

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

City of Hillsdale
 December 5, 2016
 7:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

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

Roll Call

Mayor Scott Sessions called the meeting to order.

Council Members present:	Scott M. Sessions, Mayor Adam Stockford, Ward 1 Brian Watkins, Ward 1 Timothy Dixon, Ward 2 William Morrissey, Ward 2 Bruce Sharp, Ward 3 William Zeiser, Ward 3 *Matthew Bell, Ward 4 Patrick Flannery, Ward 4
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Council Members absent:	None
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Also present were: City Clerk Stephen M. French, City Attorney John Lovinger, City Attorney Tom Thompson, Kay Freese (HR), Scott Hephner (HCPD/HCFD), Jake Hammel (DPS), Mike Barber (BPU), Chris McArthur (BPU), Kim Thomas (Assessor), Corey Murray (Hillsdale Daily News), Greg Kurtz, Joseph Hendee, Penny Swan, Jerry Wertz, Ray Briner, and Dennis Wainscott.

Council Member Excused

Mayor Sessions stated he had received notice from Council Member Bell indicating he would not be able to attend the meeting due to a work obligation.

Council Member Zeiser, seconded by Council Member Watkins, moved to excuse the absence of Council Member Bell from the meeting. By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

*Council Member Bell arrived at 7:03 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Council Member Watkins, seconded by Council Member Flannery, moved to approve the December 5, 2016 agenda as presented. By a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Bills
 - 1. City Claims of December 2, 2016: \$144,994.97
 - 2. Payroll of December 1, 2016: \$137,985.96
- B. City Council Minutes of November 21, 2016
- C. Hillsdale Policy Group – November 2016 Monthly Report

Council Member Flannery, seconded by Council Member Morrissey, moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye
	Council Member Flannery	Aye
	Council Member Morrissey	Aye
	Council Member Sharp	Aye
	Council Member Stockford	Aye
	Council Member Watkins	Aye
	Council Member Zeiser	Aye
	Mayor Sessions	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

Communications/Petitions

There were no Communications/Petitions on the agenda.

Introduction and Adoption of Ordinance/Public Hearing

There were no Ordinances or Public Hearings on the agenda.

Unfinished Business

There was no Unfinished Business on the agenda.

Old Business

- A. Action Plan: Seven Month Review

Chief Hephner reviewed the most recent update to the City's Action Plan that included:

1. The funding for the purchase of a new drinking fountain at Fields of Dreams had been secured and the installation of the fountain would be completed during the spring of 2017
2. Discussions with Council about workforce development issues had been moved to March 2017 to determine more specific parameters for the discussion
3. The contract for the installation of a new apron at the airport would be re-bid in January 2017, while the city maintained funding for the project through the State of Michigan.
4. Plans to hold quarterly meetings with Council, staff, and board/commission members were continuing
5. A needs assessment for a Structural Engineer were being reviewed by city staff.
6. The City Manager continued to communicate with existing business groups in the downtown area to promote special events and activities.

New Business

A. Land Division Application – 25 Fayette Street and 19 McClellan Street

City Assessor Thomas presented a Land Division Application from The David W. Yanakeff Trust No. 1 to divide city lot 30-006-222-453-12 into two, separate lots. Ms. Thomas explained the existing parcel had two homes on a single lot, and the owner was attempting to sell one of the homes; however, the prospective buyer was unable to secure funding for the purchase without first having the lot split.

Council Member Bell questioned if city staff had received any communications from adjacent property owners. Assessor Thomas stated the city had not received any objections from residents in regards to this request. Assessor Thomas further noted the newly created lot line had been placed at an equal distance from both homes, which created a 22 foot setback for both homes from the new property boundary.

Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Watkins, moved to approve the Land Division Application from The David W. Yanakeff Trust No. 1 dated November 10, 2016 as submitted.

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye
	Council Member Flannery	Aye
	Council Member Morrissey	Aye
	Council Member Sharp	Aye
	Council Member Stockford	Aye
	Council Member Watkins	Aye
	Council Member Zeiser	Aye
	Mayor Sessions	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

Miscellaneous

A. Board & Committee Appointments

Council Member Stockford requested future appointment recommendations utilize the city's committee application form, and not submitted via resume or letter of interest.

Council Member Flannery, seconded by Council Member Bell, moved to approve the following appointments:

1. Re-appointment of Mr. Steve Stoll to the IPMC Boards of Appeals
2. Re-appointment of Mr. David Foulke to the IPMC Boards of Appeals
3. Appointment of Mr. Quinton Lockwood to the Airport Advisory Committee

By a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

C. Hillsdale Police Department's 3rd Quarter Report & Stats for 2016

The report was received by Council for informational purposes.

