

**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

City of Hillsdale  
 Council Chambers  
 December 18, 2017  
 7:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

**Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Adam Stockford opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

Mayor Adam Stockford called the meeting to order.

Council Members present:	Adam Stockford, Mayor R. Gregory Stuchell, 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 Raymond Briner, Ward 4
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Council Members absent:	None
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Also present were: City Manager David Mackie, City Clerk Stephen M. French, City Attorney John Lovinger, Scott Hephner (HCPD & HCFD), Mark Hawkins (HCFD), Jake Hammel (DPS), Chris McArthur (BPU), Alan Becker (Zoning), Mary Hill (Library), Ginger Moore (Airport), Scott Curry (Airport), Corey Murray (Hillsdale Daily News), Vernon Tritchka, Peter Merritt, James Galloway, Pam Tippner, Dan Tippner, Ted Jansen, Dennis Wainscott, and Penny Swan.

**Approval of Agenda**

The December 18, 2017 agenda was approved as presented by a unanimous voice vote.

**Public Comment**

Mr. James Galloway, 9 North Street, discussed the Pledge of Allegiance and an apparent loophole in the Council rules that would allow residents to comment on any issue that had been raised within the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Galloway also discussed the city's leaf collection practices and the need for proper drainage on city streets.

Ms. Penny Swan, 192 South West Street, voiced support for the recommendations from the Public Safety Committee to purchase a replacement ladder truck for the fire department.

Mr. Ted Jansen, 104 Hillsdale Street, also voiced support for the purchase of a replacement ladder truck for the fire department. Mr. Jansen also voiced support for holding a special election in May 2018 for a 1-mil additional tax levy for future capital purchases for the fire department.

Mr. Jack McLain, 1445 South Bunn Road, questioned the recommended appointee to the Housing Commission was a city resident or lived in the City of Pittsford. Mr. McLain also questioned if the Council had adequate time to review the meeting packet for each meeting and encouraged the Council should table action items on the agenda if questions remained on certain issues.

**Consent Agenda**

- A. Approval of Bills
  - 1. City Claims of November 30, 2017: \$142,338.24
  - 2. BPU Claims of November 30, 2017: \$136,504.83
  - 3. BPU – Sewer Dept. Claims of November 30, 2017: \$791,758.13
  - 4. Payroll of November 21, 2017: \$41,108.32 (Longevity)  
Payroll of November 30, 2017: \$161,654.54  
Payroll of December 14, 2017: \$155,314.39
- B. City Council Minutes of December 4, 2017 Regular Meeting
- C. November 2017 Code Enforcement Report
- D. Public Safety Committee Minutes
  - 1. November 27, 2017
  - 2. December 12, 2017

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

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Briner	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye
	Council Member Morrissey	Aye
	Council Member Sharp	Aye
	Council Member Stuchell	Aye
	Council Member Watkins	Aye
	Council Member Zeiser	Aye
	Mayor Stockford	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

**Communications/Petitions**

- A. Hillsdale County Community Foundation Grant Award Notices
  - 1. Hillsdale Community Library
  - 2. Hillsdale Recreation Department

City Manager Mackie announced the city had recently received two grant awards from the Hillsdale County Community Foundation. The first grant totaled \$4,502.44 and would fund new equipment for the Early Literacy Center in the Children's Services Area at the library. City Manager Mackie reported the second grant totaled \$9,134.00 and would fund the construction of a new equipment storage building at Fields of Dreams.

- B. Waste Water Treatment Plant Update
- C. Joint Biennial Renewable Energy Plan Filing

Each plan was received from the BPU for informational purposes only.

**Introduction and Adoption of Ordinance/Public Hearing**

There were no ordinances or public hearings on the meeting agenda.

**Unfinished Business**

There were no unfinished business items on the meeting agenda.

**Old Business**

## A. Public Safety Committee Recommendation re: Fire Department

Council Member Watkins reviewed the Public Safety Committee's discussions and recommendations concerning the need to replace the fire department's ladder truck and vehicle exhaust evacuation system in the fire station. Council Member Watkins reported the committee had recommended the funding for the capital purchases be paid from the \$300,000 set aside from the PILOT (payment-in-lieu of taxes) from the BPU for street projects included within the 2017-2018 city budget. Council Member Watkins stated additional discussions could be held in regards to referendum that would propose a 1-mil tax increase that would a long-term solution and provide dedicated funding for future fire department capital purchases.

