

**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

City of Hillsdale  
September 7, 2021  
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. Clerk Price took roll call.

Council Members present: Adam Stockford, Mayor  
R Greg Stuchell, Ward 1  
Anthony Vear, Ward 1  
William Morrissey, Ward 2  
Bruce Sharp, Ward 3  
Bill Zeiser, Ward 3  
Raymond Briner, Ward 4  
Robert Socha, Ward 4

Council Members absent: Pratt

Also Present: David Mackie (City Manager), Attorney Tom Thompson, Katy Price (City Clerk), Scott Hephner (HCPD/HCFD), Jake Hammel (DPS Director), Alan Becker (Zoning), Penny Swan, Jack McClain, Rachel Cram, Josh Hypes, Ken Burtram, Stephen Hollister, Aston Cramer, Margot Games, Aries, Jordan Benzing and Corey Murray (HDN).

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Council Member Morrissey, seconded by Council Member Vear approve the agenda as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

Jack McClain, Hillsdale Twp, commented on the proposed EDC appointment of Sam Waldvogel.

**Consent Agenda**

- A. Approval of Bills
  - 1. City and BPU Claims of August 19, 2021: \$533,740.74
  - 2. Payroll of August 19, 2021: \$129,146.47
- B. City Council Minutes of August 16, 2021
- C. Planning Commission Minutes of June 30, 2021
- D. Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Minutes of October 29, 2020
- E. EDC Minutes of June 17, 2021
- F. EDC Three Meadows Committee Minutes of June 30, 2021
- G. EDC Manufacturing & Technology Park Committee Minutes of July 21, 2021
- H. Hospital Finance Authority Minutes of September 1, 2021
- I. Faith Covenant Bible Church Use Agreement – Ratification of Signatures
- J. Latimer Use Agreement – Owen Memorial Park
- K. Fair Parade – Right of Way Use Permit/Traffic Control Order

Motion by Council Member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Morrisey to approve the Consent agenda as presented.

Roll call:

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Council Member Vear     | Aye |
| Council Member Briner   | Aye |
| Council Member Sharp    | Aye |
| Council Member Stuchell | Aye |
| Mayor Stockford         | Aye |
| Council Member Socha    | Aye |
| Council Member Zeiser   | Aye |
| Council Member Morrisey | Aye |

Motion passed 8-0.

**Communications/Petitions**

- A. Certificate of Appreciation: Fire Captain Steven McDowell
- B. Art Around Town: September 18, 2021
- C. Vear Email on Streets Improvement Project
- D. Fall 2021 City Newsletter

All items presented for the purpose of information only.

**Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearings**

None

**Old Business**

- A Road Projects Verbal Update- Jake Hammel

Jake Hammel (Public Service Director) gave a street project report. Hammel stated the Elm Ct. BPU water and sewer main restoration project has been completed. All three special assessment district street projects have been completed.

He mentioned that the transfer station steel structure is onsite. Project is moving along quite well. Concrete is down and will start to build the building in a few weeks, anticipated completion time is beginning of October 2021.

Hammel reported on storm damage 65% of brush collection is completed, crews will continue to work on it until it is finalized. He also spoke on the leaf collection equipment and thanked Defiance, OH for their help in showing the department how to train and operate the new machinery.

No action taken.

**New Business**

- A. City of Hillsdale Master Plan 2021

Alan Beeker (Planning/Zoning Administrator) reported in accordance with P.A. 33 of 2008, the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission is required to amend the city’s master plan every five years. With the limitations of 2020, the amendment was not completed by the end of 2020 as planned. After reviewing the existing document, the Planning Commission decided that a much more in-depth revision was required. The Planning Commission has presented the amended Master Plan at a public hearing held on August 18, 2021.

Motion by Council Member Socha, seconded by Council Member Morrisey to approve the City of Hillsdale’s Master Plan 2021. **Resolution # 3468.**

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**B. NEZ Tax Exemption Certificate – Hillsdale County ISD**

David Mackie (City Manager) reported the Clerk received an application for a Neighborhood Enterprise Zone New Facility Tax Exemption Certificate from Hillsdale County Intermediate School District on August 13, 2021. The proposed project at 12 Windswept Lane will be based on a similar design of previous projects. The ISD is estimating the cost at \$280,000 and plan to complete the project in 2 years.

The EDC Board reviewed the application and recommends approval for 10 years as requested.

Motion by Council Member Zeiser, seconded by Council Member Stuchell to approve the NEZ Tax Exemption Certificate to the Hillsdale County ISD for the 10 year period. **Resolution #3469.**

Roll call:

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Council Member Vear     | Aye |
| Council Member Briner   | Aye |
| Council Member Sharp    | Aye |
| Council Member Stuchell | Aye |
| Mayor Stockford         | Aye |
| Council Member Socha    | Aye |
| Council Member Morrisey | Aye |
| Council Member Zeiser   | Aye |

Motion passed 8-0.

**C. Set Public Hearing for IFT Tax Exemption Certificate – 190 Uran St.**

City Manager Mackie stated DDP Specialty Electronic Materials US, Inc. has submitted an application for an Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption Certificate for their expansion project, started May 24, 2021 with a projected end date of November 19, 2021. The total cost of the building and improvements reported by the applicant is \$1,017,786. Stated Council needs to set a public hearing for the request.