General Public Comment

Mr. Greg Kurtz, 151 Westwood Drive, discussed on-going issues with water main breaks in his neighborhood and the poor condition of city streets. Mr. Kurtz encouraged the City Council to approve a third, leaf pick-up due to the large amount of leaves that were left uncollected after an unseasonably warm fall.

Mr. Joseph Hendee, 181 Rea, discussed the lawsuit of Dawn Townley v City Council for the City of Hillsdale, Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities et. al. and the embezzlement allegations that were made in the plaintiff's complaint. Mr. Hendee encouraged the city to hire a public relations firm to protect the city's image during this process.

Ms. Penny Swan, 192 South West Street, argued it was unacceptable for the Council to remain quiet on the allegations of the Townley lawsuit. Ms. Swan stated the Council needed to publically address the embezzlement allegations that had been asserted in the lawsuit.

Mr. Jerry Wentz, 22 Westwood Street, discussed the desperate need for an additional leaf pick-up throughout the city. Mr. Wentz noted there was a burned out home on Westwood Drive that needed to be razed, while the city seemed to concentrate their attention on other, minor zoning violations on the neighboring homes. Mr. Wentz also discussed the need for road repairs and traffic enforcement throughout his neighborhood.

Attorney Lovinger discussed the absolute need for City Council and staff to not publically comment or debate the claims of the lawsuit that had been discussed. Attorney Lovinger noted the city would vigorously defend itself from the allegations made in the lawsuit, beginning with a legal response of the complaint that would be filed with the court in the near future.

Council Comments

Council Member Sharp noted the poor conditions of the city streets and the on-going discussions of the Funding Alternatives Identification & Recommendation (F.A.I.R.) Committee to determine the best funding methods for these improvements. Council Member Sharp also discussed the large amounts of leaves that remained uncollected by city staff and the staff report that had been presented at the November 21, 2016 Council Meeting on the subject.

Council Member Bell voiced support for the comments offered by Council Member Sharp on the leaf collection issues and the status of the city's roads. Council Member Bell discussed the need for the city to prepare the equipment for snow removal that was utilized during the past weekend and voiced support for the leadership of DPS Director Jake Hammel.

Council Member Zeiser agreed with all of the comments made by Council Members Sharp and Bell and discussed the need to delay leaf pick-up in 2017 to mid-November and December. Council Member Zeiser also noted engineered drawings for the reconstruction of Westwood Drive were being developed by city staff for future grant opportunities. Council Member Zeiser thanked all of the residents who attended the meeting and brought forward their concerns about the city.

Council Member Stockford also thanked the many residents who attended and spoke at the Council meeting. Council Member Stockford discussed the need to protect the city during an on-going civil litigation and the requisite for Council to follow the attorney's directives during the process.

Council Member Watkins discussed the large amount of leaves that had been left in the public rights-of-way and informed residents the leaves could not be left on the terrace or on the curb. Council Member Watkins reported property owners who left leaf piles at the curb or on the terrace after the final pick up of the season, would be asked to move them or be cited. Council Member Watkins noted the importance of removing the leaves from the right of way to keep the storm sewers from becoming clogged and flooding the streets.

Mayor Sessions thanked Council for the proactive discussions that were held during the meeting and for the informative public comments that were offered. Mayor Sessions discussed the upcoming Mayor's Reception scheduled for December 19, 2016 from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Mayor Sessions also commended those involved with the Parade of Lights event that was held on December 3, 2016 in Downtown Hillsdale. Mayor Sessions reiterated the extended hours of the city's compost site where residents could dispose of remaining leaves and brush at no charge. Mayor Sessions finalized his comments by encouraging public participation with the Rising Tides Initiative that included a public meeting for all residents on Monday, December 12, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

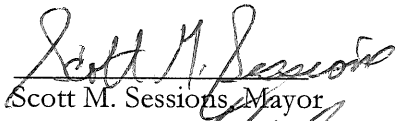
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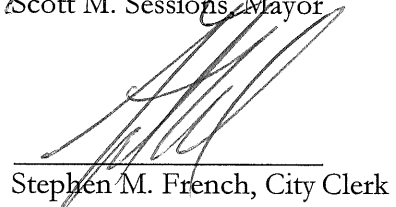
City Council Minutes

Adjournment

Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Watkins, moved to adjourn the meeting. By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.


Scott M. Sessions, Mayor


Stephen M. French, City Clerk