

Hartford City Council Meeting – Regular Meeting March 17, 2026

Mayor Arden Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with the following city council members present: Keith Carlson, Shaun Boen, Darrell Horacek, and Michelle Schilling. Cindy Matson and Travis Kuehl were absent with notice. Also present were City Administrator Teresa Sidel, City Finance Officer Karen Wilber, Code Enforcer/Building Inspector Kyle Christensen, and City Engineer Michael Redenbaugh. There were 4 people from the public in attendance.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

- **Approval of the Agenda:** A motion was made by Boen, second by Carlson to approve the agenda as set - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Minutes:**
 - A motion was made by Boen, second by Horacek to approve the regular meeting minutes from March 3, 2026 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Bills:** A motion was made by Schilling, second by Carlson to approve the bills submitted for payment – all voted yes, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Councilmember Boen asked that the pickleball nets be put up as soon as the weather allows.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPLICATIONS, AGREEMENTS AND HEARINGS:

- **Special Event Permit – Downtown Hartford Inc’s Downtown Markets:** Callie Tuschen, on behalf of Downtown Hartford, Inc., was present to submit a special event permit application to hold a farmer’s market and artisan vendor event from 3pm-9pm on the first Thurs of each month running May 28th through Sept 24th. They are requesting the closures of Main Ave from 2nd St to Menth St and 1st St from the alley to the east of Main Ave to the alley to the west of Main Ave and to allow for the use of alcohol in this area during the event. Tuschen also asked if the City could provide the following: additional garbage cans, allow the use of chalk paint to mark vendor placing on the street and for murals on the sidewalks, allow the painting a snowplow, provide one portable toilet, and provide 5k in funding for marketing the event. Discussion was held on possible placement of the portable toilet and their funding request. Staff is recommending that the 5k funding request for marketing and the cost of the portable toilet rental be taken from DHI’s funds that are being held by the City. A motion was made by Carlson, second by Horacek to approve the special event permit for the Hartford Downtown Market as presented. Carlson amended his original motion adding the approval of 5k in funding for marketing and the portable toilet to be paid from DHI’s city funds, second by Horacek – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Resolution 2026-9 Recreational Trails Program Application Sponsorship:** At the last meeting the Council made the decision to move forward with applying for the SD Game, Fish, & Park’s Trail Program grant to construct a trail on the City’s land on the edge of the N Oaks Industrial Park. Part of the application process requires passing a resolution that authorized the Mayor to sign and submit the application for the grant and also states that the City will commit to paying 20% of the cost of the project, if approved. A motion was made by Shilling, second by Boen to approve Resolution 2026-9 Recreational Trails Program Application Sponsorship – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve Grant Agreement between the City of Hartford and Sioux Empire United Way:** The City has been approved for a grant through the Sioux Empire United Way for a new AED machine for City Hall. As stated in the agreement presented, the cost of the AED through United Way is \$1,525 and this grant will pay 50%, with the City paying 50%. A motion was made by Horacek, second by Carlson to approve the grant agreement between the City of Hartford and the Sioux Empire United Way – all voted yes, motion carried.

VISITORS: Deb Jones was present to share her community garden project. Jones has received permission from Christ Lutheran Church to use a portion of their property to create a community garden space. To start she will have sixteen 10’x12’ lots, with the ability to expand in the future, if needed. Jones will be offering lots for a fee of \$25 each. She will first be offering them to members of Christ Lutheran Church since she is using their land, and any remaining will be offered to members of the community. She has applied for two grants to help cover any expense.