Council Member Sharp noted there were many tall buildings located throughout the city which necessitated the city's fire department have an available ladder truck. Council Member Sharp stated the nearest ladder trucks for mutual aid were located in Litchfield and Coldwater, which would require a 30-minute response time from those cities. Council Member Sharp also noted the proposed purchases for the fire department would not impact the funding for the Garden-Vine-Mead-Rippon infrastructure replacement project scheduled in 2018.

Council Member Stuchell noted Council had established street improvement and public safety as the highest priorities for the FY2018 budget, but had not followed those priorities with recent funding allocations, including the recent purchase of two hangars at the airport and the construction of a new apron at the airport. Council Member Stuchell stated the city funds used for recent airport improvements could have paid for the purchase of the ladder truck and vehicle exhaust removal system.

Council Member Bell argued the public's safety should always have the highest priority for Council. Council Member Bell argued the request for a 1-mil tax increase would be an embarrassment for the city, in lieu of recent pay increases and other expenditures that had been endorsed by the Council. Council Member Bell encouraged the city to set aside an existing 1-mil of tax revenue for future capital purchases for the fire department.

City Manager Mackie noted a 1-mil tax levy would equate to approximately \$122,000 in additional revenue per year. City Manager Mackie reported a new ladder truck would cost in excess of \$1.0 million, while a quality, used ladder truck could be purchased for approximately \$250,000. City Manager Mackie discussed on-going capital needs of other departments, including DPS trucks and the city's computer hardware needs.

Council Member Morrissey recommended Council conduct a public hearing to receive citizen comment and feedback on funding alternatives for capital improvement needs of the fire department.

Mayor Stockford stated additional funding could be received from an increased PILOT contribution from the BPU. Mayor Stockford requested if the PILOT from the BPU could be increased without violating legal or ethical bounds.

City Attorney Lovinger stated he could review any legal restrictions on increasing the PILOT percentage or any maximum levels placed on PILOT payments. City Attorney Lovinger spoke on the importance of adequately funding the BPU to meet the minimum funding necessary for the utility to provide timely and economic service to its customers. City Attorney Lovinger stated the city could also look into installment purchase agreements for used fire trucks, similar to the installment agreements that are available from manufacturers of new fire trucks.

Council Member Bell questioned if city staff had a specific ladder truck selected for purchase. Chief Hephner reported the department did not have a specific truck, but had looked at a variety of ladder trucks in a specific price range and model year. Chief Hephner noted the term "ladder truck" could include any number of specific fire truck models that included platform ladder trucks and ladder trucks without a bucket that may or may not have integrated water suppression capabilities. Chief Hephner reported that a \$250,000 allocation would allow the city to purchase a ladder truck that was most likely 10-12 years old.

Council Member Watkins stressed the need for the immediate purchase of a replacement ladder truck, as well as an approved, long-term plan for future capital purchases for the fire department in future years.

Mayor Stockford reported Council and staff would have a special meeting in early 2018 to develop priorities and goals for the future, as well as discussion to review the need for regular work sessions to allow Council to discuss a variety of concerns.

Responding to a question from Council Member Bell, Chief Hephner reported the old ladder truck had very little value, due to the numerous, expensive repairs that would be required for safe operation. Chief Hephner reported the reserve fire engine that was recently sold via on-line auction sold for \$3,152, approximately twice the scrap metal value of the engine.

Chief Hephner provided additional information on the proposed installation of a new exhaust extrication system in the station, which would eliminate the engine exhaust from the station while the apparatus is running. Chief Hephner stated the current system was installed in 1996 and was no longer in operating condition.

Council Member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Watkins, moved to allocate \$300,000.00 to purchase a quality, used ladder truck for the fire department and to purchase a vehicle exhaust extrication and removal system in the station to be funded from the BPU's PILOT (payment-in-lieu of taxes) for street projects included within the 2017-2018 city budget.

