

OGLESBY CITY COUNCIL

JULY 21, 2025

The Oglesby City Council was called to order by Mayor Jason Curran on July 21, 2025, at 6 p.m.

ROLLCALL: Commissioners Rich Baldrige, Austin Cullinan, Greg McDermott, Hilary Moyle, Mayor Jason Curran were present. City Attorney Pat Barry and City Clerk Becky Clinard were present as well.

Public Comments

Oakwood Avenue residents Maria Vorgic, Pat Flecker, Celine Kossart and Gerald Bernabei asked the council to not change their previous vote on the short term rental application by Ray Basa at 124 Oakwood Ave. A petition was presented to the council with more than 60 names on it of residents in the area who proposed the short term rental.

- **Neighborhood Impact:** Several residents voiced concerns that STRs would disrupt the quiet, family-oriented character of their neighborhood. They highlighted potential issues such as increased noise, traffic, and visitors whose behavior cannot be controlled.
- **Property Values:** Multiple speakers cited fears that STRs would devalue properties in the area. Residents referenced local real estate agents who warned that the presence of STRs might deter potential homebuyers and lower market values.
- **A Sense of Community:** The importance of neighbor familiarity and trust was emphasized. Opponents worried that transient guests would erode the sense of community where neighbors look out for one another.
- **Housing Availability:** Concerns were raised about STRs potentially reducing long-term housing availability, exacerbating the difficulty of finding homes in Oglesby.
- **Enforcement and Oversight:** Questions were posed about how rules would be enforced, especially since the property owner does not reside locally. The burden on local policing and municipal resources was also a concern.

Mr. Basa and his mother, Annie, spoke about their application, reasons for wanting to rent their home out, and the process they went through to apply – noting the extensive maintenance checklist and the stringent rules in place. The Basas assured the residents they would continue to be good neighbors and would comply with all of the city’s regulations.

Oakwood resident Jim Clinard and Kathy Fredericks also spoke out in favor of the application.

- **Economic Benefits:** Proponents argued that STRs generate significant tax revenue without raising local taxes, benefiting public services like police and fire departments, road maintenance, and beautification projects.

- **Business Boost:** Visitors who stay in STRs tend to spend money locally, supporting restaurants, shops, and service providers.
- **Job Creation:** STRs create micro-jobs for local workers, including cleaners, landscapers, and handymen.
- **Responsible Ownership:** The applicant assured the council and community that they would thoroughly vet guests and comply fully with city regulations, including safety inspections and insurance requirements.
- **Positive Data:** Supporters cited studies and data from comparable towns showing that STRs do not negatively impact property values and may have neutral or slightly positive effects.
- **Control Measures:** The city's ordinance includes strict regulations, annual inspections, and escalating fines for violations, including license suspension, aimed at protecting neighborhoods.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Baldrige, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to approve the minutes from the July 7, 2025, regular city council meeting. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Cullinan, **SECONDED BY** Baldrige to approve bills presented for payment in the amount of \$650,725.01. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

BILLS PRESENTED FOR PAYMENT:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Cullinan, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to approve the July 18, 2025, payroll in the amount of \$130,310.74. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cullinan clarified earlier comments that the general fund was projected to face a deficit, largely due to infrastructure investments and timing of transfers from utility funds. He noted options such as raising sales tax by 0.5% to generate additional revenue was a possibility.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Cullinan, **SECONDED BY** Moyle to approve Ordinance No. 1292-072125, Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations. The ordinance had been placed on file at the July 7, 2025, meeting. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The council then took up the matter of the short term rental application for 125 Oakwood Ave. With the commissioners reiterating their positions from previous discussions:

