

## Hartford City Council Meeting – Regular Meeting April 7, 2026

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. Shaun Boen was absent with notice. Also present were City Administrator Teresa Sidel, City Finance Officer Karen Wilber, Public Works Superintendent Craig Wagner, City Engineer Micheal Redenbaugh, and 2 people from the public.

### BUSINESS ITEMS:

- **Approval of the Agenda:** A motion was made by Matson, second by Horacek 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 March 17, 2026 – Kuehl abstained with all others voting yes, motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

### APPLICATIONS, AGREEMENTS, HEARINGS, RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

- **Resolution 2026-10 Recognizing Hartford, SD as an Official America’s 250<sup>th</sup> Community:** As the City continues to plan for the statewide celebration of America’s 250<sup>th</sup>, Resolution 2026-10 was presented. This resolution recognizes Hartford as an official America’s 250<sup>th</sup> community, supporting the creation of a committee of volunteers to help in the planning of Hartford’s celebration. A motion was made by Matson, second by Kuehl to approve Resolution 2026-10 Recognizing Hartford, SD as an Official America’s 250<sup>th</sup> Community – all voted yes, motion carried.
  - **Discuss America’s 250<sup>th</sup> Hartford Celebration:** More discussion was held on various ways that Hartford can commemorate and celebrate this historical event.
    - The 250<sup>th</sup> theme will be incorporating into the Jamboree Parade this summer.
    - Sidel has gathered some preliminary pricing on 250<sup>th</sup> flags. More information will be gathered as to the number of flags needed, their size, and their locations.
    - Wagner will talk to Mike Smith about planting a liberty tree, possibly an Elm, in Century Park.
    - The Chamber will be consulted on their interest in participating in a Community Celebration. Ideas include a community meal, fee pool access, and fireworks.
    - To gather some historical information and put together the story of Hartford since it will also be Hartford’s 130<sup>th</sup>.
    - A notation was made in the April newsletter about forming a planning committee for Hartford’s celebration. Anyone interested in being on this committee should reach out to City Hall.
- **Review/Approve Renewal of Cannabis License for Grass Roots Gardens:** Grass Roots Garden, LLC has a city license for a cannabis cultivation facility. Their license is up for renewal. All required paperwork and fees have been received. Kyle Kneip and Travis Haaland with Grass Roots Gardens were present to provide a recap of their last year in business and answer any questions. A motion was made by Matson, second by Schilling to approve the renewal of the cannabis license for Grass Roots Gardens, LLC – Carlson abstained with all others voting yes, motion carried.

### REPORTS:

- **Sheriff’s Department Report:** Deputy Rechtenbaugh was present to provide his report. For the month of Mar there were 229 calls for service, which is an increase of 86 calls from the previous month. The issue of dirt bikes was discussed. Unless they are driven on the street, there is nothing the Sheriff’s Dept can do from a law enforcement standpoint. Rechtenbaugh will touch base with the night and weekend deputies about the ongoing issue. A recap was provided on the assemblies held at the school on scooter safety. In an effort to encourage positive reinforcement, it was suggested to start a program where kids are rewarded for following the rules when operating a scooter. Rewards could be such things as a coupon to Dairy Queen. If any businesses or the public would like to contribute, coupons could be dropped off at City Hall. Rechtenbaugh informed the Council that this would be his last meeting as he is moving to the Investigation Division. The City thanked him for his service. Hartford’s new deputy will be announced in the coming weeks.
- **Engineer Report:** Michael Rechtenbaugh reported the following:
  - Site plans and plats are reviewed as they are received.
  - Engineers are in the process of reviewing stormwater management/ownership practices.
  - Engineers continue to observe public improvements by private developments as needed.
  - Information is being provided to SECOG as needed for the SD GF&P grant application for the bike trail.
  - Working with City Staff on elevations for aglime at Lyon Park.
  - The commissioning of the sludge press at the WWTF is scheduled for April. Contractors continue to work on punch list items.
  - Punchlist work is expected to be done early spring on the Western Ave project.
  - A kickoff meeting with the DOT was held on Mar 20<sup>th</sup> for the Mickelson Rd shared use path project. Design of the trail is underway. Due to federal regulation required with this grant, this project will not be completed until 2027.