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Briner	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye
	Council Member Morrissey	Aye
	Council Member Sharp	Aye
	Council Member Stuchell	Aye
	Council Member Watkins	Aye
	Council Member Zeiser	Aye
	Mayor Stockford	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Watkins, moved to schedule a public hearing for January 15, 2018 to receive citizen comments on public safety funding options.

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Briner	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye
	Council Member Morrissey	Aye
	Council Member Sharp	Aye
	Council Member Stuchell	Aye
	Council Member Watkins	Aye
	Council Member Zeiser	Aye
	Mayor Stockford	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

### New Business

#### A. City Council and Board/Commission Meeting Dates for 2018

Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Morrissey, moved to approve the City Council and Board/Commission Meeting Dates for 2018 as presented.

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Briner	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye

Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Watkins	Aye
Council Member Zeiser	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

B. Poverty Exemption Guidelines for 2018

Council received the guidelines for review and by consensus, determined to maintain the existing property exemption guidelines for 2018.

C. Appointment of Chris McArthur as Hillsdale BPU Interim Director

City Manager Mackie reported the BPU Personnel Committee and BPU Board, had recommended the appointment of Mr. Chris McArthur as Hillsdale BPU Interim Director following the retirement of Mr. Mike Barber.

Council Member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Briner, moved to appoint Mr. Chris McArthur as Hillsdale BPU Interim Director.

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Briner	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye
	Council Member Morrissey	Aye
	Council Member Sharp	Aye
	Council Member Stuchell	Aye
	Council Member Watkins	Aye
	Council Member Zeiser	Aye
	Mayor Stockford	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

D. MDOT Aero Reimbursement Contract

City Manager Mackie reviewed the proposed MDOT contract that would finalize the city's reimbursement for the airport apron construction project that had been completed. City Manager Mackie stated the city would receive \$112,027 in reimbursement from MDOT Aero based on the final costs of the airport apron and taxiway projects.

Responding to a question from Council Member Bell, City Manager Mackie stated the reimbursement funds would be used towards the purchase of two, privately owned hangars at the airport that had been discussed at the two most recent Council meetings.

Council Member Stuchell questioned if funding had been secured for the construction of a new terminal at the airport. City Manager Mackie noted MDOT funding could not be used for terminal construction and would have to be constructed without grant funding from the state or federal governments. City Manager Mackie reported the 2019 capital plan included the construction of a new fueling center at the airport near the new apron, while the 2020 plans involved the demolition of the existing fueling center and existing terminal.

Council Member Watkins, seconded by Council Member Dixon, moved to approve MDOT Contract No. 2018-0167 and authorize Mayor Stockford to sign the document on behalf of the city.

Roll call:	Council Member Bell	Aye
	Council Member Briner	Aye
	Council Member Dixon	Aye
	Council Member Morrissey	Aye
	Council Member Sharp	Aye
	Council Member Stuchell	Aye
	Council Member Watkins	Aye
	Council Member Zeiser	Aye
	Mayor Stockford	Aye

Motion passed 9-0.

### Miscellaneous Reports

#### A. Appointment of Ms. Maxine Vanlerberg to the Hillsdale Housing Commission

Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Watkins, moved to appoint Ms. Maxine Vanlerberg to the Hillsdale Housing Commission. By a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

### City Manager's Report

City Manager Mackie:

1. Reported the 425 Agreement had been finalized with Fayette Township for the property on M-99 that had been proposed for a new Meijer store location. City Manager Mackie thanked City Attorney Lovinger for his involvement and efforts in regards to this issue. City Manager Mackie stated the city and Meijer continued to work on the development agreement for the water main construction that was necessary for the project.
2. Discussed the list of DPS equipment that had been distributed to Council prior to the meeting and noted the deteriorating condition of many, vital pieces of equipment utilized by the department.
3. Reminded everyone of the special Council meeting scheduled for January 10, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. to finalize the branding program for the city.
4. Reported the bid documents for the Garden-Vine-Mead-Rippon infrastructure replacement project would be released in January 2018 with bids anticipated to be received in February.
5. Reported the issues involving the city's computer infrastructure was being reviewed, while funding had been included in the FY2018 for hardware upgrades.
6. Reported Hillsdale College had initiated a marketing survey to gauge the college's involvement in the greater Hillsdale community.
7. Announced the winners of the Christmas light awards for 2017. The winners were:
  - a. Residential
    - 1) 107 S. Howell
    - 2) 6 E. Lynwood
    - 3) 1255 Hideaway Lane
  - b. Business
    - 1) 75 N. Howell
    - 2) 106 N. Broad
    - 3) 30 N. Howell
8. Reported that with the interest in the Christmas light awards, the city's Facebook page had increased to over 2,000 followers.