- Cullinan and Moyle sympathized with residents' concerns, particularly about housing availability and community disruption, and favored strong limitations or outright denial under the current ordinance.
- Curran, Baldrige and McDermott highlighted that STRs are already regulated with strict oversight and that outright bans could push property owners toward long-term rentals without oversight, which can also cause problems.
- The debate acknowledged the "gray area" nature of the issue, balancing economic opportunity against neighborhood integrity. The suggestion that the council consider revising the ordinance to include caps on rental days or residency requirements was also discussed.
- Attorney Barry confirmed the council's authority to deny permits without cause, but also the political risks of inconsistent approvals.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Baldrige, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to reconsider and accept the short term rental application of Ray Basa, 125 Oakwood Ave., **AYES:** Baldrige, McDermott, Curran. **NAYS:** Cullinan, Moyle. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The applicant was approved but is considered to be on a "short leash," meaning any violation could lead to immediate revocation of the license. Council members emphasized that this decision does not set a broad precedent and that the ordinance and its application could be revisited as needed.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermott, **SECONDED BY** Cullinan to approve the request from Starved Rock Runners to host the annual Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving Day. The council praised the longtime event and pledged their support to the efforts. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Baldrige, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to deny the solicitor permit applications. The council expressed skepticism about the value of such solicitations in the internet age and noted many residents agree. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermott, **SECONDED BY** Cullinan to place on file an estimate to upgrade Well No. 3 with a \$43,806.09 variable speed drive. Lance Greathouse, TEST Inc., told the council the new drive would improve reliability and longevity. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Baldrige, **SECONDED BY** Cullinan to approve the request from We Are Oglesby to host a 5K race on September 13, 2025, in conjunction with the car show and Boots, Brews & BBQ already scheduled. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Cullinan, **SECONDED BY** Moyle to accept the resignation of City Clerk Becky Clinard effective August 18, 2025. The council praised her extensive knowledge, dedication, and critical role in navigating the city through financial and administrative challenges and acknowledged the difficulty of replacing such an experienced official. **AYES:** Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **NAYS:** Baldrige. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Curran then updated residents on the Republic Services collection schedule. He told the council that recycling would be picked up this week and that the city was looking into allowing residents to drop off yard waste bags at the Street Department. However, he warned that if anything other than yard waste was dumped, the privilege would be rescinded immediately.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Pat Flecker asked the council to consider dual metering for residents like herself who wish to water their lawns with an irrigation system. Flecker wants to avoid the sewer fees (which are based on water usage) because the water doesn't go into the sewer system. She is willing to incur all of the costs associated with a dual meter. Curran told her that the issue had been looked at in the past, but indicated that her request to cover the costs in full had never been investigated and thought it was worth a look.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Austin Cullinan, Accounts and Finance

- ❖ Told the council about his meetings with the clerk's office staff which resulted in valuable feedback. He commended Clinard's leadership, saying the staff feedback was a testament to "how tight a ship" the office was run and gave the staff "props" for their commitment to serving the council and residents.

Hilary Moyle, Public Safety

- ❖ Honored Richard Vicich, a 21-year employee of the Ambulance Department, with the City's First Responder of the Month Award. The award is sponsored this month by MP Automotive. Vicich excelled not only in his reliable presence, but was active in fundraising for the Ambulance Association.

Greg McDermott, Public Works

- ❖ Updated the council on scheduled road maintenance, including spray patches on Route 39 and the dry bridge work set for August.
- ❖ Expressed his gratitude for We Are Oglesby's continued efforts.

Richard Baldrige, Public Property

- ❖ Gave a brief update on the pool, telling the council the repairs (patch) is working and thanking the staff and community for supporting the pool.

- ❖ Provided updates on improvements at Courtyard Park, including basketball court repairs despite delays in material acquisition.
- ❖ Expressed gratitude to We Are Oglesby and KEI for contributions to Lehigh Park, including volunteer work and donations of pavers and flowers.
- ❖ Reminded the community about upcoming family-friendly events, such as movie night on June 6th and a kickoff party with the Ducky Derby on June 7th.

MAYORS REPORT

- ❖ Announced that the municipal band would perform on Thursday, July 31, at the Dickenson House ice cream social. The social starts at 5:30 and the band will start at 7 p.m.
- ❖ Commented on the recent athletic achievements of local youth teams, emphasizing community pride in both academic and sports accomplishments. Curran said that three teams with members from Oglesby were District Champions and represented the district at State (Boys Junior and Major Leagues and Girls Junior League). The Boys Junior League and Girls Junior League teams both placed second in state.
- ❖ He also told the council that The Illinois Valley Dispatch Center was recognized nationally for excellence in emergency services, marking a significant achievement for the region.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Baldrige, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to enter into executive session at 7:34 p.m. to discuss *“collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning the salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2). The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the OMA, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated in Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21), The selection of a person to fill a public office, as defined in the OMA, including a vacancy in a public office, when the public body is given the power to appoint under law or ordinance.”* **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The council reentered regular session at 9:36 p.m.

ROLLCALL: Commissioners Rich Baldrige, Austin Cullinan, Greg McDermott, Hilary Moyle, Mayor Jason Curran were present. City Attorney Pat Barry and City Clerk Becky Clinard were present as well.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Moyle, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to release the following executive session minutes: 2/6/2023; 1/2/2024; 1/24/2024; 2/5/2024; 8/19/2024; 9/3/2024; 11/4/2024;

1/6/2025; 1/21/2025 – Session 1; 2/3/2025; 2/18/2025 Sessions 1 & 2; 3/3/2025; 3/17/2025;
4/7/2025. **AYES:** Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MOTION CARRIED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY McDermott, **SECONDED BY** Baldrige to adjourn at 9:39 p.m. **AYES:**
Baldrige, Cullinan, McDermott, Moyle, Curran. **MEETING ADJOURNED.**