and Red Christmas program is a 501 C3 charity benefiting children in Peru.

Mayor Kolowski reported that city hall would be open for a cooling center this week due to the high temperatures.

Alderman Edgcomb noted that August 31st is Overdose Awareness Day.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident and former Friends for the Peru Pool Committee Member Sherry Mayszak addressed the council regarding the pool referendum. See speech below:

Good evening. My name is Sherry Mayszak and I am here to speak about the Peru swimming pool referendum. I appreciate this time to speak, as there were some errors presented two weeks ago at the last full council meeting, and I'd like to address those errors now. With regards to The Swimming Pool Referendum that will now be on the ballot in Peru for this next election on November 5, the referendum was wholly and totally my idea. The idea was not part of the pool committee as that committee is now defunct. It was not Mayor Kolowski's idea. It was not Alderman O'Sadnick's idea. They did help get signatures on some petition sheets because they are Peru residents in favor of a pool, but that is the extent of their involvement. I have been around Peru politics long enough to know that a referendum is a way to give the voters of Peru a voice. I have seen two referendums since I've been involved with Peru politics, the At-Large Alderman referendum, which failed, and the referendum to pay for a swimming pool by raising real estate taxes, which also failed, but not by much. I became interested in Peru politics because of the swimming pool. I was chosen by appointment to replace former Alderman Joe Mikyska in 2011 after he passed away during his term. Joe was a big supporter of a swimming pool in Peru and his wife Claudia was a member of the swimming pool committee. I begged former Mayor Harl every year for any amount of money to be put aside in a building fund for a future pool and every year I was told no. In 2021, Ken Kolowski ran against Mayor Harl and indicated he was in favor of a swimming pool. When Ken won, I thought we finally have a mayor who supports a pool, but now we have to find a way to pay for it. In 2022 Mayor Kolowski brought the idea of using hotel/motel taxes to pay for a swimming pool to a council finance committee meeting for a straw poll vote. Seven aldermen were against the plan and one was in favor of it. I got to thinking about how to give the voters of Peru a voice to let the council know if they were in favor of a public, municipal swimming pool in Peru. I did not want the decision to build a pool to be left to 7 people when I felt that a majority of Peru voters, like me, would want a pool, and I remembered the referendum process. I contacted the State Board of Elections in August 2023 and began this referendum journey. I made several FOIA requests to Stephanie Piscia and Tracy Mitchell for financial information that is included in the flyer that I made, so I could be sure that I was presenting correct financial information. I had flyers, t-shirts and yard signs made and spent around \$2,000.00 of my own money to get the word out to the residents of Peru. I have spent mornings before work, lunches on workdays and weekends hanging flyers, and I still have many houses that I have not reached yet. I have spent months going door to door asking people to sign the petition. I had a group of 14 other people who helped me get signatures and 11 other people including my granddaughters from Wisconsin, to hang flyers. We gathered 562 signatures, and I personally got 229. I spoke with many people, and only 3 told me no. At the last council meeting, Alderman Edgcomb, you asked how a citizen could have the authority to put using city monies on a referendum. Mayor Kolowski brought this funding source to you and the rest of the council in March 2022. I didn't just invent the idea to use hotel/motel tax to fund a pool and put it on a referendum. It had already been presented to the council. I just took it a step further. Alderman Payton, there are no flaws on my flyer. The hotel/motel tax account is classified as a "committed account" which means that

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“it can be used only for the specific purposes determined by a formal action of the government’s highest level of decision-making authority”, which is the city council. Which means you and the rest of the aldermen make the decision where that money can be spent. It is simply one revenue source...one of many revenue streams that the City relies upon and utilizes. Alderman Payton, you stated at a prior meeting that if your constituents told you they want a pool, you would consider it. I do not appreciate your tactics of trying to scare voters by saying their property taxes will eventually increase. Not one penny has been spent from the hotel/motel tax account since June 2022. The current balance in that account as of July 31, 2024, is \$2,018,862.31. All the city parks have been or are being updated. Money used to pay for those upgrades was found without touching the hotel/motel tax including upgrades to Schweickert Stadium, which is bringing in tourists, which supposedly is what the hotel/motel tax is to be used for, tourism. The amount on park upgrades that has been spent over the last 3 and ½ years is approximately \$3.6 million. Where did that \$3.6 million come from because it didn’t come from the hotel/motel account and it is my understanding that there are significant surpluses for the fiscal year ending 2024 in the general fund and utility fund. Now that \$3.6 million can be put towards paying off the pool since the parks won’t need upgrading again for decades.

I ask you Alderman Payton since you were on the police station building committee:

- How long will it take to pay off the police station?*
- Did you demand that a town hall be held to inform the constituents how much the police station would cost and how long it would take to pay off?*
- Did you know how the city would pay off that debt?*
- Did you demand to know how much the operating expenses and maintenance, grass cutting and snow removal of a building that size would cost?*
- Did you budget for those expenses?*
- Did the taxpayers get to vote on spending \$16,000,000, which ended up being closer to \$18,000,000 when completed?*
- Did we need a new police station? Yes. Did we need a police station of that magnitude? According to the people I spoke with when I was getting signatures, no. Not one person that I talked to thought the police station was money well spent.*
- Two years ago, Alderman Payton, you said the police station was not big enough. Are you planning on spending more money to increase its size?*

Regarding the splash pad:

- Did you ask the voters if they wanted to spend \$3.2 million on that splash pad? We received a very generous donation from the JA Happ family of \$100,000 for a splash pad. We turned that into a \$3.2 million splash pad. It was built in 2017 and at that time we could have used that \$3.2 million to build a pool with a splash pad and it would now be paid off.*
- Did you budget any money for repairs and maintenance on the splash pad?*

The referendum in November is simply a non-binding advisory referendum. The results will tell the council whether the voters of Peru want a pool or not. If it passes (and I think it overwhelming will), then each council member will have to decide whether you want to listen to your constituents or not.

We have a revenue source to pay for a pool. It may take 20 years to pay it off, but we have a way to pay it off WITHOUT raising real estate taxes. I am all in. We finally have a mayor and some aldermen who are pro-pool. I have been on this pool adventure for 13 years. I say, “it’s time to give the voters a voice.”

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I did my part. I am not spending my own money to come up with a design for a pool and its' operating costs, and why would you want to waste money coming up with a design and figuring operating costs if the referendum fails? If you're determined to inform the voters about information that you do not have, I suggest you do some homework, pay for that homework yourself, and then you go door to door to plead your case, as I have had to do.

Resident Jill Bernal addressed the council and stated she was troubled by the comments from the previous council meeting and stated that Ms. Mayszak did her job. Ms. Bernal also commented on her forced annexation without any communication from the city.

Ms. Bernal commented on the uninformed letter questioning her vote (as LaSalle County Board - District 12, member) regarding OSF, noting her medical family.

Resident Eric Soderholm spoke in favor of the pool and kids getting out of the house adding swimming is a great source of exercise and mentally therapeutic.

Finance Officer Tracy Mitchell asked to clarify Ms. Mayszak's statement regarding "*significant surpluses for the fiscal year ending 2024 in the general fund and utility fund*", stating the General Fund has a surplus of \$400,000 to which \$300,000 is due in part to the OSLAD Grant. Ms. Mitchell also noted the Utility Fund \$4,000,000.

CLOSED SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Moreno made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Alderman Lukosus seconded the motion and motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.