Council Member Bell requested city staff not use the new, proposed city logo until Council provided final approval of the design, to reduce potential confusion on the issue.

### **General Public Comment**

Mr. Dennis Wainscott, 34 Garden Street, encouraged the city to request a PILOT from Hillsdale College and Hillsdale Hospital to provide new revenue sources to the city for necessary repairs and purchases. Mr. Wainscott also argued the increase of BPU rates was no different than increasing property taxes to city residents.

Mr. Peter Merrit, 25 Sumac Drive, questioned when the fiscal audits for the BPU and city would be available for public inspection.

Ms. Penny Swan also encouraged the city to request a PILOT from Hillsdale College for additional revenue to the city.

Mr. Ted Jansen thanked Council for approving the purchase of the ladder truck for the fire department. Mr. Jansen also provided information on the necessity to purchase the privately owned hangars at the airport and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) specifics for the facility.

Mr. James Galloway discussed the possibility of private citizens donating funds for the purchase of the ladder truck. Mr. Galloway also noted the new fire truck could be used to complete the leaf collection process by cleaning the streets of any remaining leaves to help improve draining on city streets.

Mr. Ted Jansen also noted there had been potential development for the Keefer House. Mr. Jansen also encouraged the Council to adopt the city motto of "Cherishing the Past, Embracing the Future."

Mr. Jack McLain, 1445 S. Bunn Road, argued the city should not assume new programs for the Dawn Theater would not affect the programming at the Sauk Theater in Jonesville. Mr. McLain noted the Sauk Theater had a tremendous, economic effect on the City of Jonesville.

### **Council Comments**

Council Member Watkins questioned if the sidewalk between Wolcott Street to the county park would remain closed throughout the winter. City Manager Mackie stated the city had closed the sidewalk due to limited use and liability concerns during the winter months.

Council Member Sharp stated the city could ask other businesses in the city for financial assistance, not only requesting PILOT assistance from Hillsdale College. Council Member Sharp stated the college was a valuable member of the community and the city should not expect the college to voluntarily agree to a PILOT agreement.

Council Member Morrissey questioned when the BPU and city audits would be presented to Council for review. City Manager Mackie stated the BPU audit was presented to the board on December 12, 2017, while the audit for the city would be presented to Council at the January 15, 2018 meeting. Council Member Morrissey encouraged the City Council to hold a work session or retreat at the airport in the coming months to view the on-going improvements at the site.

Council Member Bell discussed the spending priorities of the Council and noted many capital purchases could be labeled as an emergency purchase. Council Member Bell also stated existing city services may need to be changed or ended in order to adequately fund needed capital purchases. Council Member Bell discussed the statements made about the PILOT agreement with Hillsdale College and noted many college employees lived in the city and made a positive economic effect on the community.

Council Member Watkins thanked City Manager Mackie and City Attorney Lovinger for their leadership with the 425 Agreement and proposed Meijer development.

Council Member Zeiser discussed the new Meijer development and the economic impact of the future developments on the site. Council Member Zeiser voiced concern at comments regarding PILOT payments from Hillsdale College and stated many municipalities experienced revenue shortages due to a large number of non-profit entities located within their boundaries. Council Member Zeiser noted the tremendous economic impact of Hillsdale College on the City of Hillsdale and surrounding areas.

Mayor Stockford announced that he would be opening an office in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor at City Hall that could be used by any Council Members to conduct city business. Mayor Stockford stated his intention was to more accessible to the public and to foster a more cohesive experience with city staff and City Council.

### 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 8:51 p.m.



Adam L. Stockford, Mayor



Stephen M. French, City Clerk