

The Hartington City Council met for a public hearing and their regular meeting on September 25th, 2023 at City Hall beginning at 5:00 P.M. Notice of time and place of the meeting was given in advance notice by posting. Notice of time and place of the meeting was communicated in the advanced notice to the Mayor and council.

Present were Mayor Becker; Councilman Bartling, Christensen, Kathol, and Sudbeck ; City Clerk-Treasurer Brittnei Benscoter, Deputy Clerk de Waal, and Legal Counsel-Nikki Brandt.

Mayor Becker opened the public hearing for the fiscal 2023-2024 budget at 4:59 P.M. The 2023-2024 property tax is set at 702,016.00 with the general being 452,016.00 and the bond \$250,000.00. The levy decreased from 66.5 last year to 66.2 this year. There were no questions or comments. The public hearing was closed at 5:01 P.M.

Mayor Becker called the regular meeting to order at 5:01 P.M., followed by all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. He announced that the open meeting law poster was on the back wall of the council room and reminded all present to silence their cell phones.

A motion to approve the minutes from September 12th, 2023 meeting was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – abstained, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Resolution 20230925 – Setting the Property Tax Request was introduced by Councilman Sudbeck. A Motion to approve the setting of the property tax request was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christiansen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

A motion to approve an additional 1% increase of restricted funds authority was made by Councilman Bartling and was seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Resolution 20230925A – Adopting the 2023-2024 Budget was introduced by Councilman Sudbeck. A motion to approve the 2023-2024 Budget was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Christiansen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Resolution 20230925B – Adopting the One and Six Year Plan was introduced by Councilman Sudbeck. A motion to approve the One and Six Year Plan was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christiansen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

A Sign Permit was introduced for U.S. Cellular. A motion was made by Councilman Christiansen to approve the sign permit for U.S. Cellular and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Joan Brodersen approached council on behalf of the Library Board. She proposed to council that she would like to keep the library budget that council has set for 2023-2024 the same and still be able to give the raises to both librarians that they Library Board has suggested. She stated the Library Board will either cut other expense or find other avenues of funding to pay for the non-salary expenses. She stated the Library Board would like control of the ability to set wages per a statute that she previously sent to the Mayor.

Mayor Becker stated he checked with the City accountant and they believed that the Library Board was not able to set the wages for the librarians. He stated they have checked funds in the past 5 years and the budget for the library has increased significantly so the City has been supporting the library and not cutting funds; however, they have to look at the total benefit package. He stated they have been looking at different insurance options to hopefully decrease the spending while still giving good benefits to their employees. Mayor Becker asked Joan Brodersen if there were any plans to look into the foundation funds the library has. Joan Brodersen told him they have looked into it to possibly be used to offset the costs for books and expenses, but they cannot spend the principal, only the proceeds, so it would not be feasible to use for salaries.

Councilman Kathol asked the council what the drawback would be to Joan Brodersen's request to keeping their budget numbers the same and lowering their expenses to increase the wages for their librarians. Councilman Christensen stated they learned from the benefit manager that a person's income could affect their insurance premium so he would want to double check on the insurance. Head Librarian Tami Anderson stated she talked with the City's current health insurance agent and he stated that the premiums were based on age, not income. Councilman Christensen said he would like to double check

the insurance angle before approving anything. Head Librarian Tami Anderson stated she has only received 50 cent wage per year. Joan Broadersen stated that wages for new hires has been impacting the wage bases. Councilman Bartling stated if there was going to be discussion about other people's wages he wanted to go into Executive Session.

Councilman Kathol made a motion to approve Joan Broadersen's request to keep the budget amount the same, give the raises to the librarians, and lower their expenses to do so. Councilman Kathol stated he was upset about holding back on wages for someone just because they take advantage of the benefits the City offers them. There was no second of Councilman Kathol's motion. Councilman Bartling made a motion to table the offer by Joan Broadersen and was seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – nay, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried. Mayor Becker stated the library does a great job, but the City Council and the Mayor have a responsibility to tax payers too.

Clerk Bencoter read off the LB840 Drawdown request for funds to pay Detlefsen Construction for New Industrial Park in the amount of \$111,857.15 and to the Nebraska Department of Transportation for the Industrial park entrance in the amount of \$2,000 for a total of \$113,857.15. A motion was made by Councilman Christiansen to approve the LB840 Drawdown request to both New Industrial Park and the Nebraska Department of Transportation totaling \$113,857.15 and was seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker read the Proclamation to Support Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Week and declared the week of October 5-8, 2023 as Support Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Week.

Broadway Lanes requested a Special Liquor License for an event on October 14, 2023. A motion was made to approve the Special Liquor License for Broadway lanes by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

A resignation for Joseph Hish from the Hartington Municipal Airport Authority was present to council. A motion was made by Councilman Christen to approve the resignation and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Appointment of Isaac Creamer to the Hartington Municipal Airport Authority was introduced. A motion to approve the appointment of Isaac Creamer to the Hartington Municipal Airport Authority was made by Councilman Christiansen and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Clerk Bencoter reviewed with Council that the sidewalk at 103 W State Street, the property of the U.S. Post Office was in need of repair as it was a hazard. A letter was issued to the owners of the property by certified mail and return receipt on June 16, 2023 giving them 60 days to replace the sidewalk. The return receipt came back showing it was received and there has been no repairs or contact with City Hall. The next steps according to the City Ordinance on sidewalk repairs, is for council to approve the repairs and to asses the cost of the repairs to the owners of the property. Notification will need to be made to the owners and occupants stating the repairs have been approved by council and the repairs are estimated to be at \$6,684.00. A motion to approve the repair of the sidewalks and asses the cost to the property owner with the estimate at \$6,684.00 was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

Department Reports:

Park – Council Kathol: none

Pool –Council Bartling: Working on getting estimates for the pool roof.

