

Hartford City Council Meeting – Regular Meeting February 4, 2025

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, City Attorney Tom Frieberg, City Engineer Michael Redenbaugh & Justin Heim, and seven person from the public.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

- **Approve Agenda:** A motion was made by Jass, second by Horn to approve the agenda as set - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Minutes:** A motion was made by Boen, second by Matson to approve the meeting minutes from January 21, 2025 - all voted yes, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPLICATIONS, AGREEMENTS AND HEARINGS:

- **7:05 Public Hearing and 1st Reading of Ordinance #762 Amendment to Zoning Districts:** The Planning & Zoning Board has had discussions on changing the City's zoning ordinance to allow for various densities for residential development. It was decided that a new zoning district of RHD (Residential High-Density) be added. The proposed changes would not affect the Residential District except for Pocket Neighborhoods being removed from this district and now be in the Residential High-Density District as a conditional use. In addition, the Residential High-Density District allows for single-family dwellings, including z-lots, and two-family dwellings as permitted uses, with smaller lot sizes and setbacks then in the Residential District. Multi-family dwellings would be allowed in the new district by condition use, as it is in the Residential District, with the lot sizes and setback remaining the same as the Residential District as well. The Planning & Zoning Board recommends approval of Ordinance #762, which incorporates these changes. A motion was made by Matson, second by Horn to approve 1st reading of Ordinance #762 Amendment to Zoning Districts – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **2nd Reading of Ordinance #760 Fines and Fees:** The City's current fines & fees are spelled out in Ordinance #739. Each year the Council reviews this fee schedule. At the Jan 7th meeting the decision was made to increase six items – pet licensing fee, contractor's license, placement permits for sheds & fences, flatwork permits, golf cart permits, and the property pin locate fee. Ordinance #760 incorporates these changes. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to approve 2nd reading of Ordinance #760 Fines and Fees – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **1st Reading of Ordinance #761 Amend Animal Fines & Fees:** At the Jan 21st meeting information was provided to the Council on the City's animal control contract with Sioux Falls Area Humane Society (SFAHS). The consensus of the Council was that any costs the City incurs for animal services be passed on to the pet owner involved in the incident, if known. Ordinance #761, which incorporates this verbiage, was presented. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Berens to approve 1st reading of Ordinance #761 Amend Animal Fines & Fees – all voted yes, motion carried.

VISITORS: Stephanie Bents with Siouxland Library was present to provide the Council with her yearly update. The library saw a 69% increase in visitors in 2024, which Bents attributes to the new entry counter that was implemented in July 2024. With the popularity of eBooks and audio books on the rise, items borrow from the library decrease by 11% in 2024. A recap of events held in 2024 and what they have planned for 2025 was provided. Bents thanked the City for their continued partnership with Siouxland Libraries.

REPORTS:

- **Sheriff's Department Report:** Deputy Rechtenbaugh was present to provide his report. For the month of Jan there were 236 calls for service for the month, which was an increase of 58 from last month. With the winter months upon us, Rechtenbaugh talked about seasonal depression. He encouraged anyone who knows someone that suffers with this to reach out and check on them. The Minnehaha County Sheriff's Department has resources available to help with these types of situations, if needed.
- **Engineer Report:** Michael Redenbaugh reported the following:
 - Continues to review site plans and plats as they are received and are monitoring public improvements of private developments as needed.
 - On the WRRF project, the Aeromod equipment installation continues as the weather allows and at the operations building the process piping, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing installation continues as equipment and pumps are delivered and placed. Electrical work at the lift station is complete. Plant startup is planned for May 2025.
 - **Review/Approve Pay Request #16:** Pay app #16 from Rice Lake Construction Group for work completed through Jan 31st on the WRRF was presented. A motion was made by Horn, second by Boen to approve payment of pay app #16 in the amount of \$500,151 to Rice Lake Construction Group – all voted yes, motion carried.

