

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

City of Hillsdale
April 3, 2023
7:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Stockford opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

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

Council Members present:	Adam Stockford, Mayor Greg Stuchell, Ward 1 Anthony Vear, Ward 1 William Morrissey, Ward 2 Cynthia Pratt, Ward 2 Bruce Sharp, Ward 3 Gary Wolfram, Ward 3 Robert Socha, Ward 4 Joshua Paladino, Ward 4
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Council Members absent:	None
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Also Present: Attorney Tom Thompson, Michelle Loren (Deputy City Clerk), Scott Hephner (HPD/HFD), Ginger Moore, Penny Swan, Sherie Ingles, Doug Ingles, Abe Dane, Correy Murray, Karen Hill, Jake Langston, Linda Fogarty, Liz Webb, James Galloway

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Stockford requested the public hearing date of April 17, 2023 under Old Business Item A., be changed to May 1, 2023 as Councilman Morrissey (Chair of O&G) will not be in attendance.

Motion by Council member Morrissey, seconded by Council member Socha to approve the requested change. All ayes.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Councilman Morrissey, support by Councilman Vear, to approve the April 3, 2023 Agenda as amended.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Karen Hill thanked Council for including the Hillsdale Community Library report in the council packet so the public can be informed of all the good the library is doing for its patrons and the community. Ms. Hill also thanked Councilman Sharp for stopping by the library and taking the time to look around and meet staff and review the policy manual. In her final comment, Ms. Hill stated that she has heard and read comments regarding the politics of the Library Board members. Ms. Hill stated she only serves the board following the guidelines of the Trustee Manual and the Hillsdale Community Library manual.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Bills
 - 1. City and BPU Claims of March 16, 2023: \$225,893.38
- B. City Council Minutes of March 20, 2023
- C. TIFA Minutes of January 17, 2023
- D. TIFA Dawn Theatre Minutes of February 16, 2023

- E. TIFA Targeted Development Minutes of February 14, 2023
- F. TIFA Program Committee Minutes of February 28, 2023
- G. Finance Minutes of March 20, 2023
- H. Operations & Governance Minutes of March 22, 2023
- I. Board of Review Minutes for March 2023
- J. Hillsdale College TCO/Noise Variance
- K. Right of Way Use Request: CAPA 5K
- L. Here's to You Pub & Grub TCO-Noise Variance
- M. Wayfinding Signage Project – Phase II

Motion by Council member Morrissey, seconded by Council member Pratt to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Roll call:

Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye

Motion passed 9-0

Communications/Petitions

- A. Electronics Recycling Event
- B. March 2023 Library Update
- C. 2023 Assessor's Report to Council
- D. Ted Jansen – Library of Michigan Censorship Information
- E. Proposal 2022-2 Election Update – Abe Dane, Deputy County Clerk, addressed Council regarding early voting that will be implemented due to the passing of Proposal 2022-2. Mr. Dane explained that 9 days of early voting will be required beginning during the primary election in 2024. The County Clerk's Office is proposing County Jurisdictions consolidate and allow the County to oversee the 9 days of early voting. All 22 municipalities would split the cost equally, saving all jurisdictions a considerable amount of money.

F. Commissioner Update - Commissioner Doug Ingles addressed Council first by stating that aside from the sharing of set-up and equipment costs for the 9 day early voting, the sharing of Clerk duties will be a help as well.

Mr. Ingles reported a sales agreement with Renaissance, LLC for the purchase of the Courthouse annex had been approved for signature by the County Commissioner Chairman.

Window replacement has begun in the courthouse and is on track to be completed in June. Work is moving up the bell and clock tower.

Lastly, Commissioner Ingles thanked Councilwoman Pratt for her community service in helping clean up trash along the bike path.

Councilman Socha thanked the County for its efforts to help save money during elections.

Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearings

- A. CRE Application for 3980 Property LLC – Public Hearing

Sam Fry, Marketing and Development Coordinator gave an overview of a Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption (CRE) application received by the Clerk's Office from 3980 Property, LLC regarding the property at 3980 W. Carleton Rd. The estimated cost of rehabilitation is \$805,000.00. The current estimated value of the building is \$332,000. 3980 Property, LLC is requesting the CRE be approved for 10 years. The intent of the rehabilitation is to use part of the building for their own business as well as renting space for other businesses.

Mayor Stockford closed the public hearing for council comment.

Councilman Paladino questioned why the millage rate doesn't go down to zero for all categories. He was referred to the City Assessor. Mr. Paladino also questioned how long after the 10 years it will take the City to recoup the abatement.

Mayor Stockford opened the public hearing for public comment to which there was none.

Council Comment:

Councilman Sharp stated this is a good thing and bringing more jobs to Hillsdale is a good thing.

Councilman Socha pointed out that a portion of the building is already being rented to Apex Painting.

Councilman Wolfram pointed out that a significant amount of money is being invested and this will have economic development impact in Hillsdale and provide jobs.

Councilman Vear made clarification that taxes would still be paid on the base assessment of the building and the abatement would apply to the rehabilitation.

Motion by Councilman Socha, supported by Councilman Vear, to approve Resolution #3545 approving the CRE application for 10 years with the certificate set to expire December 30, 2033.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye

Motion passed 9-0

Old Business

A. Set Public Hearing – Proposal to Amend City Ordinance § 2.48.020, Chapter 2, Article IV, Division 7, Sec. 2-262

Mayor Stockford stated the date for the public hearing had been amended to be set for May 1, 2023.

Councilmembers began to opine regarding the amendment which included a letter written by Councilman Sharp. City Attorney Thompson advised they stop discussion as the agenda item spoke to setting a public hearing for the matter and all discussion should be saved for that time.

Motion by Councilman Morrissey, support by Councilman Socha, to set the public hearing for the Proposal to Amend City Ordinance § 2.48.020, Chapter 2, Article IV, Division 7, Sec. 2062 for May 1, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

All ayes.

Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

A. 2023-24 Proposed City Budget & Set Public Hearing

Councilman Wolfram asked for reassurance that the budget contains the BPU budget as well.

Motion by Councilman Stuchell, support by Councilman Socha, to set a public hearing for May 15, 2023 to adopt the 2023-24 Proposed City Budget.

All ayes.

Motion carried unanimously

B. Audit Proposals 2023-2025

A request for Audit Proposals was sent out in February covering the fiscal years 2023 through 2025. The Finance Committee and staff reviewed three proposals and recommend Council award the audit contract to Yeo & Yeo.

Councilmen Morrisey and Wolfram shared their interview experience with Yeo & Yeo with Council and what led them to their recommendation.

Councilman Sharp stated he hadn't been able to attend the interviews with the firms and stated he supported Councilmen Morrisey and Wolfram in their recommendation.

Motion by Councilman Wolfram, support by Councilman Morrisey, to award the 2023-2025 Audit Contract to Yeo & Yeo

Roll call

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrisey	Aye

Motion passed 9-0

C. Cintas Contract

The Department of Public services recently received notice of a price increase for services in their uniform contract from UniFirst to go into effect with their contract renewal. Director Jason Blake received three proposals:

- UniFirst \$5,731.44 year/\$28,657.20 5 year contract
- Cintas \$5,530.98 year/\$27,654.90 5 year contract
- Gallagher \$9,951.04 year/\$49,755.20 5 year contract

After doing meaningful comparisons, Director Jason Blake recommended Council award the bid to Cintas as the change would come with an approximate savings of \$1000.00 over the course of the contract.