REPORTS:

- **Fire Department Report:** HAFR Chief Todd Lowe’s monthly report was provided. For the month of February there was a total of 17 calls, of which 7 were within city limits. An update on the various trainings held during the month was also provided. Upcoming events include the department’s pancake feed on Apr 25th and Public Safety Day on Aug 22nd.
- **Code Enforcement/Building Inspection Report:** Code Enforcer/Building Inspector Kyle Christensen was present to provide his reports for the Council. Code enforcement issues being addressed include pet issues, parking on grass, and junk/rubbish issues. Christensen is a member of the SD Code Enforcement Association and currently sits on the board. The association’s spring training event is being held May 6th-7th in Fort Pierre, SD. Christensen is requesting approval to attend this event. As a board member his lodging is paid for by SoDACE so the only expense would be the \$50 registration fee and any meals not provided by the event. A motion was made by Carlson, second by Horacek to approve Christensen attending the SoDACE Spring Training on May 6th 7th in Fort Piere – all voted yes, motion carried.

- **Engineer Report:** Michael Redenbaugh reported the following:
 - Engineers have conducted development reviews for public infrastructure as needed.
 - Site plans and plates are continually reviewed as received.
 - Engineers are reviewing stormwater management ownership and maintenance practices for future discussions.
 - Engineers are working with SECOG on information needed for the GFP Trail Grant application.
 - The WWTF project is nearly complete, with just some punchlist items remaining. One of the main items yet to be completed is the commissioning of the sludge press, which is contingent on sludge production. This is tentatively scheduled for April.
 - Punchlist work on the Western Ave project is expected to be done early spring. Once complete, the project will be closed out
 - The Mickelson Rd shared use path project is in the design phase now. Design survey work has been completed. Once the kickoff meeting is held with the City, ISG, and DOT, designing of the trail will begin. Construction is anticipated to start in the fall.
 - There were three bids submitted to the City of Sioux Falls for this year's slurry seal project. ASTECH was the lowest bidder with the City of Hartford's portion of the bid coming in at \$224,421.17, which is over the budgeted amount of 200k. Engineers noted that mobilization and striping were higher than projected. At the last meeting it was discussed that since the City has no major projects this year, maybe additional funding could be allocated to slurry sealing. A motion was made by Schilling, second by Carlson to approve the slurry seal bid from ASTECH in the amount of \$224,421.17 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Public Works Report:** Public Works Superintendent Wagner was not present. Sidel provided the following updates: construction of the new restroom building in Lyon Park is done, work on the shelters continues with two left to do, staff has obtained a quote to get electrical serve to the shed at the Sports Complex, the new play system for Lyon Park is being delivered with installation planned for April, aglime has been delivered to Lyon Park, and an individual has committed to running the concession stand this season.
- **Finance Officer Report:** City Finance Officer Wilber provided her report. Items included cash balances, sales tax revenue and DHI committee fund balance as of Feb 28th, a recap of bills submitted for payment, and the Mar/Apr calendar of events. All banking functions should be switched to Reliabank by the end of the month. The City has been lagging in sales tax revenue for the last several months. For informational purposes, the 1st Quarter sales tax totals for the last five years compared to the current year was provided.
 - **Renewal of Certificate of Deposit for Customer Deposit Funds:** The City collects a deposit for each water account. Since these deposits are restricted funds, they are kept in a separate checking account. In an effort to make more interest, a portion of these dollars has been invested in various CDs over the years. The current CD is with Reliabank, which is maturing. Wilber provided the current rates/terms from both Reliabank and First Interstate Bank. A motion was made by Carlson, second by Boen to approve investing \$92,745.56 of customer deposit funds in a 5-month CD with Reliabank at 3.67% with City Administrator Sidel and Finance Officer Wilber as authorized signers – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **City Administrator Report:** City Administrator Sidel provided her report. A meeting with residents along Kelly Ave to discuss possible improvements to Kelly Ave is being planned for Apr 21st 5:30pm-6:30pm. Mayor Jones, Carlson, Matson, and Schilling will be in attendance. Sidel continues to work with IT on the City's cybersecurity plan and recommendations. Once completed it will be presented to the Council. Sidel has applied for a grant through the Hartford Community Foundation for a new commercial dishwasher for the Senior Center. The City's 4 bridge structures are inspected on a rotating basis with 2 of them needing inspection every 4 years and the other 2 needing inspection every 2 years. The Federal Government has made some changes and now all 4 structures will require inspection every 2 years. This year we were only planning on inspecting two of them but now it will be all four. The City continues to work with SECOG and Houston Engineering on study for the Safe Street & Roads Grant. This study will help identify projects that promote traffic safety. There is a website that the community can access and mark where they think safety improvement are needed. The City has provided a link on their website.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Discuss America's 250th Event:** With the statewide celebration of America's 250th, some possible ideas of how Hartford can get involved were provided: Incorporate the 250th theme into the Jamboree Parade Event, which the Women of Today have agreed to; pass a resolution as an official America's 250th SD Community, which Sidel will present at the next meeting; display 250th flags in the park and/or banners downtown, which Sidel will obtain some pricing; have commemorative t-shirts/clothing or mugs for sale; plant a liberty tree; do a time capsule; have a 4th of July celebration that includes a community meal, free pool access, and fireworks. More planning to follow. Any citizens who wish to participate in the planning of Hartford's celebration should contact the City.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Budget Fund Request for Humboldt Ambulance Service:** Tim Even, on behalf of Humboldt Ambulance, was present to provide a yearly update and request their 2026 budget appropriation. A motion was made by Schilling, second by Horack to approve payment of the Humboldt Ambulance's 2026 budget appropriation in the amount of \$25,000 – all voted yes, motion carried
- **Review West Central School District's Application for Economic Development Funds:** West Central Superintendent Dr. Knight was present to submit their application for economic development funds. They are requesting 50k to 75k to purchase a residential lot in Hartford. Currently the district's Residential Construction

