

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

City of Hillsdale
February 17, 2025
7:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Pro Tem Joshua Paladino opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Mayor Pro tem Josh Paladino called the meeting to order. Clerk Price took roll call.

Council Members present: Joshua Paladino, Mayor Pro Tem
R Greg Stuchell, Ward 1
Jacob Bruns, Ward 1
William Morrissey, Ward 2
Matthew Bentley, Ward 2
Gary Wolfram, Ward 3
Bob Flynn, Ward 3
Robert Socha, Ward 4

Council Members absent: None

Also Present: David Mackie (City Manager), Attorney Tom Thompson, Katy Price (City Clerk), Jason Blake (DPS Director), Brandon Janes (IT), Mark Hawkins (HCFD), Scott Hephner (HCPD/HCFD), Shannon Gainer, Penny Swan, Scott Sessions and Doug Ingles.

Approval of Agenda

Council discussion on purchase of Wayfinding signs in the Consent agenda.

Motion by Councilman Bruns, support by Councilman Bentley, to move Consent item I. EDC Wayfinding sign purchase to New Business item F.

Roll Call:

Councilman Bruns	Aye
Councilman Flynn	Nay
Councilman Morrissey	Nay
Councilman Socha	Nay
Councilman Stuchell	Nay
Councilman Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Paladino	Aye
Councilman Bentley	Aye

Motion failed 4-4

Motion by Councilman Flynn, support by Councilman Socha, to approve the agenda as presented.

Councilman Flynn	Aye
Councilman Morrissey	Aye
Councilman Socha	Aye
Councilman Stuchell	Aye
Councilman Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Paladino	Aye
Councilman Bentley	Aye
Councilman Bruns	Nay

Motion passed 7-1

Public Comment

Shannon Gainer, Ward four (4), spoke on Road Diet meeting discussion and SAD policy update.

Scott Sessions, 102 Coldsprings Cir., spoke in favor of Penny Swan to be appointed to the Officer's Compensation Board.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Bills
 - 1. City and BPU Claims of January 16, 2025: \$473,904.89
February 6, 2025: \$943,496.97
 - 2. Payroll of January 30, 2025: \$214,240.53; February 13, 2025: \$204,040.89
- B. City Council Minutes of January 25, 2025
- C. Finance Committee Minutes of February 3, 2025
- D. Community Development Committee Minutes of January 23, 2025
- E. Operations and Governance Committee Minutes of January 27, 2025
- F. Public Safety Committee Minutes of February 13, 2025
- G. BPU Bid Award – Well 4 Cleaning and Rehab
- H. BPU Bid Award – Sanitary Sewer Spot Repair
- I. EDC Wayfinding Signs Purchase

Motion by Council Member Flynn, seconded by Council Member Morrisey to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Voice vote, approved unanimously.

Communication/Petitions

- A. 2025 City of Hillsdale Board of Review Schedule
- B. General Fund Per Capita Expenditure Comparison and Ad Valorem Taxable Value Trend Report
- C. Hillsdale County Commissioner Update – Doug Ingles

Kim Thomas, City Assessor reviewed the Ad Valorem Taxable Value report.

Doug Ingles, Hillsdale County Commissioner reported Jason Lautermilch Emergency Management Director. Ingles gave an update on employee changes. County is adopting policy updates in Employee Handbook. Frost Laws in effect Monday, February 24th at 6:00 a.m.

Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearings

None

Old Business

None

New Business

- A. SAD Policy & Procedure Update (Resolution)

Upon determining that special assessments would be necessary to help offset the costs of street reconstruction projects, the City Manager presented a Road Improvement Special Assessment District Policy to Council at their February 15, 2021 meeting refining the procedures outlined in city charter and ordinance for administration of special assessments. The implementation of all SADs created since 2021 have been administered in accordance with the provisions outlined in this policy. Staff was asked to further refine the procedures followed to ensure a more equitable allocation of the costs among the benefiting properties assessed. Based on the concerns and priorities specified, staff submitted a draft proposal to the Public Services Committee at their February 5, 2025 meeting. That committee voted to forward the proposal to the full Council for approval by resolution.

Council discussion ensued on the SAD policy presented.

Motion by Council Member Morrisey, seconded by Council Member Bentley to approve the SAD Policy and Procedure revision as presented. **Resolution #3625.**

Roll Call:

Councilman Morrissey	Aye
Councilman Socha	Aye
Councilman Stuchell	Aye
Councilman Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Paladino	Aye
Councilman Bentley	Aye
Councilman Bruns	Aye
Councilman Flynn	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

B. SAD 2025-10 Monroe Street – Set Public Hearing

Hillsdale Municipal Code, Section 2-334 – Determination of necessity; notice; hearing, provides, Before ordering any public improvements, any part of the expense of which is to be defrayed by special assessment, the council shall determine by resolution the necessity and propriety thereof and shall file such resolution with the plans and specifications, estimate of costs and a description of the lands or districts to be affected with the city clerk for public examination. In the same resolution, the council directed that notice thereof be given by publication once each week for two successive weeks in a newspaper published and circulated within the city, stating the time and place when the council will meet and consider any objections thereto.

Plans and cost estimates for Special Assessment District (SAD# 2025-10) were presented to City Council at their January 6, 2025 meeting.

