

Hartford City Council Meeting – Regular Meeting January 6, 2026

Mayor Arden Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with the following city council members present: Keith Carlson, Cindy Matson, Shaun Boen, Travis Kuehl, Darrell Horacek, and Michelle Schilling. Also present were City Administrator Teresa Sidel, City Finance Officer Karen Wilber, Public Works Superintendent Craig Wagner, City Engineer Michael Redenbaugh, and 4 people from the public.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

- **Approval of the Agenda:** A motion was made by Schilling, second by Matson to approve the agenda as set - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Minutes:** A motion was made by Matson, second by Carlson to approve the regular meeting minutes from December 16, 2025 – all others voted yes, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

APPLICATIONS, AGREEMENTS, HEARINGS, RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

- **7:05 Public Hearings:**
 - **Garbage License Renewals:** Novak Sanitary Service, Cressman Sanitation, Inc, Bolte's Sunrise Sanitary Service, Inc, RBS Sanitation, Inc, A-OK Sanitary & Garbage Service, Inc, Construction Trash, LLC., and Waste Management of Sioux Falls have applied to renew their garbage hauler licenses with the City. Novak, Cressman, and A-OK provide residential garbage service while the others provide roll off service only. A motion was made by Matson, second by Schilling to approve the Garbage Hauler Licenses for 2026 as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.
 - **1st Reading of Ordinance #768 Amend Subdivision Regulations:** In 2024 the City's subdivision regulations were reviewed by City Engineers and some minor wording changes were approved by the Council. During this review process, the Planning & Zoning Board wanted additional time to discuss working changes to Section 4.1.3 – Public Space Contributions. The current regulations state that a developer is required to donate 5% of the land in their development to be used for future park/trail space or, in lieu of donating land, the developer can choose to donate \$1,000/acre. Since land is worth more than \$1,000/acre, developers are choosing the monetary donation vs the land donation. As a result, the City has had a difficult time acquiring land for future parks/trails. The City has since done a Master Park Plan that has identified areas for future parks and trail systems. Now that this Master Park Plan is in place, the Planning & Zoning Board has approved changes to Section 4.1.3 that basically state that if a developer is developing land that is designated in the Master Park Plan as future park or trail, that developer will be required to donate 5% of the land rather than the monetary donation. If a developer is developing land that is not designated in the Master Park Plan as future park or trail, then a monetary donation will be required that is equal to 5% of the development land at fair market value. All of this would be determined at the time their preliminary plans are filed with the City. If a monetary donation is required, the calculation of the fair market value would be done at this time as well, resulting in a savings for the developer since the calculation would be done on undeveloped land. Ordinance #768, which incorporates all these changes to Section 4.1.3, was presented. A motion was made by Matson, second by Horacek to approve first reading of Ordinance #768 Amend Subdivision Regulations – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Resolution 2026-1 Contingency Transfer for 2025:** This resolution would approve the transfer of budget funds from the City's contingency account to other accounts in the general fund. A motion was made Kuehl, second by Boen to approve Resolution 2026-1 to transfer \$35,749.98 from the City's contingency account to the following accounts: Animal Control \$6,138.00; Downtown Hartford \$7,901.98; Planning & Zoning \$21,010.00; Debt Service \$700.00 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **1st Reading of Ordinance #769 Supplemental Appropriation for 2025:** This ordinance will provide additional appropriations to the City's 2025 budget for any budget shortfalls or purchases made that were not known at the time the budget was set. A motion was made by Matson, second by Boen to approve 1st reading of Ordinance #769 2025 Supplemental Appropriation which will add \$221,761.00 to the general fund 101 budget; \$22,045.00 to the capital improvement fund 510 budget; \$51,429.60 to the capital improvement fund 511 budget; \$81,438.62 to the capital improvement fund 512 budget; and \$30,000.00 to the water fund 602 budget – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Resolution 2026-2 Appoint Representative to SMGA Advisory Board:** As a member of the Sioux Metro Growth Alliance (SMGA), the City may appoint a representative to their advisory board. Mayor Arden Jones currently holds this appointment. Resolution 2026-2 will appoint Jones to this advisory board through December 31, 2026. A motion was made by Boen, second by Matson to approve Resolution 2026-2 as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.

REPORTS:

- **Sheriff's Department Report:** Deputy Rechtenbaugh was present to provide his report. For the period of Nov 25th through Dec 31st there were 229 calls for service.
- **Engineer Report:** Michael Redenbaugh reported the following:
 - The WRRF project is in the closeout phase. Commissioning of the sludge press system will most likely start in February. Updates continue to be made to the SCADA system, which is the system that monitors and controls the entire treatment system.
 - Punchlist items for the Western Ave project are 75% complete. Remaining items will be completed in the spring.
 - A presentation on the city-wide water model findings was provided at the meeting. Overall, the City's water distribution system is in very good shape with no immediate action items being identified. Based on current growth projections and water usage, a new tower may be needed within the next 5 to 10 years.
 - Design work on the Mickelson Rd shared use path will be completed by early 2026 with construction anticipated to start in the spring.
- **Public Works Report:** Public Works Superintendent Wagner provided his report.

Streets – The new radar speed sign on the Colton Rd has been installed. The 2026 slurry seal project has been submitted to Sioux Falls for bidding. Staff hauled salt and salt sand this past week. All equipment is working well at this time. Christmas decor will be taken down this week.

Water – The 4th quarter report has been submitted. Next reporting is due Feb 10th. This will wrap up sampling for the year with no violations. The yearly lead/copper letters have been sent out, and staff will now work on updating the City's lead/copper records in the coming weeks.

