

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

City of Hillsdale
October 2, 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 R Greg Stuchell, Ward 1 Anthony Vear, Ward 1 William Morrissey, Ward 2 Cynthia Pratt, Ward 2 Bruce Sharp, Ward 3 Gary Wolfram, Ward 3 Joshua Paladino, Ward 4 Robert Socha, Ward 4
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Council Members absent:	None
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Also Present: Attorney Tom Thomson, Katy Price (City Clerk), Jason Blake (DPS Director), Scott Hephner (Chief HCPD/HCFD), Ginger Moore (Airport Manager), Sam Fry (Economic Development), Andrew Gelzer, Nick Fox, Felicia Finch, James Galloway, Kevin Conant, Corrie Conant, CJ Toncray, Mark Nichols, Logan Washburn, and John HMP

Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Socha led discussion on historic events for the City and special event fees being waved until the fee schedule is reviewed.

Mayor Stockford asked if any events were coming up from this meeting to the next meeting.

None were taking place in between.

Motion by Councilman Socha support by Councilmember Vear to approve the October 2, 2023 agenda as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Andrew Gelzer, Ward Four, Keefer House Hotel OPRA amendment and asked Council to grant the approval.

Kevin Conant, inquired about fees for a special event that may be reversed if the fee schedule is amended.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Bills
 - 1. City and BPU Claims of September 14, 2023: \$2,015,490.75
 - 2. Payroll of September 14, 2023: \$183,979.01
- B. City Council Minutes of September 18, 2023
- C. Finance Minutes of September 18, 2023
- D. Public Services Committee Minutes of September 25, 2023
- E. Noise Variance -Scarecrow Festival

- F. Street Use Agreement – Hillsdale Brewing Company - Scarecrow Fest
- G. Ratification of Mayor’s Signature – Jeffrey Emery Lot Closure Agreement
- H. Hillsdale County Fair Parade Use Agreement
- I. Right of Way Permit- Hillsdale Schools Homecoming Parade

Motion by Councilmember Morrissey seconded by Councilmember Pratt to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed 9-0

Communications/Petitions

- A. 16th Annual Walk of Remembrance Event
- B. Mitchell Research Center Summer/Fall Newsletter
- C. Historic Train Event Oct 7,8, 2023
- D. Citywide Hydrant Flushing October 1, 2023
- E. MIFEG Grant Award

Same Fry, Marketing Coordinator shared about the train event.

Information is presented for information only.

Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearings

None

Old Business

- A. Corecoyle IFT Abatement

David Mackie reported that the City was in communication with Mr. Homovec the owner of Corecoyle, he wasn’t able to attend the meeting and requested that Council table the item until the October 16, 2023 meeting.

Councilmember Morrissey asked the attorney to review the letter from Corecoyle.

Further discussion ensued.

Motion by Councilman Socha support by Councilmember Sharp to table the IFT abatement from Corecoyle until the October 16, 2023 meeting.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- B. Extension of Traffic Control Order 2023-29

Chief Hephner reported the Temporary Traffic Control Order 2023-29 was issued on 7/13/2023 making a “Four Way Stop” at the intersection of N. West Street and Fayette Street by adding stop signs to north bound and south bound N. West Street. The TCO expires on 10/13/2023 and would need to be extended until May 1, 2024 for an evaluation period covering the winter in regards to north bound traffic.

Motion by Councilmember Morrissey seconded by Councilmember Vear to extend the traffic control order 2023-29 until May 1, 2024.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Keefer House Hotel LLC OPRA Abatement (Resolution)

Sam Fry, reported that On April 1, 2019, the City of Hillsdale approved Resolution #3372, which granted Keefer House Hotel, LLC an Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Exemption Certificate for property located at 96, 100, 102, 104 N. Howell Street, Hillsdale, Michigan, for a period of 12 years beginning December 31, 2019, and ending December 30, 2032, pursuant to the provisions of Public Act 146 of 2000, as amended. Resolution #3372 required that the rehabilitation of the facility shall be completed by December 30, 2021. Following the approval of Resolution #3372, the developer faced delays on the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic, labor and material shortages, cost increases, and major water/foundation issues. Keefer House Hotel, LLC submitted a letter dated September 28, 2023, requesting Hillsdale City Council to amend the completion date listed in Resolution #3372 to August 1, 2024. Updating the project completion date will ensure the State Tax Commission does not revoke the certificate while this project is still ongoing.

Brant Cohen, Keefer House Representative showed the improvement made currently and asked Council to approve the extension of the OPRA abatement.

