

Hartford City Council Meeting – Regular Meeting December 16, 2025

Mayor Arden Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with the following city council members present: Keith Carlson, Cindy Matson, Travis Kuehl, Darrell Horacek, and Michelle Schilling. Shaum Boen was absent with notice. Also present were City Administrator Teresa Sidel, City Finance Officer Karen Wilber, Public Works Superintendent Craig Wagner, Code Enforcer/Building Inspector Kyle Christensen, City Engineers Michael Redenbaugh & Justin Heim, and no one from the public.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

- **Approval of the Agenda:** A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Carlson to approve the agenda as set - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Minutes:** A motion was made by Schilling, second by Horacek to approve the regular meeting minutes from December 2, 2025 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Bills:** A motion was made by Matson, second by Schilling to approve the bills submitted for payment – all voted yes, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mayor Jones informed the Council of a meeting planned for Jan 5th at City Hall with the State representatives from Hartford’s district. Kuehl, Carlson, and Horacek plan on attending the meeting as well. The topic of discussion is the upcoming legislative session in January.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPLICATIONS, AGREEMENTS AND HEARINGS:

- **Resolution 2025-12 Accept Utility Improvements at 1051 Ruud Trail:** On Oct 15, 2024, the council approved an agreement with the developer of the property at 1051 Ruud Trail to upsize and extend the water/sewer utilities to allow a future connection to service property south of this parcel on the south of the Interstate. This utility work is now done and has been inspected by City Engineers, who are recommending that the City accept this water/sewer infrastructure. Resolution 2025-12, which accepts these improvements, was presented. A motion was made Matson, seconded by Carlson to approve Resolution 2025-12 accepting the utility improvements at 1051 Ruud Trail – all voted yes, motion carried.

REPORTS:

- **Fire Department Report:** HAFR Chief Bryon Schumaker’s monthly report was provided. For the month of November there were a total of 28 calls, of which 17 were in Hartford city limits. An update on the various trainings held during the month was also provided.
- **Code Enforcement/Building Inspection Report:** Code Enforcer/Building Inspector Kyle Christensen was present to provide his reports for the Council and answer any questions. Code enforcement issues being addressed include pet issues, parking on grass, and rubbish/junk.
- **Engineer Report:** Michael Redenbaugh reported the following:
 - Work on punchlist items continues on the WRRF project. Commissioning of the sludge press system is planned for February. Staff and Engineers continue to work with the contractor on the SCADA system, which is the system that monitors and controls the entire treatment system.
 - Work on the Western Ave project is done for now. Remaining punchlist items, such as seeding, will be done in the spring.
 - Approval has been received from the State on the Mickelson Rd shared use path. Engineers will now move forward with design work. Construction is being planned for the spring of 2026.
 - Updates are being made to the city wide water model based on comments received from the Staff’s review of the draft report. The final report is expected to be presented to the Council in January. Engineers provided a brief update on the study’s findings. All and all the City is in good shape with no immediate action items being identified.
 - At previous meetings there has been discussion on possibly placing bollards at the new lift station along Hwy 38 to provide some protection in the event that someone would go off the highway in that area. Rice Lake has provided an estimate for bollards and for chain link fencing around the lift station. The initial thought was that the fencing would provide further protection and somewhat screen the site. After further discussion it was decided that fencing is not needed. Landscaping would be a good alternative for screening. This will be further discussed in the spring. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Carlson to approve installing up to twelve bollards along the lift station along Hwy 38 – all voted yes, motion carried.
 - ISG submitted the new wastewater facility for an award through ACEC – American Council of Engineering Companies. The facility was chosen for the award of excellence for the water/wastewater category. Congratulations to the City and Engineers!