Motion by Council member Sharp, seconded by Council member Vear, to award the uniform contract to Cintas

Roll call:

Council Member Pratt	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrisey	Aye
Council Member Paladino	Aye

Motion passed 9-0

D. Resolution of Support – HB5054 Pension Best Practices Resolution #3545

When passed by the Michigan House of Representatives a year ago, HB5054 included \$750 million in pension grants to be divided between communities with pensions funded at less than 60 percent and \$250 million to be divided by communities with pensions funded above that. However, the \$250 million for communities that followed the State's best practices and had pensions funded above 60 percent did not make it into the 2022 State of Michigan budget.

Resolution #3545 is a show of support requesting the Legislature and Governor reconsider the \$250 million in pension grants for those communities whose pensions are funded over 60% and include it in the State's upcoming budget.

Councilman Morrissey commented that upon his arrival the City was in a pretty bad state in regard to pension funding and has worked diligently bring the City into a better position. Essentially the City is being penalized for doing this. City Manager concurred stating there were sacrifices made in order to bring the City's pension funding up to 80%.

Councilman Paladino expressed his displeasure in the \$250 million cut.

Motion by Councilman Morrissey, support by Councilman Wolfram, to adopt Resolution #3545 supporting the request to the State Legislature and Governor to reconsider including the \$250 million pension grants for municipalities over 60% be included in the State's upcoming budget.

All ayes.

Motion carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous Reports

- A. Proclamations – Hillsdale American Legion 100 Year Anniversary
Autism Awareness Month
- B. Appointments- None
- C. Other- None

General Public Comment

Jeremiah Regan thanked Recreation Director Michelle Loren for running the baseball program.

James Galloway remarked about the lack of livestream at the last couple of meetings. He also spoke about the cleanup efforts he has been making along the bike path. In doing so he has come across a back log of debris along the railroad tracks that has been there for several years and wondered who he should contact to get it cleaned up.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Mackie thanked the volunteers for their efforts at the cemeteries during Day of Service.

Mr. Mackie reminded about the Electronics Recycling event being held on April 20th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 149 Waterworks Drive.

Mr. Mackie also reported the BPU staff is participating in mutual aid in Ohio to help with the recent tornado damage.

Mr. Mackie addressed the livestream issue explaining it was taken out during the ice storm. Livestream should be working by the next meeting April 17, 2023.

Mr. Mackie pointed out the handouts of the 1978 Amended Library Ordinance for Council to refer to in reference to the ordinance change to the ordinance that is currently before Council for consideration.

Lastly, Mr. Mackie stated he would be reaching out to Council to see if anyone would like to set up meetings with department heads. He went on to highlight some of the different areas of savings in the budget and some of the many projects this budget is able to afford the City.

Councilman Sharp expressed his delight that the Westwood Project is moving forward as he has been asked several times by his constituents. He also commented he is happy to see the Meijer project making good progress.

Council Socha questioned the timing for the completion of brush pick up. To which City Manager Mackie explained DPS is working hard at it. Approximate time of completion will be 2 – 3 weeks.

Council Comments

Councilman Stuchell commented that he attended the first Homelessness Task Force meeting and was pleased with the discussions that took place.

Mayor Stockford apologized for the way he handled the Library Board appointment and apologized to Board Chair, Karen Hill for assuming her politics. Mayor Stockford further apologized to Councilman Paladino for bringing him into the matter. Mr. Stockford went on to discuss his plans for moving forward with what library board representation might look like in the future. He has spoken with school board members, and library board members trying to find a direction.

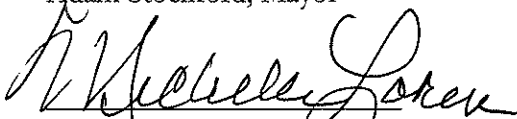
Josh Paladino spoke about Town Ball headed up by Grant More. There will be a game in North Adams April 29th. He also thanked James Galloway for his cleanup efforts.

Adjournment

Motion by Council member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Socha, to adjourn the meeting.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.


Adam Stockford, Mayor


Michelle Loren, Deputy Clerk