

Hartford City Council Meeting – Regular Meeting November 19, 2024

Mayor Arden Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with the following city council members present: Cindy Matson, Shaun Boen, Ryan Horn, Travis Kuehl, Lisa Berens, and Jake Jass. Also present were City Administrator Teresa Sidel, City Finance Officer Karen Wilber, Public Works Superintendent Craig Wagner, Engineer Michael Redenbaugh, and 5 people from the public.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

- **Approve Agenda:** A motion was made by Boen, second by Horn to approve the agenda as set - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Minutes:** A motion was made by Jass, second by Kuehl to approve the meeting minutes from November 5, 2024 - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Bills:** A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Horn to approve the bills submitted for payment – all voted yes, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

VISITORS:

- Don Hammond, from Brosz Engineering, was present to provide a report on the recent bridge inspections done. The SD DOT has identified 4 culverts that are classified as bridges by the State and must comply with their inspection rotation. All 4 structures are due for inspection this year. The culverts are located at Main Ave, Feyder Ave, Western Ave, and Mickelson Rd. Hammond reported that all are in good shape and there are no big concerns at this time. He did note that there is a small area of exposed rebar on the Main Ave structure that they would recommend either patching or cleaning and painting to prevent any further corrosion.
- BJ Olson, co-owner of Unity Road, was present to discuss the billboard lease he has with the City. He entered into a 3yr lease effective Jan 1, 2024 for 1/3 of the east face of billboard #6. Earlier this month Unity Road went out of business. Olson is asking if there are options available for terminating the lease early. In the past, the Council has allowed two different entities to terminate their billboard leases early, charging them an early termination fee of half of the rent of the remaining lease term. Olson has 25 months left on his lease, which equates to \$2,000 in rent. Staff noted that the east face billboards are more desirable than the west face. Sidel does have a waiting list of parties that have shown interest in renting the east-faced billboards in the past. A motion was made by Boen, second by Matson to allow Unity Road to terminate their billboard lease early upon payment of an early termination fee of \$1,000 – all voted yes, motion carried.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPLICATIONS, AGREEMENTS AND HEARINGS:

- **Special Event Permit – 2025 Hometown Christmas Event:** Lisa Hellvig, on behalf of Hartford Hometown Christmas, was present to request a special event permit for the Hartford Hometown Christmas event to be held Dec 1st. Activities will be similar to previous years – parade, vendor show, kid’s activities, fireworks, etc. The following road closures are being requested for the parade: Main Ave - 2nd St to Menth St at 11am; Main Ave - Hwy 38 to South St at 4pm; Railroad St at 4pm, and South St – Main Ave to Western Ave at 4pm. All road closures to re-open at the conclusion of the parade – approx. 6:30pm. Also requesting use of the city shop for parade coordination and the use of city staff during the event. A motion was made by Horn, second by Bernes to approve the Hartford Hometown Christmas special event permit as submitted – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Resolution 2024-15 – Resolution to Become a SDRS Special Pay Program Unit:** The City participates in the South Dakota Retirement System. SDRS is offering a new 401(a) Special Pay Plan for participating members. This plan is funded by an eligible employees’ special pay upon their employment terminating. Special pay would include unused sick leave and unused vacation leave. Instead of including these unused leaves in their gross pay calculation and paying it out to the employee, those dollars would be sent to the Special Pay Plan, resulting in a tax savings for both the City and the employee since no Social Security and Medicare tax would be paid on these dollars. To be eligible the terminated employee must have reached the calendar month they turn 55 and are receiving special pay of at least \$600. Special pay funds would automatically be sent to the plan by the City and the City would be responsible for a one-time fee per participant, which is currently set at \$45. Participants are eligible for an immediate distribution from the plan, if they so choose. Federal income tax would be due at the time of distribution. To enact the SDRS Special Pay Plan, Resolution 2024-15 would need to be passed. Once enacted, participation would be mandatory, provided the employee meets all the eligibility requirement. A motion was made by Horn, second by Jass to approve Resolution 2024-15 – Resolution to become a SDRS Special Pay Program Unit – all voted yes, motion carried.