- **Public Works Report:** Public Works Superintendent Wagner provided his report.
Streets – The framework for the radar speed sign is done. Staff will work on getting the sign installed this week. Wagner should have the information for next year’s slurry seal project wrapped up by the end of the week. Staff will be hauling salt sand this week. All equipment is running well.
Water – The 3rd quarter report has been submitted. Next reporting is due Jan 10th. Samples will be taken next week and then the yearly report can be done. Staff will be updating the lead and copper information in the coming weeks.
Sewer – All lift stations are working well. Wagner will adjust the light at the new lift station after receiving a complaint from a neighboring property. The November DMR reporting for both the ponds and the new facility is done. Discharging of the lagoons continues.
Parks – With the warmer temps this week, staff will be focusing on the new restroom building in Lyon Park. The ice skating rink has been filled.
- **Finance Officer Report:** City Finance Officer Wilber provided her report. Items included cash balances, sales tax revenue and DHI committee fund balance as of Nov 30th, a recap of bills submitted for payment, and the Dec/Jan calendar of events.
- **City Administrator Report:** City Administrator Sidel provided her report. To date, no applications have been received for the snow removal position. Information on the bank comparison will be presented at the Jan 6th meeting. The updated wage study is expected to be completed this month. Sidel had a meeting with DSU and Homeland Security on Dec 16th. This meeting went over next steps and processes for the City’s cybersecurity assessment. The assessment is scheduled to start Feb 2nd and is about a 3 week process. Once completed, the City will be provided with a report with recommendations to enhance/improve our cybersecurity. Any cost associated with these improvements will be paid through the grant for this program. The Windsor TIF final plan and development agreement will come before the Council for approval in January. An ISO audit meeting was held Dec 10th. This audit looks at the City’s building codes, inspections, plan reviews, floodplain management, etc. This process takes 3-6 month to complete. The City has received a Brownfields Grant for the environmental study that needs to be done prior to any remediation work on the lagoons. It has been decided to move forward with a small ice rink Lyon Park. Earlier today the City closed on the REED loan for the Western Ave project.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Review/Approve Billboard Lease Renewal with Dave & Co Real Estate Team:** The current billboard lease with Dave & Co Real Estate Team is up for renewal. A renewal lease agreement for the west face of billboard #2 was presented. The lease is for another 3yr term with all the same conditions. The lease does reflect the City’s new rate of \$300/mo. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to approve the billboard lease agreement between Dave & Co Real Estate Team and the City of Hartford as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve 2026 Fire Protection Service Agreement:** Annually the City has entered into an agreement with HAFR to pay them 80k for fire protection services. HAFR will then use these funds for the loan payment on the fire station. This agreement would be payment 16 of 25. A motion was made by Schilling, second by Matson to approve the 2026 agreement with Hartford Area Fire & Rescue for fire protection services –all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve 2026 Contract with Sioux Falls Area Humane Society:** The contract from SFAHS for 2026 animal control services was provided. This year’s contract has two changes from the prior year. The afterhours call rate has increased from \$90/hr. to \$120/hr., and the boarding fee has increased from \$14/day to \$15/day. SFAHS is the only animal control option at this time. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Horacek to approve the 2026 contract with Sioux Falls Area Humane Society for animal control services – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve updated Attorney Contract:** The City contracts with Frieberg, Nelson & Ask, LLP for attorney services. A new contract was presented. The rate for their services increased from \$190/hr. to \$225/hr. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Carlson to approve the contract for attorney services with Frieberg, Nelson & Ask, LLP as presented – all vote yes, motion carried.
- **Review Approve Surplus List:** A surplus list of two items was presented to the Council. Three new desks were recently purchased for offices at City Hall. Two of the desks that were replaced are in bad shape. Staff is recommending to surplus both of them and then discard them. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to approve the surplus list as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to enter executive session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1) for personnel, SDCL 1-25-2(3) for legal, and SDCL 9-34-19 for economic development at 7:55pm – 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Schilling to exit executive session at 9:00pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

A motion was made by Matson, second by Horacek to give year-round city employees a holiday bonus as discussed – all voted yes, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Matson, second by Horacek to adjourn at 9:01pm – 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