

**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

City of Hillsdale  
January 16, 2024  
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 Adam Stockford called the meeting to order. Clerk Price took roll call.

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

Council Members absent:	Anthony Vear, Ward 1
-------------------------	----------------------

Also Present: David Mackie (City Manager), Attorney Tom Thomson, Katy Price (City Clerk), Jason Blake (DPS Director), Alan Beeker (Zoning Administrator), Scott Hephner (Police/Fire Chief), Chris Sumnar, Keith O’Neil, Larry Jones, Jim Glover, Steve Boyd, Felicia Finch, Penny Swan, Terry Stephens, Sheri Ingles, Doug Ingles, Kevin Conant, Nick Fox, Ginger Moore, Ken Joswiak, Jami Anderson, and Sarah Maier.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Stockford requested to remove Penny Swan from appointments and substitute with Ginger Novak to the Election Commission.

Motion by Mayor Stockford support by Councilmember Stuchell to amend to agenda with the removal of Penny Swan to Election Commission and adding Ginger Novak to the Election Commission.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed 6-2

Motion by Councilman Morrissey support by Councilmember Stuchell to approve the agenda as amended.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

Penny Swan, Ward Four (4) commented on the Election Commission appointment. She shared her

displeasure with the Mayor and Council.

**Consent Agenda**

- A. Approval of Bills
  - 1. City and BPU Claims of December 14, 2023: \$864,780.33  
December 28, 2023: \$1,003,806.92
  - 2. Payroll of December 21, 2023: \$186,865.92  
January 4, 2024: \$197,631.05
- B. City Council Minutes of December 18, 2023
- C. Finance Minutes of December 18, 2023, January 3, 2024
- D. LAC Minutes & Accessibility Plan of January 3, 2024
- E. BPU John Deere Backhoe Service Agreement
- F. BPU HomeServe USA Corporation Service Line Agreement
- G. BPU Tetra Tech Study Hillsdale College Sanitary Sewer Study

Motion by Councilmember Morrissey seconded by Councilmember Pratt to approve the consent agenda as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**Communications/Petitions**

- A. Keefer House Hotel LLC Construction Update – Nick Fox
- B. Assessment Audit Review Certificate
- C. Reading Emergency Unit- Keith O’Neil
- D. Hillsdale County Commissioner Update- Doug Ingles, District 1

Nick Fox gave a brief update on the construction project at Keefer House Hotel LLC.

Keith O’Neil conveyed Reading Emergency Unit annual report.

Doug Ingles reported Hillsdale County Planning Commission is seeking a member for the Commission interested applications to apply at County Clerk’s office. Road Commission update crews worked from 4:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. all weekend with from the winter storm.

Information is presented for information only.

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

- A. Public Hearing Ordinance Amendment for Parades/Special Events

David Mackie, City Manager mentioned the proposed amendment to Chapter 30 of the Hillsdale City Code was recommended to City Council from the Public Services Committee at their December 11, 2023 meeting.

Mayor Stockford opened podium at 7:18 p.m.

Kevin Conant spoke on fee schedule, barricade rentals and asked Council to revisit fee schedule.

Felicia Finch stated she paid \$500.00 as a down payment for a special event downtown.

Ken Josiwak, HBA President spoke on fees, events and when to file permit.

Mayor Stockford closed podium at 7:26 p.m.

Council discussion ensued on fees and exemptions of certain events.

Motion by Councilman Morrissey support by Councilmember Stuchell to approve **Ordinance 2024-01** as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- B. Public Hearing Ordinance Amendment to Rezone 3005 W Carleton Rd.

Alan Beeker, Zoning Administrator reported the owner of 3005 W Carleton Rd has requested a rezoning of his property. The intent is to rezone the property from B-3 General Business District to PRD Planned Redevelopment District. The Planning Commission recommended that Council approve the rezoning. A public hearing is required prior to Council making an ordinance change.

Mayor Stockford opened podium at 7:47 p.m.

Terry Stevens, business owner reviewed his plan for property. He cleaned up the area and done a lot of work in the area for preparation of the storage units.

No other comments

Mayor Stockford closed podium at 7:52 p.m.