- The meeting with the residents along Kelley Ave is set for Apr 21<sup>st</sup> from 5:30pm-6:30pm. Engineers plan to be present to discuss possible options for improvements in this area.
- **Public Works Report:** Public Works Superintendent Wagner provided his report.
  - Streets – A preconstruction meeting for the slurry seal project is scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup>. Staff continue to blade gravel roads to prep them for mag water later this spring. The boulevard trees along Mickelson Rd are planted. Staff is working on getting them all mulched. Next week planning will start for the planting of the remaining boulevard trees and the trees for the park. Wagner has reached out to the State about the possible relocation of the City’s tree branch site. When/if it is relocated, we just need to update some paperwork on file with them.
  - Water – The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter report has been submitted. Next reporting is due July 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Sewer – All lift stations are working well. The February DMR’s have been completed. Staff plans on pumping down the aerated cells at the lagoons next week. Once this is done, Staff can begin working on discharging the last pond. The roof ladder is scheduled to be installed at the WWTF next week.
  - Parks – If the nice weather continues, the restrooms will be opened up next week, and the nets will be hung. There is one more shelter to be upgraded, which is scheduled to started next week. Aglime at Field A will be done this week. The new playground equipment is being installed this week with placement per the Master Park Plan. Wagner provided an update on the surface condition of the current pickleball court, thinking ahead of how the next one will be constructed.
  - Sports Complex – The electrical service to the shed has been installed. Dirt work and seeding around new concrete areas has been done.
  - Public Buildings: At budget time 70k was budgeted to make some improvements to the basement of the Gage House. Wagner has received one quote and he is in the process of getting two more. Once received, he will present all the information to the Council.
  - Training – The SD Water and Wastewater Association is holding a spring seminar in Pierre April 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>. Wagner is asking for approval for himself and Eric Lupkes to attend the seminar. Cost would be registration fees, two nights hotel, and any meals not covered by the conference. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Carlson to approve Wagner and Lupkes attending the SDWWA spring seminar Apr 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Finance Officer Report:** City Finance Officer Wilber provided her report. Items included a summary of revenues received in Mar along with an overview of the city’s cash balances, revenues, and expenses through Feb. All banking functions have been switched to Reliabank, with the exception of one account which should be done in the next week or so. The Apr calendar of events was provided.
  - **Review/Approve 2025 Annual Report:** The 2025 annual report has been completed by the auditors, and a copy was provided for Council review. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to approve the 2025 annual report as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.
  - **Removal of Outstanding Check from City Books:** Any checks that are uncashed and over a year old are address by trying to contact the payee to either have them cash the check or, if lost, reissue it. If no response is received, any check for \$50 or greater must be sent to the State’s Unclaimed Property Division. Any checks under \$50 can be written off the books with Council approval. There are currently two checks under review. One is being reissued to the payee. Several attempts have been made to contact the payee of the second check with no luck. Since this check is under \$50, it can be written off the books. A motion was made by Matson, second by Carlson to write off check #4247 from the City’s books – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **City Administrator Report:** City Administrator Sidel provided her report. Sidel is waiting for IT to review the cybersecurity response plan. Once completed, the plan will be present to the Council. Sidel applied for a grant through the Hartford Community Foundation to help with the cost of a new commercial dishwasher for the Senior Center. No word on this grant yet. SECOG is helping with the application for the SD GF&P grant for the new trail. The submission deadline is Apr 10<sup>th</sup>. The hiring of summer help has started. So far 2 yard waste site monitors, 2 public works assistants, the pool manager, and an assistant manager have been hired. Sidel has been asked to speak at an HBA event about Hartford’s growth and ongoing development. Sidel provided a brief recap of three different events attended: The SD City Managers Association conference, Dakota Mainstem’s annual meeting, and the District 3 meeting.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Discuss Yard Waste Disposal Site:** 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. Jeff Zacharias would allow the City to place the branches on his property 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 a parcel of land just to the east of Zacharias. Staff has looked at this area and feels it would be a good solution. The parcel is somewhat divided east and west by the creek. The west portion would be too uneven, but the east portion is flat and would allow for enough room for trucks to get in there to load and unload the branches. This option would have minimal cost – just staff time for some minor fencing repairs and to install a gate. The City does have a one year lease in place with GHI to access the lagoon land. The consensus of the Council is to continue to use the lagoon land this year and revisit this topic again in early 2027.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Discuss Deadline for Economic Development Proposals:** During the 2026 budget, 100k was budgeted for economic development funding. So far, the City has received two proposals for a portion of this funding. It was mentioned at the last meeting that maybe a submission deadline be set for this funding. The consensus of the Council is to set a deadline of May 1, 2026, to apply for any economic development funding.
- **Discuss Special Meeting Date for 2027 Budget Requests:** Earlier this year the decision was made to hold a special meeting, prior to the budget meeting, to hear and discuss budget request from various entities. This information would then be incorporated into the budget that is presented to the Council during the August budget meeting. Sidel will send a Google poll out to the Council with possible dates in July for this meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** A motion was made by Kuehl, 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 8:31pm – 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.

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Karen Wilber, Finance Officer

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** A motion was made by Matson, second by Horacek to exit executive session at 8:45pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Matson, second by Horacek to adjourn at 8:46pm – 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.

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Teresa Sidel, City Administrator