Ken from DDP stated the plant plan on expanding and increasing job force by 12 full time jobs.

Motion by Council Member Socha, seconded by Council Member Vear to set public hearing for September 20, 2021 for the IFT tax exemption certificate request from DDP (DuPont) located at 190 Uran St.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**D. Keefer House Hotel Use and Easement Agreement**

Alan Beeker (Planning/Zoning Administrator) stated that means of access to the lower level of the Keefer House Hotel is by way of a staircase along the north side of the building. That staircase is located within the North Street right-of-way. Keefer House Hotel, LLC, owner of the Keefer House Hotel is requesting a use and easement agreement with the City to keep, maintain and use the existing staircase into perpetuity. The staircase was built with the original building over 100 years ago.

Motion by Council Member Socha, seconded by Council Member Stuchell to approve the Use and Easement Agreement as presented between the City of Hillsdale and Keefer House Hotel, LLC.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

E. Hospital Finance Authority Dissolution

David Mackie (City Manager) reported that the Hospital Finance Authority has not been engaged in any activity for a period in excess of ten (10) years and is no longer needed. The Authority met on September 1, 2021 to agree to dissolve the authority but resolution.

Mayor Stockford mentioned that he thought the authority had been dissolved last year. Mr. Mackie stated that it was on hold because of Covid as many things had been.

Motion by Council Member Sharp, seconded by Council Member Socha to dissolve the Hospital Finance Authority. **Resolution #3470.**

Roll call:

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Council Member Vear      | Aye |
| Council Member Briner    | Aye |
| Council Member Sharp     | Aye |
| Council Member Stuchell  | Aye |
| Mayor Stockford          | Aye |
| Council Member Socha     | Aye |
| Council Member Morrissey | Aye |
| Council Member Zeiser    | Aye |

Motion passed 8-0.

F. Joint City Manager/BPU Director Appointment

City Manager Mackie reported upon passing the road millage and preparing this year's budget an unknown situation was exposed that will require the City to find cost savings within the General Fund to the tune of about \$150,000. This year we are using excess General Fund reserves to close this gap but staff believes it's important to address this matter sooner, rather than later, to come up with a solution.

One solution staff brought forward to address part of this gap is having the Mayor and Council appoint the current City Manager to both the City Manager and BPU Director positions with the current BPU Director moving to the open Electric Superintendent position. This decision would allow the City's General Fund to split the City Manager's wages with the BPU, thus helping to close the gap discussed above.

Currently, the matter rests with the O&G Committee. O&G plans to discuss the matter in greater detail, as it would require a new contract for the City Manager, toward the end of September. Normally, the City Manager and BPU Board would select the BPU Director. The O&G Committee might want to invite a representative or two from the BPU Board to participate in their discussions.

Mayor Stockford stated that the City is doing more with less. Combining the positions would help save tax payers money.

Council Member Sharp stated that the O& G plans on meeting to discuss the appointment details further as well as compensation.

Council Member Vear commented that on the BPU side they are down one position currently, so filling the electric superintendent with McArthur would create a savings on both ends.

Mayor Stockford commented that he spoke with BPU Director McArthur and he is on board with moving over to the electric superintendent position.

Further Council discussion ensued.

No action taken.

**Miscellaneous Reports**

A. Proclamation – None

B. Appointments—Sam Waldvogel – EDC, Rachel Lott – EDC (Reappointment)

Motion by Council Member Briner, seconded by Council Member Sharp to approve the appointments as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Other – None

**General Public Comment**

Jack McClain, Hillsdale Twp, commented on property on South Street by Stock’s Park. McClain asked about the TIFA audits, he isn’t able to find any past 2019. He asked the Mayor if he could hand out something to Council and went over to Council Member Stuchell and gave him an envelope and stated he was served.

Boy Scout Troop were in attendance.

Jordan Benzing, Adams Twp, commented on the local Boy Scout troop history as he is scout master. Troop is doing citizenship in the community.

**City Manager’s Report**

Manager Mackie reported the city’s application has been approved for the American Act Rescue Funds. City is expected to receive half of the \$837,000.00 in October.

The City received a \$100,000.00 grant to repave Uran Street scheduled for next year.

The American Legion commemorating 9/11 with a ceremony on Saturday, 9/11/21.

The Patriot Fly-in will be held at the Municipal Airport on Sunday, 9/12/21.

**Council Comments**

Mayor Stockford commented on the homeless in downtown. He mentioned council should figure out a way to address that. Stockford stated there should be away to not violate civil liberties but not allow people to sleep on benches downtown.

Further Council discussion ensued.

Council Member Socha had questions for the attorney as certain legislation has been deemed as unconstitutional.

Attorney Thompson addressed Council Member Socha’s questions.

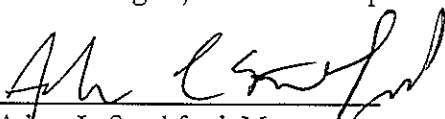
Council Member Socha exerted his frustrations on the vagrant issue the city currently has.

**Adjournment**

Council Member Sharp, seconded by Mayor Stockford moved to adjourn the meeting.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

  
Adam L. Stockford, Mayor

  
Katy Price, City Clerk