

**CITY COMMON COUNCIL
OF HARTFORD CITY, INDIANA
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME: Mayor Eckstein called to order a meeting of the Common Council of the City of Hartford City at 6:00pm, September 7, 2021.

ROLL CALL Members of the council present were Dustin George, Ron Dudelston, Jimmy Lytle, Michael Wolfe and Tony Scaggs. Also in attendance were Mayor Dan Eckstein, Attorney, Brandon Murphy and Clerk-Treasurer, Dana Whatley.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: Mr. Dudelston made a motion to suspend the regular Council meeting. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to suspend the regular meeting was 5-0.

A.) ORDINANCE 2021-12 FOR APPROPRIATIONS AND TAX RATES (2022

BUDGET): There was no public comment. Mr. Scaggs made a motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2021-12. Mr. Dudelston seconded the motion. The vote to close hearing was 5-0.

**B.) ORDINANCE 2021-13 AMENDING THE CITY POLICY & EMPLOYEE
HANDBOOK ADOPTING THE INDIANA NEPOTISM STATUTE & ADAPTING**

MORE DETAILED POLICIES: Mr. Dudelston made a motion to open the public hearing. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to open the public hearing was 5-0. Attorney Murphy explained that with the new state statutes the city is required to adopt the language of the statute and there are places in the statute that we can adopt a more detailed policy. There was no public comment. Mr. Lytle made a motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2021-13. Mr. Dudelston seconded the motion. The vote to close the hearing was 5-0.

**C.) ORDINANCE 2021-14 ESTABLISHING AN AMENDED SCHEDULE OF RATES &
CHARGES TO BE COLLECTED BY THE CITY OF HARTFORD CITY, INDIANA
FROM OWNERS OF PROPERTY SERVED BY THE SEWAGE WORKS OF SAID**

CITY: Mr. Lytle made a motion to open the public hearing. Mr. Dudelston seconded the motion. The vote to open the public hearing was 5-0. Ms. Jennifer Wilson with Crowe LLP addressed the Council and explained about the sewage rate ordinance. The city is tasked by IDEM to do phase III of the CSO sewer/separation project in the fall of 2022. Ms. Wilson explained in detail the scope of work needed and the details of how the rate was reached, for this project. There was discussion about this ordinance by the City Council. There was no public comment. Mr. Dudelston made a motion to close the public hearing for ordinance 2021-14. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to close the public hearing was 5-0.

Mr. Dudelston made a motion to resume the regular City Council meeting. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to resume meetings was 5-0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Lytle made a motion to remove new business (A). Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to amend the agenda was 5-0.

Mr. Dudelston made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A.) MINUTES FROM AUGUST 2, 2021: Mr. Lytle made a motion to approve the minutes from August 2nd as submitted. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

B.) MINUTES FROM SPECIAL MEETING JULY 14, 2021: Mr. Scaggs made a motion to approve the minutes from the special meeting of July 14, 2021 as submitted. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

C.) MINUTES FROM SPECIAL MEETING AUGUST 9, 2021: Mr. Scaggs made a motion to approve the minutes from the special meeting of August 9, 2021 as submitted. Mr. Dudelston seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

A.) JIM WEISEMAN – REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION: Mr. Weiseman explained that when the City was charged with the initiative to run water north of Hartford City beyond its current location, for the new lumber yard being built and to the Blackford County Jr./Sr. High School; the Water Department stepped up and completed the task in a timely fashion. They saved the City at least half the amount that it would have cost to hire a private company. The Redevelopment Commission wanted to publically acknowledge all members, of the Water Department, in attendance at the meeting for a job very well done. He presented Water Superintendent, Bill Bacon with a letter of thank you from the Redevelopment Commission, Blackford County Schools and the City of Hartford City.

B.) RE-ADDRESS COVID-19 SICK PAY PROTOCOL: Mr. George made a motion to continue the COVID-19 sick pay protocol until the December 6, 2021 City Council meeting. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

A.) CHASITY FRALEY – STOP SIGN AT WEST KICKAPOO & “B” STREET: Ms. Fraley did not show for the council meeting. The Council asked Clerk-Treasurer Whatley to reach out to Ms. Fraley to see if she wants to be put on the next agenda. Mr. George made a motion to table this topic to the October 4, 2021 meeting. Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to table was 5-0.

B.) ANNE OWEN – AREA PLANNING & ZONING ITEMS: Ms. Owen explained that the three permits she's bringing before Council were all given a favorable recommendation by the Area Planning Committee.

- 1.) DEMOLITION PERMIT:** Mr. Dudelston made a motion to approve the demo permit. Mr. George seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.
- 2.) ROOFING PERMIT:** Mr. Lytle made a motion to approve the roofing permit. Mr. George seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.
- 3.) SOLAR & WIND VERBIAGE CHANGE:** Mr. George made a motion change the verbiage on this permit. Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.
- 4.) BUILDING INSPECTOR:** Ms. Owen stated (just for informational purposes) that the County Commissioner's Attorney is drawing up an interlocal agreement to provide for a building inspector. She will bring that document back to the October 4th Council meeting for approval. No vote was needed this evening.

