

Hartford City Council Meeting – Regular Meeting May 5, 2026

Mayor Arden Jones called the meeting to order at 7:03pm with the following city council members present: Keith Carlson, Cindy Matson, Shaun Boen, and Travis Kuehl. Darrell Horacek, and Michelle Schilling were absent with notice. Also present were City Administrator Teresa Sidel, City Finance Officer Karen Wilber, Public Works Superintendent Craig Wagner, City Engineer Michael Redenbaugh, and 5 people from the public.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

- **Approval of the Agenda:** Mayor Jones indicated that the HAFR requested their agenda item be moved to the next meeting. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Boen to approve the agenda as set with the exclusion of the HAFR request for their 2026 budget allocation - all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Approval of the Minutes:** A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Boen to approve the regular meeting minutes from April 21, 2026 – all voted yes, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

APPLICATIONS, AGREEMENTS, HEARINGS, RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

- **7:05 Public Hearing – Malt Beverage License Renewals:** Buffalo Ridge Brewery, Coffee Cup, Get N’ Go, Brown Jug, Dollar General, AmericInn, and Stomping Grounds have submitted applications to renew their Retail Malt Beverage Licenses for 2026/2027. The Goat Bar & Grill is choosing not to renew their malt beverage license this year. They’ve held this license in the past to be able to sell off-sale malt beverage. Since they do not sell enough to justify the cost of the license, they are not renewing. They still can sell on sale, as this is covered under their restaurant liquor license. A motion was made by Matson, second by Carlson to approve the renewal of all applications submitted – all voted yes motion carried.

REPORTS:

- **Sheriff’s Department Report:** Deputy Rechtenbaugh was present, along with Deputy Alex Wahl, who will be Hartford’s new deputy starting in June. Wahl introduced himself to the Council. Rechtenbaugh provided the monthly report. For the month of Apr there were 307 for service, which is an increase of 78 calls from the previous month.
- **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.
 - Contractors continue to work on the remaining punchlist items at the new wastewater facility.
 - **Review/Approve Pay Request #28:** Pay app #28 from Rice Lake Construction Group for work completed through April 28th on the WRRF was presented. A motion was made by Matson, second by Carlson to approve payment of pay app #28 in the amount of \$4,862 to Rice Lake Construction Group – all voted yes, motion carried.
 - Design work on the Mickelson Road shared use path is ongoing. Progress plans have been provided for staff review. Continue to provide information to the State as required by the grant.
 - Engineers will be monitoring seed growth along areas of the Western Ave project, having the contractor water and/or reseed as necessary.
 - Engineers are preparing visualizations of potential roadway sections for Kelley Ave with the information received from the meeting held on Apr 21st with residents and staff. Once these visualizations are complete, they will be presented to the Council for review.
- **Public Works Report:** Public Works Superintendent Wagner provided his report.
 - Streets** – A preconstruction meeting for the slurry seal project is scheduled for May 18th. Staff continue to blade gravel roads. Wagner will start gathering pricing for mag water and crack sealing next week. All equipment is running well. All tree planting is done for now. There are 6 trees that have been potted and will be planted later this fall at Swenson Sports Complex. The mosquito sprayer has been serviced and calibrated.
 - Water** – The 1st quarter report has been submitted. Next reporting is due July 10th.
 - Sewer** – All lift stations are working well. All DMR’s have been completed for now. The next one is due May 28th. Pumping of the aeration ponds is done. Staff will now start moving water from Pond #1 to Pond #2. Once complete, samples will be taken to see if we can discharge. The bollards have been installed around the new lift station, and the hydrants have been replaced at the plant.
 - Parks** – All park restrooms are now open. Repair work on the last shelter is now complete. The parks and ballfield are being fertilized. At the last meeting, Wagner and Engineer Heim provided some preliminary cost information to do a post-tension concrete for the 2 new pickleball courts to be constructed this year. Estimates at budget time to construct 2 courts with regular reinforced concrete came in at approximately 70k. The cost of 2 courts with post-tension concrete would be approximately 200k. It was the consensus of the Council that all this information be presented to the Park & Recreation Board for their input. The Park & Recreation reviewed this information at their Apr 27th meeting, and the consensus of this board is to move ahead with the same design that

has been used in the past. They do not feel that the benefits outweigh the cost for the post-tension concrete option. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Matson to move forward with the original design for the budgeted amount of 70k – all voted yes, motion carried.

Pool – The grates for the pool have been replaced and the pool has been painted. Staff has started filling the pool. The heaters and equipment have all been tested and are working as they should. The pool will open for the season on May 22nd.

Sports Complex – Batting nets will be going up next week. The playground equipment will be placed north of the parking lots. Installation will start in the coming weeks.

Public Buildings: At budget time 70k was budgeted to make some improvements to the basement of the Gage House to help with the wet/damp conditions in the basement. Wagner attempted to get a few quotes but was only able to secure one, which is from Blackburn Foundation Repair. The quote includes grading, drain tile, sump pump, and rock around the outside to help with drainage. In addition, they would seal the walls, paint the beams, and line the floor. Their quote is for \$76,962.88, which is approximately 7k over the budgeted amount. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Boen to approve the proposal from Blackburn Foundation Repair in the amount of \$76,962.88 – all voted yes, motion carried.

Training: Eric Lupkes will be taking the water distribution exam this month.

