

Council Chambers
Hillsdale City Hall
97 N. Broad St.
Hillsdale, MI 49242
www.cityofhillsdale.org

January 18, 2016
7:00 p.m.
(517)437-6441

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

City of Hillsdale
Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Scott Sessions opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Oaths of Office

City Attorney John Lovinger administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed City Clerk Stephen M. French.

City Clerk French then administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Pro-Tem Patrick Flannery.

Roll Call

Mayor Scott Sessions called the meeting to order.

Councilmembers present:	Scott M. Sessions, Mayor Brian Watkins, Ward 1 Adam Stockford, Ward 1 Timothy Dixon, Ward 2 Bruce Sharp, Ward 3 Emily Stack-Davis, Ward 3 Patrick Flannery, Ward 4 Matthew Bell, Ward 4
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Councilmembers absent:	None
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Also present were: City Manager David Mackie, City Clerk Stephen M. French, City Attorney John Lovinger, Kay Freese (HR), Police Chief Scott Hephner (HCPD), Kevin Lawrence (BPU), Mary Wolfram (HPG), Mike Barber (BPU), Jake Hammel (BPU), Alan Beeker (Planning), Julie Beeker (Treasurer), Dennis Wainscott, Richard Wunsch, Penny Swan, Jason Walters (Patriot Aviation), Ginger Moore (Patriot Aviation), Doug Baker (Patriot Aviation), Sarah Hartzler (South Central Michigan Works), Julie Hales-Smith (MVPC), Eric Moore (Moore Insurance), Jake Hammel (DPS), Jeff King (Aero Data), Kevin Pauken (HCFD), Corey Murray (HDN), and Brian Ricketts.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Council member Watkins, supported by Council member Bell, to approve the January 18, 2016 meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Penny Swan, 205 North Manning, stated that she had attended the Airport Advisory Committee (AAC) meeting and encouraged Council to support the proposed Airport Manager Services contract with Patriot Aviation that had been discussed at the AAC meeting.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Bills from Claims of December 30, 2015: Payroll \$92,501.89; Claims \$68,621.51
- B. Committee Reports: No reports submitted
- C. Council Minutes of January 4, 2016
- D. 2015 Year-End Code Enforcement Report
- E. December 2015 Financial Report

Prior to a vote on the motion, Mayor Sessions noted a typographical correction to the proposed minutes of the January 4, 2016 Council meeting. Mayor Sessions stated a roll call vote within the "Standing Committee" discussion inadvertently omitted Council Member Bell's recorded vote and indicated Council Member Dixon's vote as a "No" vote, when it should have been recorded as a "Yes" vote. The roll call on the motion should read:

Roll call: Councilmembers Bell – no; Stack-Davis – no; Dixon – yes; Flannery – no; Sharp yes; Stockford – yes; Watkins – yes; Mayor Sessions – yes.

Motion by Council Member Watkins, supported by Council Member Bell, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Roll call:	Bell	Yes
	Stack-Davis	Yes
	Dixon	Yes
	Flannery	Yes
	Sharp	Yes
	Stockford	Yes
	Watkins	Yes
	Mayor Sessions	Yes

Motion passed 8-0.

Communications/Petitions

Ms. Marilyn Crowley, Community Assistance Team Specialist with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Department of Talent and Economic Development (TED), provided an update on the “Rising Tides Initiative” and the selection of the City of Hillsdale as a focus community within the program. Ms. Crowley stated the mission of the program was to supply at-risk communities with the tools necessary to design and build a successful, comprehensive economic development plan to ultimately attract business investment and talent to the city.

Ms. Julie Hales Smith, representing the Michigan Vacant Property Campaign (MVPC), presented information on the MVPC program and the resources that would be made available to the City of Hillsdale to be used in conjunction with the “Rising Tides Initiative.” Ms. Hales Smith stated the MVPC would schedule a city-wide site visit in late February 2016, which would be followed by a report provided to city staff of recommendations to address vacancies and blight within the City of Hillsdale.

Ms. Crowley then presented the proposed time-line of the initiative and detailed the quarterly action steps that would include city staff, a steering committee, elected leaders, and other interested stakeholders.

Responding to a question from Council Member Bell, Ms. Crowley discussed why the City of Hillsdale was selected for the program, as well as the benefits for the continued city involvement in the initiative. Ms. Crowley stressed the initiative did not guarantee funding to implement the finalized action steps, but MEDC and TED would provide recommendations and directions in the final report that could direct staff to potential resources including grant opportunities.