Class builds a home over a two year period that is then auctioned off and moved to the owner's lot, which is sometimes outside of Hartford. If approved for this funding, the district is proposing purchasing a lot to erect the house on. Once completed, this property would then be sold and the funds from that would be used to purchase the next lot, and the 2-year cycle would continue. The program offers real-world learning experiences for students, provides for affordable housing as the home would stay in Hartford, which in turn increases the tax base and population. The Council accepted the application for consideration. Further review of all applicants will take place at a later date.

- **Discuss Yard Waste Disposal Site:**

- **Days/Hours of Operation:** In the past the question had been brought up about extending hours at the yard waste site. The site opens the 1st Saturday in April through the 4th Saturday in November, weather permitting. Access is available on Tuesdays & Thursdays 4pm-8pm and on Saturdays 9am-4pm, with closing adjusted in the fall at dusk. It is the consensus of the Council to leave the hours as set.
- **Disposal of Tree Branches:** In the past any tree branches brought to the yard waste site were eventually hauled to the City's lagoon area for chipping/hauling by another party. Due to the sale of this land to GHI, the City needs to find a new location. Since the City does not have a suitable location, discussions have been held with Jeff Zacharias about hauling any branches to his land off of Hwy 38/I-90. Zacharias would allow and would charge a rental fee of \$1,500/mo., which would amount to 12k over the 8 months the yard waste site is open. The City does own the parcel of land just to the east of Zacharias. Currently this area is not gated, and staff is not sure if it is a flat enough area where we can place the pile plus have enough room for trucks to be able to get in and out of there. Some on the Council feel this site would be worth investigating while others feel the Zacharias site would be the best option. As far as the disposal of the branches, Mueller Pallet would pick them up for free if there were over 10 loads. Staff believes we will meet this requirement. A motion was made by Boen, second by Carlson to approve paying \$1,500/mo. to Zacharias for tree branch storage - Boen and Carlson voted yes, with Horacek and Schilling voted no – motion failed. Staff will look into the City's parcel and report findings at a future meeting.

- **Discuss Motorized Scooter Regulations:** With the ongoing safety concerns with motorized scooters in town, there has been some discussion as to whether the City should adopt specific regulations to address them. Deputy Rechtenbaugh is planning on holding an assembly with the younger students at WC School. One of his topics of discussion will be motorized scooters and how to operate them safely. It was the consensus of the Council to hold off on doing anything for now, until after Deputy Rechtenbaugh holds his assembly.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Schilling, second by Boen to adjourn at 9:05pm – 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