

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL

Monday, August 17, 2026

6:00 p.m. – City Hall Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ptak called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Ptak, Aldermen Demes, Thompson, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, and Herndon

Excused Absence: Alderman Crane

Others Present: Deputy Clerk Brent Bader, Finance Director John Duncan, Economic Development Director Curt Bedei, Fire Chief Jerry Janick, City Engineer Brian Brown; Attorney James McPhedran arrived at 6:11.

A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Thompson to approve the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting from the August 3, 2026, meeting.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

City Engineer Brian Brown updated the Committee on the situation with the sewer lines west of the intersection of Bucklin and Fifth Streets. Approximately three weeks ago when work was being done on the nearby water tower at Bucklin and Ninth Streets, various water main breaks occurred as the tower was being taken out of service, and a leak was discovered in the pavement west of the Bucklin and Fifth street intersection. At first it was assumed it was a water main break, but the map indicated the water main is on north side of the street, so that explanation did not make sense. Soon afterwards a green discoloration and odor were present indicating it was an issue with the sewer. Five or six years ago the hole in the top of the sewer line in that area had been patched; no further work was done at the time.

Due to the leak, a large hole was recently dug to effect repairs. A hole in the top of the sewer pipe to the north was discovered. Initially, the plan to repair it was to connect the line

to an existing line. The maps of the area do not include accurate locations of the sewer lines. As the area was dug up, a sewer end was discovered, so they continued to dig back into the hillside looking for the pipe and did not locate it. No pipe, clay, or any remnants of a sewer line were located; it dead-ended. Brown sought to connect existing lines to each other; however, variances in the elevations of the pipes involved will not support that plan. Further investigation followed, including televising, cleaning, excavating, and surveying. U.S.G.S. (U.S. Geological Survey) maps dated 1893 and 1910 revealed the original work had been done during that timeframe.

City Engineer Brown reviewed various scenarios for repairing the line including elevations and locations of various existing lines and no easy solution was found.

Using a lift station at a cost of approximately \$250,000 was considered. Additional costs would include long-term maintenance, a generator, etc.

City Engineer Brown recommended an alternative which includes running approximately 400 feet of 12-inch sewer from the alley between Fourth and Fifth streets and connecting it to the alley between Fifth and Sixth streets. Additional costs would include curb restoration and re-paving the road.

Time and materials estimates from local contractors are approximately \$150,000 (not including restoration or paving). To date approximately \$26,000 has been spent on repair efforts at the hole on Fifth Street west of Bucklin Street with another \$9-10,000 to finish that work, bringing total estimated work to around \$190,000, not including paving or any other unanticipated costs.

Alternate solutions were discussed.

City Engineer Brown stated all the contractors, engineers, etc. with whom he spoke said they have never seen anything like this situation. He also indicated dye testing had been performed with results suggesting only 10-15 homes are connected to the troubled sewer line.

City Engineer Brown is confident the proposed solution will work. The project does not qualify for TIF (Tax Increment Financing) funds. The project should take approximately a week-and-half once the materials are obtained.

Finance Director John Duncan indicated the balance in the sewer fund is currently at negative \$120,000 with approximately \$6.2 million in EPA loan forgiveness revenue anticipated. There is approximately \$7 million in infrastructure projects planned for this year. An additional \$500,000 loss in the sewer fund is anticipated this year. Last year's

unexpected broken pipe on the Route 6 bridge over the Little Vermilion River has depleted funds as well.

Duncan does not anticipate having to borrow funds to pay for these sewer repairs. Brown indicated there are projects which had been planned that can easily be delayed.

Brown pointed out that since it is an emergency project, putting it out for bid is not feasible. He proposes having local contractors complete the work with Pohar & Sons doing the excavating and installing the manholes and Universal Asphalt & Excavating performing the curb and paving work. Cost of the associated repairs was estimated at approximately \$250,000.

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to recommend to the Council to approve emergency sewer repairs near the intersection of Bucklin Street and Fifth Street with local contractors performing the work on a time and materials basis and related matters.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Aldermen Demes, Thompson, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon

NAYS: NONE **Absent:** Alderman Crane **Abstain:** NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0-0

Alderman Lavieri asked about the Shelter Reservation Refund account. Duncan explained that the demand for the shelters does not exceed availability and current City policy is to refund deposits in the event of a cancellation.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Alderman Thompson and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to adjourn the meeting.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Chairman Ptak adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Bishop". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Liz Bishop, City Clerk