Council Member Sharp noted the Land Bank Demolition contained on \$1.0 million of funding, which would have to be utilized throughout the entire State of Michigan. Ms. Crowley noted the Land Bank Demolition fund capped funding at \$200,000 per municipality, while other state programs provided significantly more demolition funding for larger blight abatement projects.

Council Member Stack-Davis questioned if the final action plans would take into account the city’s limited resources in implementing the project recommendations. Ms. Crowley stated the state report would also include items like best practices, grass-root campaigns, and case studies that could be maximize efficiencies in the implementation process.

Introduction and Adoption of Ordinance/Public Hearing

A. Landscape Ordinance Amendments

City Zoning Administrator Alan Becker presented proposed amendments to the city’s landscaping ordinance and corresponding articles. Mr. Becker stated the certification of the city as a “Redevelopment Ready Community” required that the Zoning Ordinance be reviewed and amended, if necessary, to remain current with modern standards. Mr. Becker stated the proposed amendments were recommended for approval by city staff and the Planning Commission. Mr. Becker noted the changes were intended to clarify existing ordinance provisions that were ambiguous, while also including many, new storm water requirements.

Council Members engaged in general discussion regarding the impact of the new landscaping requirements on existing businesses and the additional burdens that would be required of residential property owners. Council Members also debated the specificity of the new landscaping requirements and questioned if the dramatic expansion of the ordinance section would negatively impact future development within the city.

Motion by Council Member Sharp, supported by Council member Flannery, to refer the proposed amendments to the city’s landscaping ordinance and corresponding articles back to the Planning

Commission and to have Council Members provide City Manager Mackie with their recommended changes by the February 1, 2016 Council Meeting.

Roll call:	Bell	Yes
	Stack-Davis	Yes
	Dixon	Yes
	Flannery	Yes
	Sharp	Yes
	Stockford	Yes
	Watkins	No
	Mayor Sessions	No

Motion passed 6-2.

Old Business

A. Airport Manager Search Update.

City Manager David Mackie reported the City of Hillsdale had received three responses from the Request for Proposals (RFP) regarding the Airport Manager Services. City Manager Mackie stated the responses had been reviewed by the Airport Advisory Committee at their Saturday, January 16, 2016 meeting. City Manager Mackie stated Airport Advisory Committee had recommended the three-year service contract be awarded to Patriot Aviation in the total amount of \$116,000.00. City Manager Mackie indicated the management services contract would be included for approval on the February 1, 2016 City Council agenda.

New Business

A. BPU: Sewer Extra Strength Surcharge Rate (Resolution)

BPU Director Mike Barber presented a recommended resolution to increase surcharge rates for commercial users of the city's wastewater system that produced higher-than-domestic strength concentrations for compatible pollutants. Mr. Barber stated the increase in surcharge rates was last addressed by Council in 1992 by Resolution #1145. Mr. Barber reported the increase was aimed to recoup the city's additional costs in treating the wastewater, and not used to punitively punish the affected customers of the system.

Responding to various questions of Council, Mr. Barber stated the utility was in continual contact with non-compliant users of the wastewater system and that the proposed surcharge rate was comparable to other wastewater systems in the area.

Motion by Council Member Stack-Davis, supported by Council Member Watkins, to adopt Resolution 3259 "Sewer Extra Strength Surcharge Service Rate".

Roll call:	Bell	Yes
	Stack-Davis	Yes
	Dixon	Yes
	Flannery	Yes
	Sharp	Yes
	Stockford	Yes
	Watkins	Yes
	Mayor Sessions	Yes

Motion passed 8-0.

B. TCO 2016-1: Stop Sign installed S.W. Corner of Windswept Lane at Hidden Meadows Drive TCO 2016-2: Stop Sign installed N.E. Corner of Foxtail Lane at Hidden Meadows Drive

Chief of Police Scott Hephner presented the recommendations to install stop signs within the Three Meadows subdivision. Chief Hephner stated the new stop signs would benefit the safety of both traffic and pedestrians within the plat, as new home construction had increased traffic volumes in the area.

Motion by Council Member Stack-Davis, supported by Council Member Stockford, to adopt Resolution No. 3260: "Traffic Control Order 2016-01", approving the installation of a stop sign at the S.W. Corner of Windswept Lane at Hidden Meadows Drive.

Roll call:	Bell	Yes
	Stack-Davis	Yes
	Dixon	Yes

Flannery	Yes
Sharp	Yes
Stockford	Yes
Watkins	Yes
Mayor Sessions	Yes

Motion passed 8-0.

Motion by Council Member Stack-Davis, supported by Council Member Stockford, to adopt Resolution No. 3261: "Traffic Control Order 2016-02", approving the installation of a stop sign at the N.E. Corner of Foxtail Lane at Hidden Meadows Drive.

