

CITY OF HARTFORD
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
PROPOSED APRIL 27, 2026

Commissioners Present: Peter Aranda; John Miller; Lindsay Morsaw; Nancy Spoula; Tom VanLierop;
Charles Weeden; Mayor Jane M. Danger
Commissions Absent: None
Staff Present: Matthews; Pulluam; Ricks; Rodney-Isbrecht

Mayor Jane M. Danger called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Commissioner Spoula, supported by Commissioner Aranda, to approve the agenda as presented

Motion carried 7 – 0

Guests: None

Public Comment:

- John Spoula, Bennet Ave, Complaint filed regarding comments made by Commissioner Weeden.

Communications:

- Mayor Proclamation – Presented to Mark Kellogg on April 9th
- 2026 Strawberry Run – returning after many years’ hiatus on June 13, 2026; requesting partnership
- Special Meeting - April 29, 2026 7pm – Joint Fire Board Meeting
- Special Meeting - April 30, 2026 4pm – 2026 Truth in Taxation Setting Millage Rate
- Special Meeting - May 7, 2026, 4pm – Workshop on Communication, City Managers Review & Contract
- Special Meeting - May 18, 2026, 5:30pm – Public Hearing for 2026 Truth in Taxation
- Special Meeting - May 18, 2026, 5:45pm – Public Hearing for 2026/2027 Budget
- Council Meeting - May 18, 2026, 6pm – Third Monday Meeting
- City Hall Closed May 25, 2026 in observance of Memorial Day

Reports of Officers, Boards & Committees; Routine Monthly Reports from Departments:

- Van Buren Conservation District – April 2026 Program Information, recycling & educational Events, requesting the City’s partnership and contribution towards recycling efforts.
- A. **Police & Ordinance** – Brian Matthews, Chief,
Report on file. Discussed blight enforcement; Strawberry Festival coverage; writing required policies and completing prosecutors assigned complaints.
- B. **Fire Department** – Robbie Harting, Chief,
Report on file. Discussed pancake breakfast scheduled for May 9, mini pumper delivered and being prepared for service. Board Chair, Ron Sefcik, expressed concerns regarding the City Manager’s questions about the Fire Department 2026/2027 budget.
- C. **Ambulance** – no report on file
- D. **Van Buren County** – no representative present.
- E. **Public Works** –Rickey Ricks, Superintendent,
Report on file. Discussed brush & leaves pick-up has begun, fire hydrants have been flushed and marking miss dig requests.
- F. **Iron Removal Plant** – report on file, no representative present,
- G. **Wastewater Treatment Plant** – report on file, no representative present,
- H. **Treasurers, Investment & List of Bills** – List of Bills total \$485,597.36, Investment Report on file

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I. **City Manager** –report on file –

Discussed: Wastewater treatment plant operator position posted; MSHDA letter of intent was accepted to submit an application; Applied for Congressionally Directed Spending for South Center Street reconstruction; Health insurance cost increase; staff have begun MIOSHA Safety Training ; DPW staffing vacancies and interviews underway; attended MSHDA’s grantee meeting; Budget Committee meeting; BG Construction Company beginning work in Ely Park; Congratulations to Clerk Rodney-Isbrecht for completing the MSU Zoning Administrator Certification; Congratulations to City Manager for completing a 12 week High Performance Leadership Academy; Goals Update; Construction Project Updates.

Approval of Commission Minutes:

Motion by Commissioner VanLierop, supported by Commissioner Aranda, to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2026 business meeting of the Hartford City Commission, and place them on file.

Motion carried 7– 0

Motion by Commissioner Spoula, supported by Commissioner VanLierop, to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2026 Special business meeting of the Hartford City Commission, and place them on file.

Motion carried 7– 0

Approval of Reports:

Motion by Commissioner Spoula, supported by Commissioner VanLierop, to approve the March/April 2026 list of bills to be paid in the amount of \$485,597.36

Motion carried 7 – 0

Motion by Commissioner Spoula, supported by Commissioner VanLierop, to accept the March/April 2026 reports of Officers, Boards & Committees and place them on file.

Motion carried 7 – 0

Goals/Objectives: None Discussed

Old Business: None Discussed

New Business:

- Discuss & Consider – Attorney Agreement Proposal
Discussion: Recommendation to approve the legal services agreement with Bloom Sluggett for special legal counsel to review wastewater treatment plant equipment affecting its performance.
- Discuss & Consider – 2026/2027 Fire Department Budget
Discussion: The City Manager asked the fire board several questions regarding the budget. The City has to begin metering water at the Fire Department and bill them for usage as required by EGLE. The cost should be covered under the DWSRF project. The Commission reviewed operations, and questions were answered by the Fire Chief & Assistant Chief.
- Discuss & Consider – 2026/2027 Fiscal Year Preliminary Budget
Discussion: Preliminary budget exceeds projected revenues and additional cuts will be necessary. The Budget Committee will meet again on May 5, 2026, at 1:15pm.
- Discuss & Consider – Set Public Hearing Date for Code of Conduct & Ethics Complaint – Against Commissioner Weeden
Discussion: Proposed date of May 19, 2026, 6pm.

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Motion by Commissioner Aranda, supported by Commissioner Morsaw, to set a public hearing date for May 19, 2026 at 6pm, to consider the Code of Conduct & Ethics complaint received against Commissioner Weeden.

Motion carried 7 – 0

Resolutions, Ordinance, Proclamation's:

- Discuss & Consider – Resolution 2026 – 013 2026/2027 Fee schedule

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Spoula, to adopt Resolution 2026 – 013 amending fee schedule rates for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.

Motion carried 7 – 0

- Discuss & Consider – Resolution 2026 – 014 Amending Water Rates

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Motion by Commissioner VanLierop, supported by Commissioner Spoula, to adopt Resolution 2026 – 014 amending water rates for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.

Motion carried 7 – 0

- Discuss & Consider – Resolution 2026 – 015 Amending Sewer Rates

Motion by Commissioner Spoula, supported by Commissioner Aranda, to adopt Resolution 2026 – 015 amending sewer rates for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.

Motion carried 7 – 0

- Discuss & Consider – Resolution 2026 – 016 Fire Millage Ballot Language

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Morsaw, to adopt Resolution 2026 – 016 approving proposal ballot language to renew fire district millage to be voted on at the August 4, 2026 election.

Motion carried 7 – 0

- Discuss & Consider – Resolution 2026 – 017 Legal Service Agreement – Bloom Sluggett, PC.

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Aranda, to adopt Resolution 2026 – 017 entering into a legal services agreement with Bloom Sluggett, PC for special legal counsel services related to the wastewater treatment plant at the billing rates outlined and authorizes the City Manager to execute the agreement.

Motion carried 7 – 0

Adjournment:

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner VanLierop, to adjourn the meeting at 7:58pm.

Motion carried 7 – 0

Respectfully Submitted,

RoxAnn Rodney-Isbrecht, City Clerk