Mike, Keefer House construction manager shared the many updated that has been done since he had taken over.

Many of the Council didn't want to see the City move away from the project, not impressed on project timeframe and lack of movement that has been done in the past.

Councilmember Sharp stated that there were a few major things that CL Real Estate ran into that presented issues that pushed back timeframe of completion.

Further Council discussion ensued.

Motion by Councilmember Vear, seconded by Councilmember Socha to approve the Keefer House Hotel OPRA Abatement Resolution. **Resolution #3575.**

Roll call:

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

Motion passed 7-2

New Business

A. Airport/MDOT Terminal Construction Contract

Motion by Councilmember Socha, seconded by Councilmember Morrisey to approve the MDOT Airport Terminal Construction Contract 2023-0741 and approve the City Manager and City Clerk to sign on behalf of the City. **Resolution # 3576.**

Roll call:

Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrisey	Aye

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Pratt	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye

Motion passed 9-0

B. Hillsdale Mobile Home Park Monthly Lot Payments

City Manager Mackie reported the City Assessor mailed a letter in January 2022 and send emails to Hillsdale MHP in January 2023 along with the City Treasurer. Under Michigan law mobile home parks must pay a monthly per mobile home fee to the city they reside in. The mobile home park was sold in May 2021 to Hillsdale MHP. From June 2021 to after the time of the emails MHP did not make their monthly per mobile home payments to the City. By the time the City Treasurer and MHP staff were able to connect the past due amount including penalties and interest was calculated at \$221,890 in May 2023.

After discussion with MHP and the Finance Committee the Finance Committee talked about a 10% on dollar settlement, \$22,189 to avoid future litigation and was presented to Council for consider.

Council discussion on the civil fines potion ensued. Councilmember Stuchell ask questions regarding the MHP policy on tenants that fall behind on rent. John Salsman MHP representative stated that there would be late fees associated for tenants and then process to evict if they cannot pay.

Councilmember Sharp spoke with tenants and is “disgusted” with the trailer park and condition.

Mr. Salsman stated that the company owns four other Michigan trailer parks and didn’t realize there was a monthly trailer rent payment for Michigan as the company is out of Florida.

Councilmember Morrissey stated that ignorance of the law isn’t an excuse, the City gave a 90% discount and the company should pay the 10% in the amount of \$22,189.

Councilmember Socha shared that the City has been extremely generous with the break of 10%.

Mayor Stockford mentioned that we need to treat everyone equally. The City needs to enforce what we have in the books.

Councilmember Vear asked if the MHP was current on the taxes, the answer was yes.

Council discussion ensued on calculation of Michigan monthly trailer park lot rental with and without civil penalties.

Mr. Salzman, stated that he doesn’t think his company should not pay the 10% to the City. The Company would like to potentially put that money back into the park. He stated that he would like to take the money and continue to improve the community for the residents.

Mayor Stockford mentioned he would rather see funds going into the park for improvements than to the City.

Councilmember Paladino asked if MHP had a proposal of improvements to the park with the money in civil fines proposed.

Lengthy Council discussion ensued.

Motion by Council Member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Morrissey to have the Hillsdale Mobile Home Park pay the 10% civil fines in the amount of \$22,189.00 which is owed to the City.

By a voice vote, two in opposition.

Roll call:

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

Motion failed 4-5

Further discussion ensued on further negotiation of what Hillsdale Mobile Home Park owes.

Motion by Councilmember Stuchell, seconded by Councilmember Paladino to have the Hillsdale Mobile Home Park show Council a proposal for improvements in the amount of \$221,890.00 in the park over an 18 month period and have it presented at the next Council meeting, October 16, 2023.

By a voice vote, two in opposition.

Roll call:

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

Motion passed 6-3

Miscellaneous Reports

- A. Proclamations – Pregnancy & Infant Loss Remembrance Day- October 15, 2023
Public Power Week – October 1-7, 2023

Mayor Stockford read each proclamation aloud.

- B. Appointments- None
- C. Other- None

General Public Comment

None

City Manager’s Report

Public Power Week, BPU office has drawings and kits available and will have Trivia contest on Facebook.

City Manager Mackie announced BPU Coloring Contest \$50 Gift Card.

Train event is this weekend on October 7 & 8, 2023

Fact sheets were given from MML on fee schedules and information on special events to Council members.

Council Comments

None

October 2, 2023

City Council Minutes

Adjournment

Motion by Councilmember Sharp, seconded by Councilmember Socha, to adjourn the meeting.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.


Adam Stockford, Mayor


Katy Price, City Clerk