Motion by Councilman Morrissey support by Councilmember Sharp to approve **Ordinance 2024-02** to rezone the property from B-3 General Business District to PRD Planned Redevelopment District.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

A. Property and Casualty Insurance

Last month the City Council approved renewing with Trident for property and casualty insurance in the amount of \$365,230.63 plus Vested Risk’s fee of \$50,000 for a total of \$415,985.63 for the 2024 calendar year. At that time we did not have a proposal from Travelers to consider. Council agreed to review Travelers proposal at this meeting to see if there were any savings to be realized over Trident. Attached is the comparison between Trident and Travelers. Vested Risk is going through Travelers’ proposal to see if there are any additional savings beyond the demonstrated \$13,000, which includes some different deductibles and coverages.

Chris Sumnar, Vested Insurance, reviewed the deductibles and coverages.

Motion by Councilmember Socha support by Councilmember Pratt to approve Travelers Company for Property and Casualty Insurance term Feb 1, 2024 – Feb 1, 2025.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Pratt	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

**New Business**

A. Land Division Request Parcel 006-334-202-07

Alan Beeker, Zoning Administrator stated Hillsdale City Code Section 18-82 requires application to council requesting approval to divide platted lots, with automatic referral to the planning commission for input, review and recommendation. The property owners would like to divide property as presented. They have submitted an application to divide the property for the purpose of deeding the rear landlocked portion of the parcel (identified on the attached survey as Parcel B) to the adjacent property owner (Parcel A). The survey includes a new combined description of Parcels A and B to be used as a single parcel upon the recording of a deed establishing common ownership. Parcel C would constitute the remainder of the property commonly known as 115 Reading Avenue, to be retained as a separate parcel. Parcel A as it

currently exists does not meet the minimum square foot requirement under zoning for a parcel in the R-1 district. Adjusting the boundary line between the 2 properties and adding Parcel B to Parcel A brings both properties into compliance with current minimum lot size requirements.

Motion by Councilman Sharp support by Councilmember Morrisey approve the application as presented with the condition that Parcel B may only be deeded to the owner of Parcel A and combined as described on the survey submitted with the application upon execution of the deed establishing common ownership.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Bight Elimination Program Demolition Bid Award

Alan Beeker, Zoning Administrator the Planning Department issued an invitation to bid for the demolition of 47 E. St. Joe St. The property has been a long term code enforcement issue. The Hillsdale County District Court has adjudged that violations of the property may be abated by the City of Hillsdale. Inspections by the Code Enforcement Official have determined that the property owner has not resolved the outstanding ordinance violations. By order of the Court, the City is permitted to abate the violations.

On January 9, 2024, Four (4) submitted sealed bids for demolition of the property were reviewed. They are as follows:

- Parrish Excavating, Inc. \$17,985.50
- DuBois Trucking & Excavating \$19,800.00
- Slusarski Excavating & Paving, Inc. \$27,163.00
- Handy Excavating LLC \$33,250.00

Motion by Councilman Sharp support by Councilmember Socha approve the demolition project to Parrish Excavating, Inc in the amount of \$17,985.50.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Pratt	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

C. DART Annual Funding (Resolution)

Jason Blake, DPS Director reported in February the City of Hillsdale submits an application to the State of Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to apply for financial assistance under Act 51 for public transportation known as Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART). The Resolution of Intent as required by MDOT as part of the applications process. The resolution outlines the anticipated balanced budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year of \$399,646 and projected funding sources. This budget is similar but not necessarily identical to the budget Council will approve in June as it covers a different fiscal year (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025). It is anticipated that we will receive 18.0% of operational cost from the federal sources and 40.2993% from the state. The remaining 41.7007% will come from local sources (ticket fares and general fund). The resolutions also appoints Jason Blake, Public Services Director, as the Transportation Coordinator.

Motion by Councilman Sharp support by Councilmember Morrisey to approve the presented resolution for DART Annual Funding and appoints Jason Blake as Transportation Coordinator. **Resolution #3584.**

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

D Residential and Municipal Trash Recyclables RFP

Jason Blake, DPS Director stated the proposed contract for a 5-year term and would impact approximately 1862 residential trash customers and 876 residential recycling customers in addition to municipal trash and recycling services. All residents who require residential trash and recycling services would be directed to LSR for service.

Service will be provided to residents at the cost of \$14.34 per month for weekly trash service and \$3.61 per month for bi-weekly recycling services. Pricing will go up 4.5% per year, starting year two. LRS's proposal also includes, at no cost to the city, curbside municipal trash and recycling services from various municipal facilities in addition to the city owned curbside cans in the downtown area and 4yd dumpsters that are utilized by DPS and BPU. City will also be able to continue dumping up to 25 tons of overflow trash at the Hillsdale Transfer Facility, \$65 a ton after.

