

CITY OF HARTFORD  
PROPOSED BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 22, 2023

Commissioners Present: Frank Dockter; Ramon Beltran; John Miller; Helen Sullivan; Terry Tibbs; Mayor Richard A. Hall

Commission Members Absent: Jane Danger

Staff Present: Prince, Rodney-Isbrecht, Vitale

Mayor Richard A. Hall called the business meeting to order at 6:45pm to hold a public hearing on the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund Water System Improvement Project (6:45pm), Truth in Taxation (7:00pm) and 2023/2024 Budget (7:15pm).

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Miller to approve the agenda as amended to remove SWOT Goals proposed by Commissioner Tibbs.

Motion failed 3 – 3 (Dockter, Miller, Hall)

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

Motion carried 4 – 2 (Beltran, Tibbs)

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to recess the Council business meeting to open a public hearing on the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund Water System Improvement Project.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: The City Manager presented information on the State of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Project Plan for the City of Hartford Water System Improvements Project supplied by Wightman's. City Commissioners were concerned the water rate increase to do all the projects at once, instead of incremental over time would be an initial burden on customers. Council is aware that all of the upgrades to the water system need to happen and will be prioritized based on lead & cooper rules and funding. There were no written comments during the public notice period and no public comments from the person in attendance.

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Miller, to close the public hearing at 7:06pm and resume the Council business meeting.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Miller, to recess the Council business meeting to open the public hearing on Truth in Taxation and City Millage Rate.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: In order to keep the City's Millage Rate at current levels the Council has chosen to go through the truth in taxation process. The City would lose \$30,754 if it did not go through the process due to Heedlee.

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to close the public hearing at 7:15pm and resume the Council business meeting.

Motion carried 6 – 0

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Motion by Commissioner Beltran, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to recess the Council business meeting to open the public hearing on the 2023/2024 Budget.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: Council did not make any changes to the proposed budget. The Manager recommends moving investments to general fund accounts to balance the budget. Some reasons for the out of balance budget: depreciation has not been funded in previous budgets and the CDBG Grant match was not budgeted for. There were no comments from the public.

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to close the public hearing at 7:27pm and resume the Council business meeting.

Motion carried 6 – 0

**Guests:** None

**Public Comment:**

- John Spoula, 112 Bennett, questions on Council/Manager chain of command.
- Dan Danger, 209 North Maple, several comments on Ely Park.

**Communications:**

- No Rummage Permit Needed Weekend Thursday – Saturday, May 25 – 27, 2023 8am-6pm
- City Hall Closed May 29, 2023 in observance of Memorial Day
- Council Special Meeting June 7, 2023 2pm – City Manager Review
- Job Fair @ Hartford Public Library July 8, 2023 10am – 3pm
- Van Buren Conservation District sent a Thank You for the City’s participation in the 2023 Resource Recovery Program.
- Children’s Advocacy Center is hosting a Cybersafety for Caregivers Wednesday, May 24, 2023
- CSX is closing roads at crossing for maintenance at Bernard Street & West Main Street, June 26 – July 6, 2023.

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

- A. **Police & Ordinance** – Chief Prince – Commended Officer Vandevoren for his work on a case involving a sixth grader. Commended Officer Kuzma for going above & beyond. Ordinance Officer Position is being considered to be filled temporarily by an officer to come in on a day off. Council would like to see drug count on report.
- B. **Fire Department** – Chief Harting – Pancake Breakfast was a huge success. Received two grants to purchase equipment. ISO rating stayed the same at a 4. Smoke Alarms are still available. Police Department participated in CPR training and are now all certified. Fire Department has received their Audit and will review at their next meeting.
- C. **Ambulance** – Report on file - If Pride Care cannot or does not respond, mutual aid is in place.
- D. **Van Buren County** – Mike Chappell – provided updates, K-9 Officer Retirement, County Clerk’s fees have increased, opioid steering committee to review how settlement funds should be spent, seeking County administrator, land bank has received complaints about 5 W Main and is considering selling the property.
- E. **Public Works** – Report not filed, No Action. Mayor Hall commented the Department has been very busy with construction projects, of South Parking Lot and Clark & Linden Streets.
- F. **Wastewater Treatment Plant** – Report on file, Commissioners requested reports be signed, and more information on what happens when the plant is at capacity due to all the rain. Working on a compliance plan for Amhawk. Also requested additional information on PFAS, and mercury sampling.

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**G. Treasurers, Investment & List of Bills** – \$114,842.54

**H. City Manager** – Weekly Update 5/5/2023; Weekly Update 5/12/2023; Continue to seek qualified candidates for the WWTP, the job has been reposted; Cinco de Mayo festival went great; searching for approved DDA development plan and TIF documents, working with Attorney Swets if the documents cannot be found funds collected for DDA may have to be returned. Planning commission ordinance amendment and seat a zoning board of appeals; roof project is in progress; brush pile update, too much blight in the pile to be burned, out of all the bids received the least expensive bid was \$75,000 to separate and remove the pile; Boring project at WWTP is under way; 215 Shepard, Cross Excavating to move forward with the demolition; 1 & 5 Main Street status emailed the County Treasurer and landbank; Bullet Proof Vest Grant submitted; Blight Elimination grant submitted for 106 S Center St; Clark & Linden Street is well under way; asking for an extension on DWAM Grant Contract; Input session on SPARK Grant, Wightman will provide preliminary plans; Summer newsletter nearly ready, additional input welcome.

