



Office of Mayor Peter Schwartzman

PRESS RELEASE

Topic: Moving Forward in Galesburg
Date: 6/13/2023

Last night, our City Council supported (on a 5 to 1 vote) a separation agreement with our City Manager Gerald Smith. While I agree with this decision, we shouldn't "move on" without reflection. For Galesburg to continue on its forward path, there are things we must do. Both elected officials and community members can help our city heal and assist bringing us all together during this tumultuous time, for our City and our nation. Here are my recommendations:

- 1) Recognize that we must treat all members of our community with respect. This is particularly true to new members to our community, ones that have been brought here to lead and to those that bring new ideas and investment (social and economic);
- 2) Reach out to community members different from you (by attending an event that you don't know much about or may be apprehensive about for some reason). See diversity of thought, background, culture, etc., as a strength, not a weakness;
- 3) Find common ground on which to work with others. Look for these opportunities, rather than oppositional ones. Make this a priority, acknowledging that this type of collaboration is what will make our community whole again. Feeding division and disseminating unfound rumors will not.
- 4) Focus on the positive things going on in Galesburg, and there are a ton. Spend more time on furthering these efforts than on rehashing the negative ones. (I realize there are negatives that cannot be ignored, as we can learn from our mistakes and identify systemic challenges. I am merely saying that it is not productive to focus primarily on the negative. A house can burn down in 5 minutes but it takes a lot longer to build a new one.)
- 5) Show humility and grace. We are all members of this community. We all want to live in peace, harmony and love. No one has all the answers. Everyone has something to contribute. Encourage others to participate and be heard.

If we all do these things and encourage others to do the same, we will heal and move forward. It is up to us, every one of us. I have faith in the resilience of our City and its people.

Please contact me if you have additional questions: (phone) 309-877-1988; (email) pschwart@ci.galesburg.il.us

Sincerely,

Peter D. Schwartzman

Mayor Peter D. Schwartzman