The Monroe Street estimated cost for the overall construction project is \$737,112.50.

Motion by Council Member Flynn, seconded by Council Member Morrissey to set public hearing for March 3, 2025 for SAD 2025-10 Monroe Street. **Resolution #3626.**

Voice vote, approved unanimously.

C. SAD 2025-11 Barry Street – Set Public Hearing

Plans and cost estimates for Special Assessment District (SAD# 2025-11) were presented to City Council at their January 6, 2025 meeting.

The estimated cost for the street portion of the overall construction project is \$381,184.77.

Motion by Council Member Flynn, seconded by Council Member Morrissey to set public hearing for March 3, 2025 for SAD 2025-11 Barry Street. **Resolution #3627.**

Voice vote, approved unanimously.

D. Dial-A-Ride Fee Rate Increase

Jason Blake, DPS Director, reportedThis past January Council approved a Resolution of Intent that is required by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) as part of the application process for the anticipated 2025-2026 budget, in the amount of \$401,907. The approved resolution reflected that the City would receive 18% (\$72,343) from Federal Sources, 30.5895% (\$122,941) from state sources. The remaining 51.4105% (\$206,623) would come from local ticket fares (\$58,000), advertisement rentals (\$36,000) and the City’s General Fund (\$112,623) To lower the General Fund contribution and to offset the states decrease in funding from the 24/25 and 25/26 FY a price increase was proposed and approved by the Dial A Ride Local Advisory Committee and the Public Services Committee.

	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
In Town Adults	\$3.50	\$5.00
Senior & Handicap	\$2.00	\$2.50
Children 5-11	\$2.00	\$2.50
Children 0-4	Free w/Adult	Free w/Adult
Students (To/from School)	\$2.00	\$2.50
Out of Town Adults	\$5.00	\$6.00
Seniors and Handicap	\$2.75	\$3.00
Children 5-11	\$2.75 w/Adult	\$3.00 w/Adult
Children 0-4	Free w/Adult	Free w/Adult
Students (To/from School)	\$2.75	\$3.00

Council discussion ensued on loss of state revenue, one way trips, ridership totals and trips out of town.

Motion by Council Member Flynn, seconded by Council Member Stuchell to approve the DART Ridership Fare increase as presented.

Voice vote, approved unanimously.

E. Police Department Purchas of Firearms

Scott Hephner, Police Chief, reported the Police Department requested to purchase handguns for the City’s officers. The handguns would remain department owned and maintained, and all will be the same caliber, make and model. The purchase of 16 Glock pistols and five (5) shotguns along with ammunition in the amount of \$23,546.14 was quoted and presented.

Motion by Council Member Socha, seconded by Council Member Stuchell to approve the Police Department purchase of the handguns, shotguns and ammunition in the amount of \$23,546.14 as presented.

Roll Call:

Councilman Socha	Aye
Councilman Stuchell	Aye
Councilman Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Paladino	Aye
Councilman Bentley	Aye
Councilman Bruns	Aye
Councilman Flynn	Aye
Councilman Morrissey	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

Miscellaneous Reports

A. Proclamations – None

B. Appointment- Officer’s Compensation Board – William Mullaly, Penny Swan, Russell Richardson

Councilman Bentley mentioned that Swan made negative comments previously about Council.

Swan spoke in defense to the comment made.

Motion by Council Member Socha, seconded by Council Member Morrissey to appoint William Mullaly, Penny Swan and Russell Richardson to Officer’s Compensation Board.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Reappointment- Board of Review- Dennis Wainscott

Motion by Council Member Flynn, seconded by Council Member Socha to reappoint Dennis Wainscott to Board of Review.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Other - None

General Public Comment

Shannon Gainer, Ward four (4), thanked Council for approving the Police Department handgun purchases, commented on Hillsdale College purchasing property and taxing it off the tax roll and commented on pavilion rental costs.

Jack McLain, Hillsdale Twp., commented on the minutes and packet information.

City Manager Report

Manager Mackie asked Jason Blake to give a quick update on the downtown snow removal.

Manager Mackie gave information on MDOT Road Diet grant process as it is being submitted. Tentative plans will come back for review once available from MDOT for Council and will have public input then.

Mayor Pro-Tem Paladino asked for the TAP Program grant resolution that was approved by Council in June 2024 to be included in the minutes. Clerk Price placed the resolution on file in the Clerk's office for inspection.

Council discussion ensued on Road Diet plans.

Council Comment

Councilman Flynn asked to see a list of streets that are being proposed in the next five (5) years with Special Assessments, so residents can see the list and start saving for the SAD. Flynn mentioned that he would like to tour some of the City facilities as a Council.

Mayor Pro-Tem Paladino asked Clerk Price to add the Special Assessment revised procedure & policy to the minutes for inspection. Clerk Price placed procedure on file in the Clerk's office.

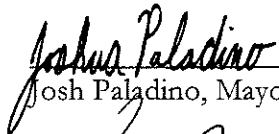
Councilman Bentley asked the attorney about the Mayor Pro-Tem position if Mayor Pro-Tem Paladino wasn't elected Mayor at the election.

Adjournment

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

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting Adjourned at 8:32 p.m.



Josh Paladino, Mayor Pro-Tem



Katy Price, City Clerk