REPORTS:

- **Fire Department Report:** HAFR Chief Bryon Schumaker’s monthly report was provided. For the month of October there was a total of 29 calls, of which 12 were within city limits. An update on the various trainings held during the month was also provided. The department handed out over 800 glow necklaces on Halloween.
- **Chamber Director Report:** Chamber Director Wynne Hindt was not present. Her report was provided. The Ambassador Committee is still seeking two more people to be on the committee. Eleven welcome bags have been

distributed to new members of the community over the past three months. The Ambassador Committee's next meeting will be Dec 3rd. The Events Committee is finalizing plans for the Taste of Hartford event to be held in January and the Annual Chamber Banquet to be held in February. The Events Committee's next meeting will be Nov 21st. The Governance Committee is finalizing updates and changes to the by-laws and policy procedures. Once complete, these updates will be presented to the board for voting. The Chamber's annual meeting was held Nov 18th.

- **Engineer Report:** Michael Redenbaugh reported the following:
 - Continue to monitor construction progress on the WC School addition, the Bluetide project, utility installation at Oakley St in Maple Pass Addition, and utility installation at a lot in the Industrial Park at Western Meadows Addition.
 - Construction at the WRRF site is moving along nicely. Wall framing and door installation at the operations building is now complete. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing installation continues. Installation of the Aeromod equipment is ongoing. Electrical work is ongoing at the lift station structure. The last bid package for the connections to the existing system was received, with Siteworks being the low bidder at just under 32k. There was a total of 80k budgeted for this bid package. The difference will be added to the contingency balance for the project.
 - Water main installation is underway on the Hwy 38 Water Main Extension project. Work along Railroad St to Hwy 38 is done. The contractor is now working on boring the pipes under Hwy 38 at Colton Rd. Large rocks were discovered along the bore path, causing work in the project to cease. The contract has presented a change order to upsize the bore casting from 16" to 24", which will help facilitate the removal of the rocks encountered during the boring process.
 - **Review/Approve Change Order #2:** Change Order #2 in the amount of \$45,584 to upsize the casting for boring under Hwy 38 from a 16" to a 24" was presented. It was noted that this amount is just for the upsizing of the casing. If an obstruction is encountered, the rate for the contractor to enter the casing and remove any obstructions is \$1,292.50/hr. It was also noted that this project is currently under budget by just under 179k with this change order taken into account. A motion was made by Matson, second by Berens to approve Change Order #2 to Siteworks in the amount of \$45,584 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Public Works Report:** Public Works Superintendent Wagner provided his report.

Streets – Staff will continue to blade gravel road and do street sweeping as needed through the fall. The 2007 Sterling truck is now fixed. There was a damaged wire to the injector causing it to misfire. In preparation for the snow season, plows will be moved to the shop. Christmas lighting will be put up either later this week or next.

Water – The 3rd quarter report has been submitted. Next reporting is due Jan 10th. After letters were sent to the residents regarding lead service lines, it came to the City's attention that there is one less lead service line than we had documented.

Sewer – All lift station pumps are working well. Staff is still working on getting the bar screen up and running. The Oct DMR reports are completed and have been sent. The next report is due Dec 28th. Staff will be checking the pH levels at the lagoons next week. If ok, samples will be taken. The bolt down casting for the manhole located north of the bus barn is in. Staff is planning to install it next week.

Parks – The pickleball court project is now complete. The park restrooms have been winterized and closed for the season. Soccer nets have been taken down. Staff will be taking down and storing the batting cage nets.