- The Western Ave Expansion project is scheduled to be bid in conjunction with the State's bridge project on Mar 5th. Engineers and Staff met with business owners on Feb 4th to provide a project update. Once the project has been awarded to a contractor and a schedule has been provided, Engineers will be coordinating a follow up business owner meeting. Progress meetings with business owners throughout the construction process are being planned as well.
- Work has started on the Parks Master Plan. Engineers and Staff met on Jan 10th to discuss current facilities to provide Engineers with a better understanding of our current park and trail system. The next meeting, which will focus on the vision for future improvements/needs, is set for Feb 27th.
- **Public Works Report:** Public Works Superintendent Wagner provided his report.
 - Streets – Staff is planning to blade and back drag some of the gravel roads this week. The Sterling Dump truck is scheduled to go to Sideline Diesel Repair for some brake work next week. Staff has removed some dead trees on city property near Turtle Creek and along drainage areas.
 - Water – The 4th quarter report has been submitted. Next reporting is due April 10th.
 - Sewer – All lift stations are working well. The necessary reporting has been done with the DANR for the incident with the new sewer line. The Dec DMR report has been sent in, as well as the paperwork for 2024. The next report is due Jan 28th. The lagoon discharge in December went well with no violations. Samples have been taken again to see if another discharge can be done this winter.
 - Bike Trail – Some benches along the trail have been temporarily removed so they can be repainted.
 - Sports Complex – The plumbers need to finish the supply lines to the bathroom fixtures. Staff will be installing the partitions this week. The exterior concrete will be finished up in the spring.
 - Public Buildings – Staff is updating the year-end inventory reports.
 - Training – Wagner and Olson will be attending a class on various water related topics in Colman on Feb 19th. Wagner and O'Kane will be taking their Class III wastewater treatment exams at the end of Feb.
- **Finance Officer Report:** City Finance Officer Wilber provided her report. The items included a summary of revenues received in Jan along with an overview of the city's cash balances, revenues and expenses through Dec. With year-end totals now in, Wilber provided a 2023 vs 2024 comparison of both revenue and expenses. Wilber has completed all year-end processes and will now start working on the information needed for this year's audit. The Feb calendar of events was provided. Wilber has lined up the following individuals to sit on the election board: Laurel Stringer as the election superintendent, Darla Lawver and Marcene Siemonsma as election deputies, and Gail Blocker as the alternate. A motion was made by Horn, second by Boen to approve the election board appointments as presented - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **City Administrator Report:** City Administrator Sidel provided her report. The City has received three applications for the Chamber Director position. It was decided that a committee be formed to start the interview process. The committee will include two Chamber members, Sidel, Councilmember Horn, and Councilmember Berens. Sidel will work with the committee members to set a day/time for the interviews. The City still awaits a decision from the State on the Transportation Alternative grant for the new section of bike trail along Mickelson Ave. Engineers and Staff have been working on a job description for the operator that will need to be hired for the new wastewater plant, which will come before the Council for approval at the Feb 18th meeting. A second meeting for the Parks Master Plan will be on Feb 27th. The meeting will include members from all boards – Planning & Zoning, Park & Recreation, and the Council. Mayor Jones, Councilmember Boen, and Councilmember Berens volunteered to attend this meeting on behalf of the Council. Due to the inclement weather forecast, Sidel will no longer be attending the SDML Managers training in Pierre on Feb 5th.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Discuss Possible Assessment for Western Ave Project:** At the Jan 21st meeting the Council started discussions on whether or not the City should assess the property owners along the Western Ave project. The Council realizes that this project will negatively impact their businesses, hampering access during construction. However, in an effort to remain consistent and fair to those residents who have had to pay assessments, some feel that the City should assess these owners. The City's current assessment rate for an improved street and sidewalk is \$250 per lineal foot. At the Jan 21st meeting, the Council asked for more information to be presented at the Feb 4th meeting, breaking down the costs for just the curb, gutter, and sidewalk portion of the project and what that assessment would look like. Based on current engineer estimates, the total project is approximately 5.6M, with the urbanization portion costing approximately 1.8M – or 32% of the project. Information was provided on what the assessment would be based on the full assessment rate of \$250 and on the adjusted rate of \$80 (32% of \$250) for urbanization only. Further discussion was held on the pros/cons and next steps. A motion was made by Boen, second by Jass to move forward with assessing the property owners along the Western Ave project at a rate of \$250 per lineal foot per the City's current assessment policy – Horn voted no with all others voting yes, motion carried.
- **Discuss Open Liquor License:** The City has an open liquor license. At the Jan 7th meeting, discussion was held on how to handle this open license. Options include doing the RFP process again, releasing on a first come first serve basis, or holding the license until a party presents a plan that will best benefit the City. The consensus of the Council at that time was to move forward with an application process and for more information to be provided at the Feb 4th meeting. Staff presented a sample application that an interested party would submit, along with the \$100 non-refundable application fee. If the application were approved by the Council, the applicant would still