The comparable bid from Granger Waste Services for a five-year contract was less for residential trash services @ \$13.30 monthly and \$3.27 month for recycling with an increase of 4% increase beginning in year two . Granger's proposal included 4yd dumpsters at a cost of \$105 per dumpster per month (City currently has six dumpsters) and also increase 4% per year, starting upon year two.

Council discussion ensued on pricing differences.

Motion by Councilmember Sharp support by Councilmember Pratt to approve the Residential and Municipal Trash Recyclables 5-year contract with LRS services.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
Council Member Pratt	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

E. Airport Hangar Renovation

Ginger Moore, Airport Manager reported the Airport need to renovate the large Corporate Hangar #2 to make space for bigger aircraft and/or multiple aircraft. The renovation will also allow us to house our Snow Removal Equipment and Fuel Truck. The airport has had multiple customers wanting to be in a hangar during their stay when it is cold or when there is weather moving in.

The airport also needs a place to house the airport's vehicles. The vehicles are currently being housed in t-hangars with no heat or room to work on them. By freeing up the 2 t-hangars that we are currently using we would be able to rent those hangars to customers at \$100/month each.

The Hillsdale Municipal Airport has become very attractive to larger aircraft such as turbo props and corporate jets. The ability for business aircraft to come to Hillsdale relies on housing aircraft from time to time to keep the aircraft out of the cold or in-climate weather. The airport missed a number of fuel sales because the aircraft preferred to be in a hangar while visiting. Those said aircraft chose to go to Toledo or Jackson and buy their fuel at those airports.

The Hillsdale Municipal Airport is proposing renovating the Corporate Hangar by tearing out the offices that were put in around 2015. The office space has not been utilized since 2017. By demolishing the office space we will create room for aircraft and airport vehicles.

The estimated cost of demo and updates is \$55,000 with an estimated 2-3 year return on investment.

Motion by Councilmember Stuchell support by Councilmember Sharp to award the demolition and reconstruction of hanger up to \$55,000.00 and award the demolition to Hodge Construction in the amount of \$18,250.00.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
-------------------------	-----

Council Member Pratt	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. City Sponsored Local Events on Public Property (Resolution)

David Mackie, City Manager mentioned the proposed resolution was recommended to the City Council from the Public Services Committee at their December 11, 2023 meeting. The resolution identifies: Summer in the City, Light-up Parade, County Fair Parade and Tri-State Scenic Steam Excursions as City sponsored events and establishes a fee schedule.

Motion by Councilman Paladino support by Councilmember Socha to approve the resolution for the City Sponsored local events as presented with reduced fees. **Resolution #3585.**

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Miscellaneous Reports

- A. Proclamations – None
- B. Appointment- Shade Tree Commission- JoAnne Miller, Sara Stewart  
Election Commission – William Mullaly, Ginger Novak

Mayor Stockford discussed his reasons for not reappointing Penny Swan. Council Member Stuchell thanked Swan for all of her hard work for City. Swan is on different committees currently.

Motion by Councilmember Morrissey support by Councilmember Pratt to approve the appointment of JoAnne Miller to the Shade Tree Commission.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Councilmember Morrissey support by Councilmember Pratt to approve the appointment of Sara Stewart to the Shade Tree Commission.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Councilmember Socha support by Councilmember Pratt to approve the appointment of William Mullaly to the Election Commission.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed 7-1

Motion by Councilmember Stuchell support by Councilmember Socha to approve the appointment of Ginger Novak to the Election Commission.

Roll Call:

Council Member Paladino	Aye
-------------------------	-----

Council Member Pratt	Aye
Council Member Sharp	Nay
Council Member Stuchell	Aye
Council Member Socha	Aye
Mayor Stockford	Aye
Council Member Morrissey	Nay
Council Member Wolfram	Aye

Motion passed 6-2

Reappointments- Michael Hendershot

Motion by Councilmember Socha support by Councilmember Pratt to approve the reappointment of Michael Hendershot to the Election Commission.

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Other- None

**General Public Comment**

Penny Swan, Ward four (4) stated she believes the Mayor violated her first amendment right.

**City Manager's Report**

No report

**Council Comments**

Councilman Morrissey thanked City attorney Thompson for his opinion on conflict of interest.

Councilman Sharp thanked the BPU and DPS crews on a job well done with the winter storm.

**Adjournment**

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

By a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55p.m.




---

Adam Stockford, Mayor




---

Katy Price, City Clerk