

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

City of Hillsdale
December 18, 2023
7:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Stockford opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Mayor Stockford called the meeting to order. Clerk Price took roll call.

Council Members present: Adam Stockford, Mayor
Anthony Vear, Ward 1
R Greg Stuchell, Ward 1
William Morrissey, Ward 2
Bruce Sharp, Ward 3
Gary Wolfram, Ward 3
Joshua Paladino, Ward 4
Robert Socha, Ward 4

Council Members absent: Cynthia Pratt, Ward 2

Also Present: Attorney Tom Thomson, Katy Price (City Clerk), Jason Blake (DPS Director), Scott Hephner (Chief HCPD/HCFD), Kim Thomas (Assessor), Sam Fry (EDC Coordinator), Jake Hammel (PBU Electric Director), Brandon Janes (IT), Richard Smith, Larry Walworth, Chris Sumnar, Mark Nichols and Ron Sweinhagen.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Councilman Morrissey support by Councilmember Vear to approve the agenda as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Bills
 - 1. City and BPU Claims of November 30, 2023: \$324,553.35
 - 2. Payroll of December 7, 2023: \$196,631.39
- B. City Council Minutes of December 4, 2023
- C. Shade Tree Minutes of November 1, 2023
- D. Finance Minutes of December 4, 2023
- E. Public Services Committee Minutes of November 13, 2023 and December 11, 2023
- F. EDC Minutes of October 17, 2023
- G. BPU Industrial Sub Switchgear
- H. BPU Transmission Line Clearance (West)
- I. 2024 Committee Meetings
- J. Hillsdale College Street Closure Request
- K. Retirement Pension Report
- L. Retirement Health Care Report
- M. Mitchell Building Lease

Motion by Councilmember Morrisey seconded by Councilmember Vear to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrisey	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

Communications/Petitions

- A. Match on Main Grant Funding Opportunity
- B. Hillsdale County Commissioner Update- Doug Ingles, District 1

Sam Fry, EDC Coordinator reviewed the Match on Main Grant.

County Commissioner Ingles shared the next Commissioner Meeting is on Tuesday, December 26, 2023. Annex building is in discussions on lease option. Time of completion for Courthouse restoration is tentative for November 2024.

Information is presented for information only.

Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances/Public Hearings

None

Old Business

- A. City Hall Carpet Bid Award

Jason Blake, DPS Director stated City staff developed and requested bids for carpet replacement within the 3rd floor council chambers in addition to 2nd floor conference room. Carpet in both areas currently have extensive delamination, wrinkling, and seam raveling due to age, rolling chairs and pedestrian traffic.

The City received a single bid from Willowbrook Interiors from Coldwater Michigan. Willowbrook Interiors included a base bid in addition to an alternate bid. The base bid was for Broadlume rolled carpet as specified in our bid. The alternate bid included pricing to install carpet tiles. Carpet Tiles were recommended, as they would eliminate current issues of delamination caused by chair rollers, scooting/sliding of chairs and wrinkle issues. \$20,000.00 was budgeted for the project in the FY 23-24 budget.

Contractor	Base Bid	Alt. Council Chambers	Alt. Conf. Room
Willowbrook Interiors	\$17,434.20	+\$2,265.00	+\$998.00

Base Bid Total - \$17,434.20

Alt Bid Total - \$20,697.20

Council Member Paladino stated he would like to send the funds for the carpet to the streets or other priorities.

Council Member Vear stated that in the past the carpet has tripped people and is a trip hazard. Public Safety is an issue.

Motion by Councilman Vear support by Councilmember Sharp to award the alternate bid for this project to Willowbrook Interiors in the amount of \$20,697.20.

Roll Call:

Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Nay
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Paladino	Nay
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 6-2

New Business

A. Trident Property and Casualty Insurance

Chris Sumnar, Vested Risk Insurance mentioned the City's updated insurance coverages and rates for 2024 with Trident Property and Casualty Insurance. Premiums are up for the same coverages 21.55% and 14.83% with increased deductibles. The large increase, which might require a budget amendment, is due primarily to the catastrophic weather losses experienced the past year across the commercial insurance industry. We are still waiting on a second quote from Travelers Insurance, which we are supposed to receive in early January. Vested Risk is recommending the City approve the renewal with Trident and if the Travelers quote is better we can cancel with Trident and start with Travelers on February 1st.

Motion by Councilman Morrissey support by Councilmember Vear to renew with Trident for property and casualty insurance in the amount of \$365,230.63 for the 2024 calendar year.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

B. Vested Risk Strategies Insurance Services Agreement

The City separated the payment of Vested Risk Strategies' services from that of the actual insurance premiums. The agreement is for one year. Attached is their agreement for 2024, which needs to be approved by City Council. The amount, \$50,000, is the same as the last two year.

Motion by Councilman Socha support by Councilmember Stuchell approve the Insurance Services Agreement with Vested Risk Strategies in the amount of \$50,000 for the 2024 calendar year.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

C. Set Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendment for Parades/Special Events

The proposed amendment was reviewed at the December 11, 2023 Public Services Committee meeting. The Committee's recommendation was to send the amendment to Council to set a public hearing to allow the public an opportunity to be heard.

