

CITY OF HARTFORD
PROPOSED SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 13, 2023

Commissioners Present: Ramon Beltran; Jane Danger; Frank Dockter (7:25PM); John Miller; Helen Sullivan;
Terry Tibbs; Mayor Richard A. Hall
Commission Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Vitale

Mayor Richard A. Hall called the business meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to recess the Council business meeting to open a public hearing at 7:01pm on the proposed increases to the 2023/2024 sewer rates

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: Council considered the need for the rate increase due to operational obligations. New rates will take effect on July 1, 2023. City residents Jeff Fuller and Mark Little had comments on the specific rate increases and the effect the last rate increase had.

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to close the public hearing at 7:14pm and resume the Council business meeting.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Danger, to recess the Council business meeting to open a public hearing at 7:15pm on the proposed increases to the 2023/2024 water rates

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: Council considered the recommendation by bakertilly municipal advisors and the need for the rate increase due to operational obligations. New rates will take effect on July 1, 2023. City residents Jeff Fuller and Mark Little had comments on the specific rate increases and the effect the last rate increase had.

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to close the public hearing at 7:29pm and resume the Council business meeting.

Motion carried 7 – 0

Guests: None

Public Comment:

- Mark Little, North Maple Street, comments on Strawberry Festival, social media & Commissioner's comments.
- Zip Cannabis spoke regarding their application for an Adult Use Class A Microbusiness
- Kingh Farm spoke regarding their applications for Adult Use Class C Grow & Retail
- Jeff Fuller, Mary Street, comments on the Planning Commission Ordinance

Communications:

- Certificate of Appreciation for Diamond Sponsorship from the Hartford Strawberry Festival

County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, 19 West Main St, Hartford, MI 49057

CITY OF HARTFORD
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JUNE 13, 2023

- I & M sent notice of Public Hearing for June 14, 2023 @ 10:30am

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

- A. **Police & Ordinance** – Chief Prince, no action
- B. **Fire Department** – No action
- C. **Ambulance** – No action, the City Manager is working with VBEMS, they & Covert will provide Mutual Aid during the transition as Pride Care contract with the City will end May 31st if Pride refuses service. VBEMS is asking for additional time to prepare a contract and be able to provide service.
- D. **Van Buren County** – None Filed
- E. **Public Works** – None Filed
- F. **Wastewater Treatment Plant** – None Filed
- G. **Treasurers, Investment & List of Bills** –List of Bills in the amount of \$131,532.58;
- H. **City Manager** –
 - Award from Van Buren County Land Bank for demolition of 106 S Center St & update on 5 West Main Street, they are considering removal of the back staircase and selling the property;
 - Working with City’s Attorney for updates to the Planning Commission Ordinance, based on comments from Council & Planning Commission;
 - Moving forward with awarding VBEMS the local ambulance agreement, expects to bring agreement to Council by next meeting, if it is not received in time a special meeting will need to be called;
 - Shifting funds to Consumers Credit Union and moving funds from investments to the checking accounts for a net zero transfer;
 - Shawn Poole will be returning as a full time employee, possibly losing a current full time officer;
 - Candidate for WWTP, checking background, would be responsible for managing brush program at WWTP upon hire with specified hours for brush drop-off appointments;
 - City is named in a civil case regarding Mistretta case, currently in discovery;
 - New fee schedule and budget effective 7/1/2023;
 - South Parking lot has been damaged , council may want to consider pursuing remedies due to the repair costs;
 - City Hall roof is substantially complete, waiting on final inspection;
 - Issues with property rights claims at Clark & Linden, Council may want to consider how to respond to these requests/claims;
 - Concerns about ongoing noncompliance by AM Hawk, Council may want to consider how to respond to these ongoing issues.
 - Commissioner Tibbs recommending credit to water/sewer bill if asked to run water due to the lead/copper recommendations, Council may want to consider amending the water/sewer use ordinance as recommended by legal counsel;
 - WWTP, UV has been taken offline, working with Wightman’s to find a solution.
 - DPW is working incredibly hard with the six active projects as well as their normal duties.
 - Mayor comments: VBMS was housed at the Hartford Fire Station over the weekend as mutual-aid coverage in the area.