need to get all the necessary approvals from the Planning & Zoning Board, if applicable, and submit the State's liquor license application and fee. City Attorney Frieberg noted that with the application process, once an application is presented and meets the State law requirement of a suitable person, someone being of good moral character and never having been convicted of a felony, and suitable place, location of license use is in a property zoned area, the City would have to accept it. If the RFP process was used, the City could list some criteria in the RFP, such as deadline to be operational by. If more than one RFP is received, the decision is then up to the Council on which one to accept, unlike the application process. It is the consensus of the Council that this open license be handled through the RFP process. More information will be presented at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Review/Discuss MOU for Possible TIF within Turtle Creek Highlands:** Quinn Reimers, with Collier Securities, was present to discuss a Memorandum of Understanding for a possible TIF district within the Turtle Creek Highlands addition. They are proposing an economic development TIF. The Developer's intentions are to construct up to 70 single family lots, 28 5-plexes, and 2 to 3 commercial lots. The Developer would secure a 20-year TIF loan, which they are projecting to pay off well before that timeframe. City Attorney Frieberg reiterated that approving this MOU does not bind the City to doing the TIF. Approving allows the Developer to move forward with securing their financing and to start the TIF process of presenting their plan to the Planning & Zoning Board, which would then come to the Council for final approval. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to approve the MOU to allow a TIF plan to be presented to the City – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve Advertising Agreement for Field Signage:** The Park & Recreation Board has put together an agreement for advertising at the Sports Complex. As presented, for an annual fee of \$500 you'd get a 4'x8' banner to be attached to the field fencing and for \$1,000 you'd get a 30"x42" decal to be placed on the scoreboard. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Boen to approve the advertising agreement as presented – Horn abstained with all others voting yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve Amendments to Employee Manual:** Staff is proposing two changes to the City's Employee Manual. The City's health insurance is through the SD Health Pool. This year they restructured their plans. As a result of this, the name of our plan changed. This name is referenced in the employee manual, so it need to be updated. The second change is to the vacation schedule. Currently vacation is capped at 20 years of service. The proposed change would add another tier to our schedule, allowing an addition 5 days of vacation after 30 years of service. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Boen to approve the changes to the employee manual as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Set 2025 Equalization Meeting Date:** A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Jass to set the Equalization Meeting for Monday Mar 17, 2025 – all voted yes, motion carried. A motion was made Kuehl, second by Jass to set the meeting time at 6:30pm – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve Seasonal Job Descriptions:** The eight seasonal job descriptions were provided. When doing the 2025 budget, wages for the seasonal positions were increased slightly in an effort to secure applicants. These increased wages have been incorporated into the job descriptions presented. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Berens to approve all seasonal job descriptions as presented and begin advertising – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Mayoral Appointment to the Park & Recreation Board:** The Park & Recreation Board consists of 5 voting member and 2 non-voting members, one being a council member and the other a staff member. Two of the voting members' terms were up at the end of the year and they do not want to be reappointed. At the Jan 21st meeting Mayor Jones appointed Frank Blaine to fill one of these positions. Mayor Jones is recommending the appointment of Duncan Woodhull to the other position. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to approve Mayor Jones' appointment of Duncan Woodhull to a 3yr term on the Park & Recreation Board – all voted yes, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to enter executive session pursuant to SDCL 9-34-19 for economic development, SDCL 1-25-2(1) for personnel, and SDCL1-25-2(3) for legal at 8:41pm – 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 Horn to exit executive session at 9:36pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: . A motion was made by Horn, second by Kuehl to adjourn at 9:37pm – 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