Motion by Councilman Socha support by Councilmember Sharp to set a public hearing for Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

D. EcoSmart Choice Program (Resolution)

The BPU would like to offer a voluntary green energy program its customers. The program is available to through AMP to our residential, commercial and industrial customers to offset (25%, 50%, 75% or 100%) of their electric usage with green energy credits. The cost of participation will be born solely by the customer. Attached is the resolution approving participation in the EcoSmart Choice program and Contract with AMP for program services. Currently there are 14 AMP member communities participating in the program including Coldwater, MI.

Council discussion ensued on alternative energy and going green throughout the State of Michigan.

Motion by Councilman Vear support by Councilmember Sharp to approve the EcoSmart Choice Energy Program contract and resolution. **Resolution #3581.**

Roll Call:

Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Nay
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Paladino	Nay
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Nay

Motion passed 5-3

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

E. Amendment to BPU Rules and Regulations (Resolution)

David Mackie, City Manager mentioned the Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities, a review of the Rules and Regulations were completed. Staff recognized some changes to the rules that needed updating. 2019 was the last update to the rules and regulations.

Motion by Councilman Sharp support by Councilmember Socha to approve the BPU Rules and Regulations as presented by resolution. **Resolution #3582.**

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

F. 2024 Poverty Exemption Guidelines (Resolution)

Kim Thomas reviewed that City Council is required to annually adopt guidelines to be followed by the Board of Review in determining eligibility for exemption from property taxes for reasons of poverty as provided for in Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL), Section 211.7u.

Three (3) taxpayers submitted requests to the board of review for exemption from the 2023 property taxes due to poverty, two (2) of whom were granted.

State Tax Commission Bulletin 18 of 2023 was issued on November 15, 2022 with the updated federal poverty guidelines from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to be used in determining eligibility for 2023.

Motion by Councilman Socha support by Councilmember Paladino approve the 2024 Poverty Exemption Guideline as presented by resolution. **Resolution #3583.**

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

G. Handicap Parking Space- 92 N. Broad St.

Jason Blake, DPS Director stated the Michigan Department of Transportation issued a permit to the City of Hillsdale for the installation of a signed and marked handicap parking space in front of 92 N. Broad St. per their request the designated space is the southernmost parking space on the west side of N. Broad St. TCO 2023-58.

Motion by Councilman Vear support by Councilmember Sharp to approve TCO 2023-58 for the handicap space at 92 N. Broad St.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

H. Dial-A-Ride Fleet Bus Purchase

Jason Blake, DPS Director reported the City of Hillsdale Dial-A-Ride is eligible to request a replacement bus through MDOT's Section 5339(b), Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program, every seven years as part of a capital request on the City's Annual Budget Application. A replacement bus was requested in 2019 as part of the 2020 Annual Budget. After multiple delays due to supply chain issues, covid and price increases the replacement bus was delivered to DPS on November 22, 2023.

As part of the replacement program, the new bus, A 29', 2023 F550, 18+2 passenger bus with lift (gas) will replace bus #63, A 26', 2013 International, 14+2 passenger (Diesel). Procurement was completed under a Mideal contract with Hoekstra Transportation, as they are an approved vender through MDOT Office of Transportation. Total replacement purchase cost of \$175,824.00 would be reimbursed to the City using State and Federal funds:

Federal - \$78,942.00

State - \$96,882.00

Motion by Councilman Morrissey support by Councilmember Sharp to approve the purchase of one Ford F550 fleet bus in the amount of \$175,824.00.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Mortisey	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

I. Dial-A-Ride Fleet Bus Purchase Approval

Jason Blake, DPS Director reported the City of Hillsdale Dial-A-Ride is eligible to request a replacement bus through MDOT’s Section 5339(b), Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program, every seven years as part of a capital request on the City’s Annual Budget Application. The City requested and received authorization on August 24, 2023 for approval to replace Dial-A-Ride bus number #62, a 2015 Ford Eldorado National, 18+2 seat, 29’ bus (gas).

As part of the replacement program, under MiDeal contract, Hoekstra Transportation will supply and deliver a new model, Ford F550, 18+2 seat, 29’ bus, in the amount of \$176,724. Total replacement cost will be reimbursed to the City utilizing State and Federal Funds.

Federal - \$141,379
State - \$35,345

Motion by Councilman Morrissey support by Councilmember Sharp to approve the purchase of one (1) Ford F550 fleet bus in the amount of \$176,724.00.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Vear	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Aye
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Aye
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 8-0

Miscellaneous Reports

- A. Proclamations – None
- B. Appointment- Airport Advisory Committee – Daryl Hart
Reappointments- Airport Advisory Committee- Martin Beeker, Troy Brocato

Motion by Councilmember Socha support by Councilmember Vear to approve the appointments and reappointments as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- C. Other- None

General Public Comment

Larry Walworth, Ward three (3), commented on police matter and a dog at large.

City Manager’s Report

Meijer Store working on final approvals, pleasure to work with.

Three Meadows housing pilot project construction with foundation started.

Thanked all boards and commissions for serving the City for this year.

Thanked the Arts Chorale for signing carols for the Mayor’s Reception.

Council Comments

Mayor Stockford thanked the boards and commissions along with the rest of Council for serving the City and volunteering time.

Councilman Paladino requested information on life insurance policy and an insurance representative not being able to submit an RFP.

Councilman Morrissey, spoke and asked City Attorney Thompson on Hillsdale College and conflict of interest on specific City matters.

Council member Socha wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Adjournment

Motion by Councilmember Sharp, seconded by Councilmember Morrisey, to adjourn the meeting.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.



Adam Stockford, Mayor



Katy Price, City Clerk