Approval of Commission Minutes: No Action

Approval of Reports:

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to approve the June 13, 2023 list of bills in the amount of \$131,532.58.

Motion carried 7 – 0

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PROPOSED SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 13, 2023

Goals/Objectives: None

Old Business:

- Brush Pile at WWTP

Discussion: Council discussed the process for accepting brush at the WWTP upon reopening. Once a new staff member is hired at the WWTP, that person can accept appointments for brush only and drop-off during posted hours only. That staff member would be responsible for ensuring that all brush meet size limits. Council also discussed having DPW routinely pick-up brush once a month and eliminate drop-off at the WWTP. Council closed the WWTP to brush drop off for 90 days which ends July 31, 2023. Council will wait for a State mandate to remedy the current brush pile before taking action.

- Recreational Marihuana RFP Results – The City Manager reviewed the applications and gave an overview of the scoring for each application. Council discussed the scoring and applicants.
- Consider Recreational Retail Establishment Marihuana Application from Kingh Farms, LLC @ 325 West Main Street
Discussion:

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Sullivan, to approve the recreational retail establishment marihuana application from Kingh Farms, LLC @ 325 West Main Street.

Motion carried 5 – 2 (Danger, Tibbs)

- Consider Recreational Grow Facility Class C Marihuana Application from Kingh Farms, LLC @ 325 W Main

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to approve the recreational marihuana Class C grow facility application from Kingh Farms, LLC @ 325 West Main Street.

Motion carried 5 – 2 (Danger, Tibbs)

- Consider Recreational Microbusiness Class A Marihuana Application from Zip Cannabis LLC @ 801 Prospect St

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Sullivan, to approve the recreational microbusiness Class A marihuana facility application from Zip Cannabis, LLC @ 801 Prospect Street.

Motion carried 5 – 2 (Danger, Tibbs)

- Discussion – City Commission Rules of Order
Commissioner Danger has concerns about time guests are allowed to speak prior to Public Comment. Discussion focused on possibility of moving public comment on the agenda to better accommodate the public. Commissioner Tibbs has concerns about the City’s Manager’s participation in Council subcommittee meetings and suggests changing Section 2.5 to eliminate the City Manager’s role from Council subcommittee, also general discussion on the past City’s Manager’s role in subcommittees. Commissioner Beltran suggests that Council be allowed to assign work to City staff and suggests changing Section 2.8. Council would like to revise the Council rules at a future meeting.

New Business:

- Consider – DPW Mowing Attachment Purchase \$2,200

CITY OF HARTFORD
PROPOSED SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 13, 2023

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to approve the DPW request to purchase a 72" Chopper Shear Pin attachment for the mowing system from Tom Smith Tractor in the amount of \$2,200. .

Motion carried 7 – 0

- Consider – WWTP Crane/Winch Equipment Purchase \$2,247.02.

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to table the request to purchase a Crane/Winch on wheels from USA Blue Book in the amount of \$2,247.02 until Wightman Engineering can present information on the practical application and use of UV System and whether Wightman will support the reimbursement of the Crane/Winch should the use of the UV System not be feasible. .

Motion carried 7 – 0

- DWAM Grant Change Order

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Tibbs to approve the DWAM Grant Change Order no. two extending the contract through September 30, 2023.

Motion carried 7 – 0

- Discussion – Proposed WA/SW Utility Rate Increases

Discussion: None

- Consider Proposed Workplace Injury Policy

Discussion: Most employers have a workplace policy.

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Tibbs, to approve the City's Workplace Injury Policy as presented.

Motion carried 7 – 0

- Discussion: Economic Incentives for Development.

Possibly offering free tap fees for sewer and water to attract businesses wishing to open in Hartford as an economic incentive. The City Manager will work with the City Attorney to determine the legality of this option.

Resolutions, Ordinance, Proclamation's: None

Adjournment:

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to adjourn the meeting at 8:55pm.

Motion carried 6 – 1 (Miller)

Respectfully Submitted,

RoxAnn Rodney-Isbrecht, City Clerk