

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

City of Hillsdale
June 6, 2022
7:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Adam Stockford opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Mayor Adam Stockford called the meeting to order. Clerk Price took roll call.

Council Members present: Adam Stockford, Mayor
R Greg Stuchell, Ward 1
Anthony Vear, Ward 1
William Morrissey, Ward 2
Cynthia Pratt, Ward 2
Bruce Sharp, Ward 3
Bill Zeiser, Ward 3
Robert Socha, Ward 4

Council Members absent: Raymond Briner, Ward 4

Also Present: David Mackie (City Manager), Attorney Tom Thompson, Katy Price (City Clerk), Jason Blake (DPS Director), Sargent Steven Pratt (HCPD), Karen Lancaster (Finance), Brandon Janes, Penny Swan, Doug Spade, Mike Clement, Robert Eichler, Stephanie Myers, Dennis Wainscott, Louise Worms, Mark Nichols, Sheri Ingles, Doug Ingles, CJ Toncray, Karla Schaerer, Lynnette F, Leisha Taylor, Katheryn Watkins, Brianna Crall, Karla Adams, Tracy Fowler and Ted Jansen.

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Stockford requested to remove Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearing Item A. Set Public Hearing- Consideration for Removal of TIFA Board Member from the agenda and Council Member Sharp requested New Business Item G. Citywide Trash Pickup Discussion be added to the agenda.

Motion by Council Member Sharp, Seconded by Council Member Stuchell to remove Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearing Item A. Set Public Hearing- Consideration for Removal of TIFA Board Member and add New Business Item G. Citywide Trash Pickup Discussion to the agenda.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Pratt to approve the agenda as amended.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Karla Adams, commented on her FOIA appeal request that hadn't been added to the agenda.

Karla Schaerer commented on the Hillsdale Business Association's Open Air Market on Saturdays in downtown Hillsdale and the Right of Way Permit request for the usage of the lower level of the Library parking lot.

Ted Jansen asked for clarification if public could comment on letters entered in as Communications.

Tracy Fowler, Hillsdale County resident, spoke for intellectual freedom and shared her displeasure of Josh Paladino, Library board trustee of recent happenings. Fowler stated he is a liability and not an asset to the community as a whole. She requested Mr. Paladino to be removed from the board.

Robert Eichler, requested information on the proposed sale of the Transfer Station.

Dennis Wainscott, commented that all have freedom of speech.

Lance Lashaway commented that Library board trustee Paladino was right in what he did and said.

Kathryn Watkins, commented on Library Board Trustee Paladino. Stated he was in violation with his comments made at the Library meeting. Mr. Paladino's actions have made national news and is bad press for the City of Hillsdale.

Karla Schaerer commented that she is in support of Mr. Paladino.

CJ Toncray, was in favor of Mr. Paladino as he had an opinion like everyone else and shouldn't be removed because of it.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Bills
 - 1. City and BPU Claims of May 12, 2022: \$417,190.51
 - 2. Payroll of May 12, 2022: \$171,520.64
- B. City Council Minutes of May 16, 2022
- C. Housing Commission Minutes of March 14, 2022
- D. TIFA Minutes of March 15, 2022 & April 19, 2022
- E. TIFA Dawn Theater Minutes of May 5, 2022
- F. TIFA Targeted Development Minutes of May 10, 2022
- G. Hillsdale College Fireworks Permit & Noise Variance Request
- H. Right of Way Permit Hillsdale Business Association Open Air Market
- I. Use Agreement for Hillsdale Business Association Open Air Market
- J. St. Anthony's Church Park Use Agreement – Owen Memorial Park
- K. Ritchey Park Use Agreement – Stock's Park Wedding
- L. Application for July 3rd Fireworks
- M. Noise Variance Request

Motion by Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Vear to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

Communications/Petitions

- A. Library Director Resignation
- B. Brianna Crall Email/Letter
- C. Ted Jansen Correspondences
- D. Martha MacRitchie Letter
- E. Lynn MacRitchie Letter
- F. Mrs. Stock's Park Tuesdays in the Park Concert Series

Ted Jansen read his correspondences aloud.

Council Member Socha commented on freedom of speech.

Council Member Sharp stated that banning books is wrong and shouldn't be done. The Library is a good place and should be utilized.

Mayor Stockford requested information about the threats that the Library director received as she discussed in her resignation.

Further Council discussion ensued.

All items presented for the purpose of information only.

Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearings

Old Business

New Business

A. Adoption of FY 2022-23 City Budget (Resolution)

City Manager Mackie stated at the council meeting, April 4, 2022, the proposed 2022 – 2023 budget was presented. On May 16, 2022 a Public Hearing was conducted for members of the public to express their opinions regarding the proposed budget. Charter dictates that on or before the first Monday in the month of June, Council shall by resolution make an appropriation for the next fiscal year to meet the expenses of the activities of the City and levy the taxes. Accordingly, the attached resolutions define the specific amounts of revenues and expenditures for each of the funds of the City and the BPU, as well as their capital budgets. It also affirms a 3% wage increase for City non-union employees.

Motion by Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Stuchell to adopt the budget for FY 2022-23 as presented. **Resolution 3503.**

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

Motion by Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Pratt to levy the mileages as presented. **Resolution 3504.**

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

B. City Fee Schedule Update (Resolution)

During the fiscal year 2023 budget process, staff identified updates to several fees that needed to be increased based on review of costs as well as a review of the demand and market pricing. The increase in fees relate primarily to permits, cemetery fees, and dock rentals. The last update to City fees was 10/7/2019.

Motion by Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Sharp to approve the City fee schedule as presented.