- **Finance Officer Report**: City Finance Officer Wilber provided her report. Items included a summary of revenues received in Apr along with an overview of the city's cash balances, revenues, and expenses through Mar. The semi-annual payroll for the Council was done on May 4th. The May calendar of events was provided.
- **City Administrator Report**: City Administrator Sidel provided her report. The new AED for city hall is in. With the completion of the Western Ave project, Sidel will be working on closing out the Community Access Grant and getting payment. The City continues to advertise for the Wastewater Specialist Plant position and all the park rec program positions. All other summer positions have been hired. A meeting was held with members of the Council, staff, and Sam Asssam to discuss his proposed TIF. Asssam intends on submitting a revised TIF plan to the City.
 - **Grant Submission for Transportation Plan**: There is a grant program available through SECOG that helps municipalities develop a transportation plan. The City has never had a transportation plan and having a plan like this in place would be beneficial in future grant submissions for transportation type projects. Based on the criteria of the grant, ISG is estimating the cost to develop this plan would be around 100k. The grant would pay 81.95% of the cost so the City's share would be approximately 18k. If the decision is made to move forward with this grant, this would be a 2027 project. This expense could then be included in the 2027 budget. A motion was made by Matson, second by Carlson to move forward with the transportation plan grant through SECOG – all voted yes, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Discuss America's 250th Event**: Mayor Jones and Sidel met with Chamber Director Jill Skots. The Chamber holds their annual summer block party in July of each year. It was discussed that the City partner with the Chamber on this event, having a community celebration of America's 250th and Hartford's 130th. The date of the event will be Friday July 17th from 6-9pm. Preliminary discussion includes a free community meal, kids' entertainment, vendors, music, fireworks, giveaways and drawings, among others. Sidel will attend the Chamber's next marketing meeting to get more information on costs involved to be presented at the next council meeting. It was the consensus of the Council to proceed with ordering flags for the City's various flagpoles. Sidel will work with the vendor on a design that will incorporate both America's 250th and Hartford's 130th. More discussion and planning will be held at future meetings.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Approval of Scheels' Signage at Swenson Park**: Scheels would like to participate in the banner advertising at Swenson Park. However, they've requested to use their own signage rather than the banners the City is providing. Their sign is 26'x4' made of plastic/vinyl material. With this signage being larger than the banner the city would provide, the price would increase from \$400/year to \$650/year on a 3year agreement. Staff feels that there should be no issues with having the larger signage on the fencing. The Park & Recreation Board discussed this at their April 27th meeting and is recommending approval to the Council. A motion was made by Kuehl, second by Boen to approve moving forward with Scheels' signage at Swenson Park as presented – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review/Approve Abatement for Parcel #23568**: State law allows property tax abatements for qualifying disabled veterans & seniors. The Minnehaha County Auditor has received an abatement request from a qualifying disabled senior on a parcel of land that is located within Hartford city limits. Since this is within Hartford's municipal boundaries, the request need to be approved by the governing board. A motion was made by Matson, second by Carlson to approve the property tax abatement request submitted on Parcel #23568 – all voted yes, motion carried.
- **Review Municipal Ordinance #760 Fines & Fees**: The City's current fines & fees are spelled out in Ordinance #760. Each year the Council reviews this fee schedule. Last year several minor increases were made. Staff is recommending no change in the fee amounts this year, just two verbiage changes – under the Pool section remove the family cap on season passes and under the Alcohol/Lottery section clarify the fee for On-Premise Full-Service Restaurant Liquor License to be \$3,354 for the original license and \$1,500 annually thereafter. The consensus of the Council is to not make any changes to the fees at this time. A revised ordinance with the two verbiage changes will be presented for approval at the next meeting.

- **Review Economic Development Proposals:** The City has 100k economic development funding available. Proposals were being accepted until May 1st. Four proposals have been received. West Central School District presented their proposal in March. The following three proposals were presented:
 - **West Central Music Association** – Brad Bjergaard was present to request 35k to purchase band instruments over the next 3 years for the WC middle and high schools. Due to an increased number of students participating in band, the availability of instrument to rent, and the financial limitations of some district families, these funds would be a huge help. The association kicked off a capital campaign in the fall of 2025 with a goal of raising 50k. They’ve raised about 12k and plan to continue the campaign until they reach their goal.
 - **Sioux Metro Growth Alliance** – Tyler Tordsen with SMGA has submitted a request of 50k to help provide the Hartford Area Development Foundation with an economic development professional to serve as the HADF’s Executive Director. This contracted position would support both the City of Hartford and the HADF in executing its economic goals.
 - **Christ Lutheran Church Daycare** – Kelsey Zirbel, Director of CLC Daycare has submitted a request of 35k to 40k for improvements to their facility including the playground, kitchen, & gym. The daycare serves roughly 30 families now but there is, however, 9 families on the waitlist due to limited staffing and space. These funds would also provide wages for new hires to expand enrollment capacity, expanding childcare access for the community. Christa Kennington, on behalf of Zirbel and who is also with the daycare, was present to answer any questions.

Over the next few weeks, the Council will review and score each of the 4 proposals, with more discussion planned for the May 19th meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Boen, second by Matson to enter executive session pursuant to SDCL 9-34-19 for economic development at 8:46pm – 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 Boen to exit executive session at 9:25pm – all voted yes, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Matson, second by Boen to adjourn at 9:26pm – 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