Sports Complex – The concession stand building is moving right along. Steel installation, both on the overhangs outside and the ceiling inside, is underway. The walk-thru and overhead doors have been installed. The electrician and plumber have started. The contractor is planning on starting the exterior concrete next week. Equipment is in the process of being ordered.
- **Finance Officer Report:** City Finance Officer Wilber provided her report. Items included cash balances, sales tax revenue and DHI committee fund balance as of Oct 31st, a recap of bills submitted for payment, and the Nov/Dec calendar of events.
- **City Administrator Report:** City Administrator Sidel provided her report. A walk-thru of the 12th St/Oaks Ave project was done last week and is now substantially complete. A list of punch list items was provided to the contractor. The City's zoning ordinance and amendments were recently codified into one document. When doing this, some errors were discovered. Corrections for these will be coming before the Planning & Zoning Board, as well as the Council, for approval. The City's TAP grant project was presented to the grant committee on Nov 13th. A final decision on the grant is expected in January. The City has received three applications for the snow removal position. The review/interview process will start in the next couple weeks. The ordinance for the second surcharge on the WRRF project will be coming before the Council at the next meeting. Sidel reminded the Council of two upcoming open house style meetings: County Highway 151 Study to be held at St George Catholic Church on Nov 21st from 2pm-4pm for stakeholders and from 4:30pm-6:30pm for the general public. Also, the Minnehaha County Comprehensive Plan Update to be held at Hartford City Hall on Nov 21st starting at 7pm.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Review/Approve Changer Order #5 to Alliance Construction:** ATS Complete Diesel & Automotive Service is located along the 12th St/Oaks Ave project. The original engineered plans allowed for a small drainage ditch to convey excess water during normal rain events to the intersection of 12th & Oaks. ATS owners are concerned that this ditch is too close to their building and that they may experience water issues. There is enough room to shift the ditch to the north to get it further away from their building. Change Order #5 in the amount of \$3,000 for the regrading of this ditch was presented. Wagner indicated that this isn't a guaranteed fix in a major rain event, but it would definitely help. The changes have been discussed with the property owner and he is satisfied with the solution and understands it is not a guarantee that he won't ever experience water issues. A motion was made by Boen, second by Matson to approve Change Order #5 to Alliance Construction in the amount of \$3,000 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve Contract Amendment with Infrastructure Design Group:** The City Attorney is recommending further review of this contract amendment before any action is taken on it. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Horn to table this item until the next meeting – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Discuss Chamber Director and Economic Development Director Positions:** The City no longer employs an Economic Development Director and, after this week, will no longer employ a Chamber Director either. In addition, the HADF has now brought on their own director. Moving forward, the City need to decide if these positions should be under the City's umbrella or left to each organization to provide. Discussion was held on issuing a press release to inform the public about the changes that have occurred and how the City intends to move forward. After meeting with SMGA, they have offered their assistance in whatever capacity the City would need it, including the drafting of a press release. Further discussions are needed with both groups, HADF & HACC, to discuss their thoughts as all entities move forward.
- **Discuss Pay Increase for Mayor:** The pay structure for the council is yearly salary plus a per meeting stipend. The current rate for regular council meetings is \$100 and for any special meetings it is \$75. The council, by motion, can grant extra meeting pay for a council member or mayor. With the City moving forward with regionalization, Mayor Jones attends a number of meetings that he is not currently getting paid for. He also regularly attends economic development type meetings such as SMGA, HADF, among others. The consensus among the Council is that based on the amount of time Mayor Jones puts in attending meetings on behalf of the City, his annual salary isn't adequately compensating him. A motion was made by Matson, second by Boen to compensate Mayor Jones for any regionalization or economic development meetings he attends on behalf of the City at a rate of \$75 per meeting – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Council Float for Hometown Christmas Event:** Mayor Jones suggested that the Council have a float in the Hometown Christmas parade like they've done in the past. Kuehl offered the use of his trailer. Boen indicated he would not be able to attend. All others are on board. Matson and Horn will co-chair.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Boen to enter executive session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1) for personnel at 8:12pm – 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 Horn, second by Jass to exit executive session at 9:10pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

A motion was made by Matson, second by Boen to provide all year-round staff a \$300 cash holiday bonus – all voted yes, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Horn, second by Matson to adjourn at 9:11pm – 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