**Approval of Commission Minutes:**

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2023 business meeting of the Hartford City Commission, as presented and place them on file.

Motion carried 5 – 0 (Beltran out of the room)

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Tibbs, to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2023 special business meeting of the Hartford City Commission, as presented and place them on file.

Motion carried 5 – 0 (Beltran out of the room)

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to approve the minutes of the, May 9, 2023 special business meeting of the Hartford City Commission, as presented and place them on file.

Motion carried 5 – 0 (Beltran out of the room)

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Tibbs, to approve the minutes of the, May 16, 2023 special business meeting of the Hartford City Commission, as presented and place them on file.

Motion carried 6 – 0

**Approval of Reports:**

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Miller, to accept the April 2023 reports of Officers, Boards & Committees and place them on file.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Motion by Commissioner Miller, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to approve the May 22, 2023 list of bills in the amount of \$114,842.54.

Motion carried 6 – 0

**Goals/Objectives:**

- The City Manager asked Council to fill out the SWOT Analysis Strength's at the March meeting and bring back for discussion. This will be used to define the goals for the next fiscal year. Council did not submit any strengths. Council was asked to bring back to May meeting strengths & weakness.

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Discussion: Commissioner Miller – Goals & Planning is needed and should be done in a separate special meeting session; Commissioner Beltran – Not a high priority at this time. Commissioners Miller & Beltran will meet to bring back some information to the rest of the Council.

**Old Business:**

- Discussion & Consider Committee Recommendation for Legal Representation

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Miller, to open discussion on legal representation.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: Committee met with the City Manager & Clerk who opened the three proposals received. The Committee concluded Attorney Nick Curcio of Nunica, MI would best fit the needs of the City. Council would like to meet with Attorney Curcio at a future meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Tibbs, to engage Attorney Nick Curcio to represent the City as its legal representation.

Motion carried 6 – 0

- Consider Additional Special Council Business Meetings

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to set special business meetings for July 11 & August 8, 2023 at 7:30pm.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: Concerns about bills getting paid on time. Commission rules do not address a workshop meeting, or a separate agenda for a special meeting.

- Spark Grant

Discussion: Groups who utilize the park and community members were invited to provide input on improving Ely Park. Wightman will put together plans and concept drawing to include upgraded utility connections, larger pavilion, more seating, improved sound system, improved lighting, smaller pavilions with picnic areas, parking area off of Michigan Ave, and a fence or living fence along the West side of Ely Park. Those in attendance were in favor of seasonal ice skating rink, garden area with seating, a water feature, play scape with ADA features, additional veterans memorial to recognize those who served in Iraq & Afghanistan, skate park or biking feature. Once concept drawings are received another public input session will be scheduled.

**New Business:**

- Move City Funds Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to move city funds in the amount of \$500,000 from Honor Credit Union to Consumers Credit Union.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: This will address the need to diversify and the comingling of funds.

- City Commission Rules of Order

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Discussion: Commissioner Danger asked for the discussion item, because she is absent Council tabled to next meeting.

**Resolutions, Ordinance, Proclamation's:**

- Resolution 2023 – 012 Establishing the City of Hartford 2023/2024 Fee Schedule

Motion by Commissioner Beltran, supported by Commissioner Miller, to adopt Resolution 2023 – 012 establishing the City of Hartford 2023/2024 Fee Schedule as revised.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Discussion: Commissioner Beltran requested additional time to review the three new proposed fees for marihuana, the Annual Inspection, Special Event Application, Late Application were removed from the fee schedule.

- Resolution 2023 – 013 Property Tax Millage for the Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Dockter, to adopt Resolution 2023 – 013 approving the Tax Millage for the Fiscal Year 2023/2024.

Motion carried 6 – 0

- Resolution 2023 – 014 2023/2024 Budget

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Tibbs, to adopt Resolution 2023 – 014 approving the 2023/2024 Budget.

Motion carried 5 – 1 (Sullivan)

- Resolution 2023 – 015 Final Project Plan for Water System Improvements & Designating an Authorized Project Representative

Motion by Commissioner Dockter, supported by Commissioner Miller, to adopt Resolution 2023 – 015 approving the Final Project Plan for the Water System Improvements & Designating an Authorized Project Representative.

Motion carried 6 – 0

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading & Consider Adoption- Proposed Amendment Chapter 151.290 Planning Commission Transfer of Zoning Power

Discussion: Council requested a revision to add Planning Commission must report monthly to Council. Requested changes will be made and brought back to Council for First Reading.

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Commissioner Tibbs, supported by Commissioner Beltran, to adjourn the meeting at 9:53pm.

Motion carried 5 – 1 (Miller)

Respectfully Submitted,

RoxAnn Rodney-Isbrecht, City Clerk