Complex/Auditorium – Councilman Sudbeck: Bill Hochstein has finished the masonry work on the Complex and now they will begin working on the roof. All sidewalks have been completed. The ceiling has been completed at the Auditorium and Councilman Sudbeck purchased a new vanity in the Auditorium because the previous one was a freestanding one and someone sat on it causing it to pull away from the wall.

Fire/Ambulance– Councilman Christensen: none.

General – Mayor Becker: A citizen approached him about the traffic on the Complex road, especially this time of the year with all the sporting events. He questioned about getting a sign that tells you your speed limit. Councilman Bartling stated the County has one and has placed it for them in the past. Mayor Becker said he will reach out to the County.

Legal – Nikki Brandt: She is taking over for Steve Pier and he goes into retirement so she would like all requests and document that are being sent to Steve Pier to also be sent to her. Mayor Becker asked her to check into the statute Joan Broadersen mentioned giving the Library Board the authority to set the librarians wages.

Clerk Bencoter: There were two incidents at the Hartington-Newcastle Homecoming Parade that took place the previous Friday. Side streets are not blocked off and an elderly gentlemen pulled into the parade driving through the parade head on into the band and young school kids walking in the parade. There was another person that speed across the intersection almost hitting two young children in the road getting candy. Clerk Bencoter has requested that in the future when council approves parades to make sure that it is mandated to have the side street intersections blocked off for safety.

Clerk Bencoter updated the council on the new air conditioning unit being installed.

Deputy Clerk Hines: none

Public Comments: Rob Dump with Cedar County News asked if council was going to go into Executive Session. Mayor Becker stated they were going to check things further with insurance and would not be going into Executive Session at this time. Rob Dump stated he asked that because he believes Council has a tendency to be meeting when they are not supposed to and with new legal council coming on board he wants to make sure council is doing what they are supposed to and just wants things doing right.

The following bills were presented for payments:

General:	Cedar County Register of Deeds 16.00, Hartelco 324.18, Nebraska Secretary of State 30.00, SHIFTR 6.77.
Streets:	Bank of Hartington 2,353.56, Black Hills Energy 127.36, Bomgaars 140.96, Central Valley Ag 143.98, Hartelco Computers 32.00, Sherwin-Williams 170.95, Usable Life 1450.
Water:	Bomgaars 8.99, Cedar Knox-Public Power District 2,055.81, Robert Heimes Dirt Man 325.00, Hawkins Inc. 2,180.66, T. Lokhorst 100.00, Nebraska Public Health Environment Lab 163.00, k. Sudbeck 100.00
Sewer:	Black Hills Energy 52.54, Hartelco 66.66, Hartington Auto & Truck Parts Inc. 378.60, Midwest Laboratories Inc. 312.00.
Sanitation:	Bomgaars 12.74, Echo Real Property, LLC 43.18, T. Lokhorst 70.00, Stop N Go 702.35, K. Sudbeck 70.00, Usable Life 29.00.
Fire:	Black Hills Energy 20.19, Hartelco 45.75, Leise Lawn Care 300.00, Rural Fire Board 67,367.50, Stop N Go 57.21, Tri-State Communications Inc. 5,367.00.
Ambulance:	Black Hills Energy 20.20, Hartelco 45.76, K. Fischer 458.50, Northeast Community College 60.00, Stop N Go 87.96.
Cemetery:	Maverick Heine 950.00, Toby Heine 950.00.
Pool:	Black Hills Energy 41.39, Bomgaars 189.99, Kneifl Paint & Caulk 1,100.00, Tnemec 2,365.59.
Parks:	Bomgaars 409.91, Midwest Tree 3,150.00, Mayer Sign, Inc. 100.00.
Complex:	Hochstein Masonary 5,700.00, Bomgaars 131.98, Hartelco 44.06, Tnemec Company Inc. 914.07, Yankton Janitorial Supply, Inc. 538.10.
Library:	Black Hills Energy 38.60, Hartelco 155.12, Hometown Leasing 48.40, Ingram 397.96, Midwest Tape 56.21, Matt Mason 100.00, Quill Corporation 49.97, Usable Life 29.00, X-Pert Lawn and Landscaping 420.00.

City Hall: Black Hills Energy 48.36, Bomgaars 69.99, Eakes Office Solutions 79.66, Dixie Fischer 100.00, Glass Edge Inc. 219.00, Hartelco Computers 803.49, Nebraska Municipal Clerks Association 100.00, Premier Lawn & Landscaping 195.00, Usable Life 13.50.

Auditorium: Appeara 65.73, Black Hills Energy 96.39, C. Folkers 49.44, Kris Kathol 200.00, R. Sudbeck 250.00, Tri-State Drywall 36,030.00.

Economic

Development: Cedar County Register of Deeds 52.00, Eakes Office Solutions 39.84, Hartelco 54.15, Hartelco Computers 31.99, Usable Life 1450.

Transfer

Station: Cedar-Knox Public Power District 135.94, Hartelco 46.55, Olson's Pest Technicians 75.00.

A motion to pay the bills except for Roman Sudbeck, check # 63671, was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried.

A motion by Councilman Bartling was made to pay Check # 63671 to Roman Sudbeck and was seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling –yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – abstained. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM. The next scheduled meeting is October 10th, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittini Bencoter
City Clerk-Treasurer