C.) B. BACON

- 1.) ON CALL PAYMENT:** Mr. Bacon approached Council to request that the \$100 on-call pay be paid as a flat fee instead having the call out penalty. Mr. Scaggs made a motion to approve the on-call payment be a flat \$100 fee for 2022. Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.
- 2.) LONGEVITY:** Mr. Bacon and Mr. Eli Coulter addressed Council requesting that they consider lifting the 20 year cap on the longevity pay. There was some discussion about this. Councilman Dudelston asked for a list of employees with the number of years of seniority for each. Mr. Lytle made a motion to give Attorney Murphy permission to draft an ordinance to remove the cap on longevity. Mr. Dudelston seconded the motion. The vote to move forward was 5-0.
- 3.) USDA GRANT FOR BACKHOE & WORK TRUCK:** Mr. Bacon explained that he's been working on a grant from the USDA for a new backhoe and work truck. He stated that the City qualifies for a \$50,000 grant. Mr. Bacon said that the backhoe they currently have is a 2004/05 and they have spent \$12,000 over the last 6 months in repairs. When he spoke with the dealer they are willing to give \$33,000 trade in on a new one. The estimated cost for a new backhoe is \$67,000. He explained that they also want to purchase a work truck for an additional \$40,000. Mr. Bacon requested permission to spend over \$5,000 on this endeavor. Mr. Dudelston made a motion to

give Mr. Bacon permission to spend more than \$5,000 contingent upon the award of this grant. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

D.) C. CROUSE – SALARY ORDINANCE: Chief Crouse requested that Council amend the current salary ordinance to add a 13th officer. He stated that if approved the police department will pay for this position for the remainder of 2021 & all of 2022 out of the LOIT fund. The police department will then budget for this position in the 2023 budget cycle. There was a lot of discussion. Mr. George made a motion to approve and additional 13th officer. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 4-1.

E.) N. PARROTT – TEMPORARY NO PARKING BECAUSE THE INTERSECTION AT HWY 26 & HWY 3 CLOSURE: Chief Parrott addressed Council and stated that he'd brought this topic up earlier in the month and since then he has realized that the closure of this intersection has not been as problematic as first thought. It was decided that things will remain the same unless it becomes an issue before this intersection opens up. There was no action taken on this.

F.) 1ST READING OF ORDINANCE 2021-12 – APPROPRIATIONS AND TAX RATES (2022 BUDGET): Mr. Dudelston made a motion to approve the 1st reading of Ordinance 2021-12. Mr. Lytle seconded the motion. The vote to approve the 1st reading was 5-0.

G.) RESOLUTION 2021-40 ESTABLISHING POLICIES & PROCEDURES TO PROTECT DECORUM & FOSTER THE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC MEETINGS: Mr. Lytle made a motion to approve Resolution of 2021-40. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

H.) 1ST READING OF ORDINANCE 2021-13 AMENDING THE CITY POLICY & EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ADOPTING THE INDIANA NEPOTISM STATUTE & ADAPTING MORE DETAILED POLICIES: Mr. Lytle made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2021-13. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The vote to approve the 1st reading was 5-0.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

A.) Mayor Eckstein stated that he spoke with Robin Walker (Richard Rice's daughter). Mr. Rice was a former city employee who was also the 1st COVID-19 death in Blackford County. She would like to see the City create a memorial area on City Hall grounds for the COVID-19 deaths. He stated maybe making a memorial bench with memorial bricks surrounding it. Mr. Dudelston made a motion to move forward with developing a plan for this. Mr. George seconded the motion. The vote to move forward was 5-0.

B.) Mayor Eckstein stated that Indiana has mandated that all new firefighters go through a live fire to become certified. Currently the city and county do not have any sort of facility to do this training. We have the capability to do this in Grant County but that would mean the bulk (if not all) of our Fire Department would be out of the county at the same time. The Fire Department would like to look into grants to construct a Conex Burn Chamber somewhere in the city to do this training and also offer additional training capabilities for the Police Department, as well. Mr. Dudelston made a motion to move forward. Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to move forward was 5-0.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT: NONE

COUNCIL INPUT:

- A.) Mr. Wolfe brought up the subject of Huggins Drive. There is a debate as to who owns this street. It is believed that the City owns the street. The City does currently plow snow on this road during the winter. There was much discussion. It was decided to have Attorney Murphy do a deed search to try to come to a definitive answer.
- B.) Mr. George wanted to know if Helen Lieber Preschool vacated the north/south alley? It was determined that yes it was vacated in 2018 or 2019.
- C.) Mr. George wanted to propose a 15 to 30 minute parking sign in front of Amazing Glaze bakery. He requested this topic be added to the October council meeting for discussion.
- D.) Mr. George brought up the topic of a stop sign for High St. & Kickapoo St. This was a topic that was voted down by Council a couple of months ago. No action was taken at this time.
- E.) Mr. Dudelston stated that he has a vacate alley topic to bring up at the October meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- A.) Ms. Cheri Brown told everyone that there is a movie night scheduled at Weiler Plaza. They will be showing "Sherlock Gnome". She invited everyone to come out to enjoy it.
- B.) Ms. Cheri Brown stated that on September 22nd a Taylor University Senior Social Work class will be doing a preliminary assessment of Hartford City.
- C.) Ms. Anne Owen brought to the Council's attention that Independence Parkway from Park Avenue to the ambulance entrance of the hospital is not a city street. She stated she

wasn't sure if this was just an oversight but she has been directed that this needs to be addressed and corrected.

D.) Ms. Pam Weiseman wanted to give kudos to the City Council for doing such a good job. She gave kudos to the Fire Chief for being so proactive. She gave kudos to the new Police Chief. She finally gave kudos to all of the senior employees for their dedication and loyalty to Hartford City.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business, Mr. Dudelston made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.

FOLDER 2/REC 46