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Nay
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye

Motion passed 7-1

C. BPU Cost of Service & Rate

City Manager Mackie stated the Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities (BPU) hired Utility Financial Solutions, LLC to perform a rate study analysis for the Electric, Water and Sewer Departments. The results of that study, as mentioned during the May 16th budget hearing, are a combined utility rate increase of 3.9% for fiscal year 2022-23, which equates to a \$6.10 monthly increase for an average residential household.

The recommended rate presented tracks for each department and the actual rates to be adopted effective July 1, 2022, July 1, 2023, July 1, 2024, July 1, 2025, and July 1, 2026. The recommended rates are used in developing each corresponding year's budget.

Motion by Council Member Vear, seconded by Council Member Stuchell to approve the recommended rates presented.

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Nay
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

D. Purchase Agreement for Storm Water Control Facility – 50 Morry Street

City Manager Mackie reported as part of the storm water control portion of the Lynwood/Hallett/Morry Street project, the city engineer has proposed purchase of the property at the southwest corner of South Howell and Morry Streets for the purpose of construction a storm

water control facility. After negotiation, the property owner has agreed to sell this property to the City for this purpose according to the terms stated in the attached purchase agreement.

Motion by Council Member Vear, seconded by Council Member Socha to approve the purchase of 50 Morry Street.

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Nay
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

E. Sale of City’s Solid Waste Transfer Station

City Manager Mackie mentioned during the May 16th City Council meeting Modern Waste Systems approached the City about purchasing the Transfer Station at 425 Carleton Road. The draft Purchase and Sale Agreement is being reviewed by both entities’ attorneys. The purchase price for the facility is \$875,000. Additionally, as part of sale both parties are discussing amending the current refuse agreement to extend its timeframe and lock-in pricing.

Both the Finance and Community Development Committees are in favor of the sale.

Council Member Vear asked about insurance savings and tax revenue if this property is sold.

Further Council discussion ensued.

Motion by Council Member Socha, seconded by Council Member Socha to support the Transfer Station sale.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

F Submission of Grant Application for Funds from the Transportation Economic Development Fund (Resolution)

The Michigan Department of Transportation – Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDFB) is providing grant funds to cities and villages of 10,000 or less for road construction work. The program requires a “Resolution of Support” in the form of official action by the Governing Body. The City is completing this grant application, due on June 15, 2022, for a preventative maintenance project including a leveling slurry seal layer, overlain by a single course chip seal, topped by a Microsurfacing Cape Seal on approximately 62,000 Square Yards (3.75 miles) of various city streets. Through this grant application we are requesting \$250,000 in grants funds together with matching funds of \$302,693.84 for a total estimated project cost of \$552,693.84.

Motion by Council Member Socha, seconded by Council Member Morrissey to submit the grant application. **Resolution #3506.**

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

G City Wide Trash Pickup – Discussion

Council Member Sharp led discussion on the citywide trash pickup. Discussion on having it once or twice a year to help remove some of the blight issues the city faces.

Further Council discussion ensued.

Motion by Council Member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Pratt to send the city wide trash pickup to Community Development Committee to review.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Miscellaneous Reports

A. Proclamation – None

B. Appointments- Zoning Board of Appeals – Tammie Henderson
Airport Advisory Committee – Troy Brocato, Jacob Bruns

Motion by Council Member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Stuchell to approved the appointments as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Other – None

General Public Comment

Jack McLain, Hillsdale Township, commented on the Morry Street Purchase, the trash pickup and the sale of the Transfer Station.

Karla Adams, commented on the Hope House in Jonesville stated the government system is a failure and commented on freedom of speech.

Kathryn Watkins, commented on the threats that the Library director received. Spoke on the Library and the displeasure of Council Member Socha's comments online.

Brianna Crall, commented on Mr. Paladino and the letter he sent out. Crall mentioned the threats that the Library Director received and stated there is a standard rating system for books in the library. Crall stated the former librarian did a wonderful job of sectioning off age appropriated books and materials.

Stephanie Myers asked Council to keep in mind their comments as children pay attention to what Council is saying in meetings and to be mindful and respectful for all choices of life.

Robert Eichler, Scipio Township, recommended Council to extend time to those that are handicap for public comment and commented on taxes.

Tracy Fowler, Jefferson Township, commented on a few of Council Member Socha comments during the meeting. Fowler asked Socha to be a part of the wide Hillsdale community. Fowler showed her displeasure with Council on the Library board and trustee issue.

Mark Nichols, Adams Township, commented on the Library issue and stated he is in favor of what Council is doing and thanked Council Member Socha for his comments and thanked the Mayor on trying to find a middle ground.

Doug Ingles, County Commissioner, commented on electronic devices used by Council members, mentioning that many officials use them to work off of during a meeting and thanked Council for using them.

City Manager's Report

No Report.

Council Comments

Council Member Zeiser stated he is a part of the community and all are allowed to speak during public comment.

Council Member Sharp asked about the PA system and microphones and the citywide trash pickup.

Council Member Socha shared his concerns with coming of age era and lifestyle choices and stated he is in favor of retaining Library trustee Paladino should he continue to serve.

Council Member Stuchell stated as a Christian he is to share the good news. He stated there is currently a decay in society.

Point of Order – Interruption from public.

Adjournment

Motion by Council Member Sharp, seconded by Mayor Stockford moved to adjourn the meeting.

By a voice vote, 7 ayes 1 nay.

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Morrisey	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Council Member Socha	Nay
Council Member Pratt	Aye

Motion passed 7-1

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.



 Adam L. Stockford, Mayor



 Katy Free, City Clerk