Roll call:	Bell	Yes
	Stack-Davis	Yes
	Dixon	Yes
	Flannery	Yes
	Sharp	Yes
	Stockford	Yes
	Watkins	Yes
	Mayor Sessions	Yes

Motion passed 8-0.

C. 2016-2017 Proposed Budgeting Schedule and Priority Discussion

City Manager Mackie reviewed the proposed budgetary schedule that had been disseminated in the Council packet. City Manager Mackie stated the budgetary worksheets had recently been distributed to City Department Heads and the Council work sessions and budget review with staff had been initially scheduled for April 2016. City Manager Mackie indicated final approval of the budget was set for June 6, 2016.

Council Members Bell and Flannery voiced their recommendation to allocate \$300,000-500,000 in the annual budget for road maintenance and street funding, with the importance of having a balanced annual budget.

D. Council Committee Assignments and the Open Meetings Act

City Attorney Lovinger reviewed his email dated January 5, 2016 regarding the appointment additional members to the advisory committees that was approved at the last Council meeting. Mr. Lovinger stated the appointment of five members to a committee would constitute a quorum of the entire Council, and therefore, the meeting would have to comply with the City Charter and the Open Meetings Act. Mr. Lovinger stated if Council wished to return to the historical number of three members per committee, a motion could be offered to simply rescind the motion adopted at the January 4, 2016 meeting, which increased the membership of the Operations & Governance Committee from three to five members, and added an addition Council Member to the Public Safety and Public Services committees.

Council engaged in general discussion regarding the number of Council Members assigned to each committee, including the benefits and costs associated with the issue.

Motion by Council Member Watkins, supported by Council Member Dixon, to rescind the Council motion approved at the January 4, 2016 meeting, which appointed Council Member Stack-Davis to the Public Safety Committee, Councilmember Flannery to the Public Services Committee, and Council Members Stack-Davis and Bell to the Operations & Governance Committee.

Roll call:	Bell	No
	Stack-Davis	No
	Dixon	Yes
	Flannery	No
	Sharp	Yes
	Stockford	Yes
	Watkins	Yes
	Mayor Sessions	Yes

Motion passed 5-3.

Miscellaneous

Appointments:

Motion by Council Member Bell, supported by Council Member Sharp, to approve the appointment of Mr. Richard Curtis to Zoning Board of Appeals for a 3 year term ending November 2018. Motion passed unanimously.

Information Only:

Police Chief Hephner provided a report that detailed the number of deer harvested within the City of Hillsdale during the 2015 approved hunt. Chief Hephner stated a total of 24 deer had been taken, including 15 does and 9 bucks.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Mackie stated the next Council packets would be disseminated on Wednesday, January 27, 2015 in anticipation of the February 1st Council meeting.

General Public Comment

Mr. Brian Ricketts, 130 North West Street, questioned a delinquent tax bill he had received in regards to a former business he had operated within the city. City Manager Mackie stated he would have the City Treasurer communicate with Mr. Ricketts regarding this matter.

Mr. Richard Wunsch, 98 ½ North Broad Street, encouraged the Council Members not to adopt zoning ordinances which placed additional zoning restrictions and burdens on property owners.

Fire Chief Kevin Pauken reported a new utility vehicle had been purchased by the department and invited everyone to visit the station to inspect the new equipment.

Mr. Dennis Wainscott, 34 Garden St., discussed the need for city crews to clear snow and other debris near the curb line in the interest of public safety.

Mr. Jeff King voiced support for the proposal offered by Patriot Aviation for the Airport Manager Services contract. Mr. King also discussed the requirements of the Open Meetings Act and noted the intent of the law was established as a base minimum, and that the law allowed public bodies to exceed the basic requirements of the act in an effort to increase transparency.

Council Comments

Council Member Bell noted the importance of citizen comments at the beginning and the near end, of the Council meetings. Council Member Bell also voiced his objection to the reduction of Council Members assigned to each of the committees.

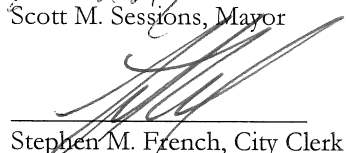
Council Member Sharp voiced his support for the work performed by the City Manager and objected to a recent newspaper comment which labeled the City Manager as "corrupt". Council Member Sharp noted the important questions asked by Council and acknowledged the important discussions and opinions expressed by each Council Member.

Adjournment

Motion by Council Member Bell, supported by Council Member Stockford, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.


Scott M. Sessions, Mayor


Stephen M. French, City Clerk