Sewer – All lift stations are working well. The November DMR reporting is done. Discharging at the lagoons is done until spring. The cabinets for the new facility have been delivered but some might be too short. Staff continues to work with ISG on the SCADA system that monitors the plant.

Parks – Good progress has been made on the new restroom building. It should be ready for electrical and plumbing work within a week or so.

 - **Authorize the Purchase of New Truck for Public Works Dept:** When setting the 2026 budget, 36k was allocated to a new truck for the Public Works Dept. Wagner is going to start looking and would like to have approval to purchase, should he find something. A motion was made by Kuehl, seconded by Matson to approve the purchase a new truck not to exceed the budgeted amount of \$36,000 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Finance Officer Report:** City Finance Officer Wilber provided her report. Items included a summary of revenues received in December, an overview of the city's general fund revenues and expenses through November, and the January calendar of events. The rate exception of 3.10% on the money market account with First Interstate Bank, which was set to expire on Dec 31st, has been extended to Jan 11th. In the coming weeks, Wilber will be working on year-end reporting.
 - **Review Bank Services:** Banking services for the City have not been evaluated for a number of year. In an effort to ensure the best fit for the City's banking needs, meetings were held with both local banks - First Interstate Bank, who the City is currently using, and Reliabank. Based on information obtained from these meetings, a comparison of services, fees, and interest was provided for Council review. Based on both banks offering very similar services and the minimal difference in fees, the biggest factor would be the difference in interest rates. Reliabank currently, and has consistently in the past, provided higher interest rates. Based on the City's current account balance, this rate difference would generate additional revenue of approximately \$35,000 over the course of a year. Based on this, staff is recommending that the City's banking services be switched to Reliabank. A motion was made by Carlson, second by Boen to move the City's banking to Reliabank – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **City Administrator Report:** City Administrator Sidel provided her report. The City was awarded a \$600,000 Community Access Grant for the Western Ave project. One application has been received for the snow removal position and is currently being evaluated. The Weston Group should have the updated wage study done within a week or two. The City's cybersecurity assessment with DSU is scheduled to start in Feb. Sidel will be meeting with Homeland Security on Jan 8th to discuss next steps with them as well. The Windsor TIF final plan and development agreement will come before the Council for approval at the Jan 20th meeting. The City has received a Brownfields Grant for the environmental study that is needed before any sludge can be cleaned out of the lagoons. Sidel continue to work on the paperwork necessary for this two phase process. In 2024, the City agreed to partner with SECOG to develop a regional safety action plan. The plan would include a study of the region, including Hartford, to be led by Houston Engineering. This will be about a 6 month process, with a final report anticipated in June. There will be the opportunity for community and public input on the plan, with several future meetings to be held. Sidel provide a brief recap of Dakota Mainstem's board meeting held on Dec 19th. Sidel met with SVE on to go over the rate increases for 2026. The City will see an average of a 10% increase on all our accounts for 2026. Each year a utility increase of 3%-5% is incorporated into the budget. With the actual increases being higher, the City will most likely have some budget shortfalls at the end of the year.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Discussion Regarding Gateway Hartford, Inc:** Mayor Jones provide some background on Gateway Hartford, Inc. Now that the new wastewater facility is up and running, the lagoons are no longer needed. Once the lagoons are fully drained, this area will have to be remediated and, ultimately, developed for sale. Gateway Hartford, Inc, which is a nonprofit, has been created to aid in the remediation, development and sale of this land. Gateway Hartford, Inc is a special project entity (SPE) that is created for the sole purpose of developing and selling this land only. Once this area is developed and sold, all remaining funds of the entity will be transferred back to the City, and the entity will cease.
 - **City Appointment to the Board of Gateway Hartford, Inc:** The board of Gateway Hartford, Inc consists of five board members. Current board members include Keith Matthieson, Mark Brenneman, Travis Kuehl, and Dylan Peterson. The fifth position is representation of the City. A motion was made by Boen, second by Matson to appoint Arden Jones to the board of Gateway Hartford, Inc. – all voted yes, motion carried.
 - **Release of Funds to Gateway Hartford, Inc:** As Gateway Hartford, Inc moves forward, funds will be needed for professional services – attorney, accountant, consultants, etc. A motion was made by Carlson, seconded by Horacek to approve \$100,000 be paid to Gateway Hartford, Inc out of the 3rd Penny Fund – all voted yes, motion carried.
 - **Transfer of Land to Gateway Hartford, Inc:** The paperwork to transfer the lagoon land to Gateway Hartford, Inc is not ready at this time. Therefore, no action will need to be taken at this meeting. A motion was made by Boen, second by Schilling to table this item until the next meeting – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve Contract Services with TetonRidge Consulting LLC:** A contract proposal between the City and TetonRidge was present. The contract is for consulting services to support the lagoon remediation, support the City with any special project needs, and engage state and federal stakeholders to help with economic development outcomes. This contract is for one year, expiring on Dec 31, 2026, at a rate of \$270/hr. not to exceed \$11,600. A motion was made by Matson, second by Boen to approve the contract with TetonRidge Consulting, LLC as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Boen, second by Matson to enter executive session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1) for personnel and SDCL 9-34-19 for economic development at 8:44pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

Minutes recorded by Finance Officer Karen Wilber.

I, the undersigned Karen Wilber, Finance Officer in and for the City of Hartford, South Dakota, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes which is on file at the Municipal Finance Office.

Karen Wilber, Finance Officer

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Matson, second by Boen to exit executive session at 8:54pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Matson, second by Boen to adjourn at 8:55pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

Minutes recorded by City Administrator Teresa Sidel.

I, the undersigned Teresa Sidel, City Administrator in and for the City of Hartford, South Dakota, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes which is on file at the Municipal Finance Office.

Teresa Sidel, City Administrator