

The Hartington City Council met for a public hearing and regular meeting on November 25th, 2024 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 Christensen, Sudbeck, Kathol, and Bartling; City Clerk-Treasurer Benscoter, Deputy Clerk Schulte, and Legal Counsel Nikki Brandt.

Mayor Becker opened the public hearing for the CoCo Bongo LLC Class I Liquor License Application at 5:01 P.M. He explained The Hotel Hartington had Wildcat Properties LLC carrying the liquor license for them and now they were going to carry their own license. He opened it for comments or questions and there were none so he closed the public hearing at 5:02 P.M.

Mayor Becker called the regular meeting to order at 5:02 P.M., followed by all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the minutes from the November 12th, 2024 meeting was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck- yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker presented the November, 2024 Sheriff's report for the month of October, 2024. There were 241 ¾ hours patrolled. School traffic was 1 ½ hours. Calls of service were, 1 EMS Assist, 1 Alarm, 2 Disturbances. Traffic stops were 1 Verbal Warning, 1 Written Warning, and 0 Citations. 0 Arrests were made.

Mayor Becker introduced a building permit for the Cedar County Historical Museum to construct a Private Shannon structure and for Herbert Bose to construct a home. A motion to approve the building permit for the Cedar County Historical Museum and Herbert Bose was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck- yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced two sign permits for the VFW to replace signs they had lost in a past storm. A motion to approve the two sign permits for the VFW was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck- yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the CoCo Bongo LLC Class I Liquor License for The Hotel Hartington. A motion to approve the Class I Liquor License for CoCo Bongo LLC was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck- yes. Motion carried.

The Hartington Volunteer Fire Department appointed Matthew Burbach as a member to the Hartington Volunteer Fire Department on November 4th, 2024. A motion to approve the appointment of Matthew Burbach to the Hartington Volunteer Fire Department 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. Mayor Becker wanted to thank Matthew Burbach and all the first responders that volunteer their time to the City of Hartington.

The Hartington Economic Development Group requested an LB840 drawdown request in the amount of \$19,558.51 to JEO for engineering and NPPD for electric at the Industrial Park. Mayor Becker stated this was continual work they are doing to get the Industrial Park ready. A motion to approve the LB840 drawdown request for \$19,558.51 was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck- yes. Motion carried.

Department Reports:

Park – Councilman Kathol: The nets are still not down at the batting cages or the tarp. He has been in contact with the Baseball Association to get those down, but they are still up. Councilman Bartling said if the Baseball Association fails to get them down before bad weather, the City should do it so they do not get damaged and we need to buy new ones next year.

Pool – Councilman Bartling: none.

Complex/Auditorium – Councilman Sudbeck: The portable pickleball net has arrived and the floor in the basement of the Auditorium has been marked. They are needing a chairperson to organize and coordinate the pickleball games.

Fire/Ambulance – Councilman Christensen: none.

General – Mayor Becker: none.

Legal Counsel Nikki Brandt: none.

Clerk Bencoter: The City has multiple fees all established by different Ordinances and Resolutions so when we are trying to find the most current fee, if we have a fee, or when it last was updated, it is a daunting task of looking through the Ordinance book or Resolution folder. Many towns have a Master Fee Schedule Ordinance or Resolution where all of their fees are listed on one form and any time a fee is updated, the Ordinance or Resolution is all updated at one time; therefore, making it easier to see what the fees are and other information associated with them on one document. She asked Council if this is something they would be interested in doing before putting in the work to compile all the information. Councilman Kathol asked if we adopt a Master Fee Schedule would that void anything else that is in the Ordinance with the fees that have already been adopted. Legal Counsel Brandt said no, it would just void fee portion of the Ordinance, not the whole Ordinance. Mayor Becker and Council agreed this would be good to clean things up and make it easier in knowing all our fees for ourselves and the public.

Clerk Bencoter discussed with Council that there were some very old uncollected Transfer Station and Utility debts still on the books that the auditor has asked to clean up and a couple that could go to collections. She stated there is a 5-year statute on collections, so many of the old Transfer Station accounts are over that time and some of the past due utility accounts are too old for collections to collect. She stated she is working on finalizing a list to have them write off for next meeting.

Clerk Bencoter discussed with Council the opportunity to set up a fund at the City level to be able to assist those that are unable to pay some or all of their bill one month due to a health issue, emergency, or some other special circumstance. She stated other towns have a type of program where residents and businesses can opt in to round up their utility payment or apply extra as a donation that goes into a special fund to help people with utility payments. When a person has a special need, they can fill out a form to request help and then the City Clerk, Mayor, and a Council member can review the form to determine if and how much to assist the person from the fund. She stated currently if someone has a need, she has to send them over to the County to apply for their General Relief Fund or area churches. She stated she thinks having something at the local level would be more beneficial instead of trying to send people elsewhere who may be embarrassed or not have the means to travel. She has spoken with the utility software program IT people and the utility payment software is able to accommodate this, she has spoken to Legal Counsel Brandt who does not see legal issues, and the auditor on receiving donations. Legal Counsel Brandt explained this is not for the people that are on the shut-off list every month, but like an elderly person that broke their hip and is having trouble paying their bills for the month, or other certain circumstances, not ongoing. Mayor Becker stated he believed this would be a good thing for the community to help those that may be struggling at times. Clerk Bencoter stated she is asking Council if this is something they would have interest in doing as they would eventually have to approve the program when it is finalized and the new account for the funds. They agreed they would like to see this program developed.

Deputy Clerk Schulte: none.

Public Comments: Rob Dump with Cedar County News asked about the structure the Cedar County Historical Museum was building and Council stated it looked like a structure to be built to house Private Shannon. He asked to elaborate on pickleball and Councilman Kathol stated there has been interest in a pickleball league in the basement of the Auditorium, so they are working on finding someone to coordinate and organize it.

The following bills were presented for payments:

General: AMGL 6,320.00, League Association of Risk Management 82,820.85.

Streets: Black Hills Energy 227.40, Concrete Product Co. 408.74, Leise Concrete 25,947.25, League Association of Risk Management 12,631.26, Nebraska Public Power District 3,634.51, Plumbing & Electric 11,186.00, Usable Life 29.00.

Water: Cedar-Knox Public Power District 1,754.23, League Association of Risk Management 9,473.44, Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy 12,929.49, Nebraska Public Power District 677.15, Nebraska Public Health Environment Laboratory 66.00, C. Smith 41.96.

Sewer: Black Hills Energy 87.00, JC Cross Co. 5,168.00, League Association of Risk Management 13,636.02, Menards, Inc. 17.94, Midwest Laboratories, Inc. 495.07, Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy 28,363.73, Nebraska Public Power District 2,620.09, Plumbing & Electric 151.47, Sudbeck Underground 25,380.00.

Sanitation: J. Gothier 48.30, League Association of Risk Management 11,626.50, NP Mart 24 669.55, C. Smith 70.00, Usable Life 14.50.

Fire: Black Hills Energy 20.29, League Association of Risk Management 5,023.80, Leise Lawn Care 250.00, Nebraska Public Power District 125.01, NP Mart 24 26.95.

Ambulance: Black Hill Energy 20.30, C. Hamilton 401.00, League Association of Risk Management 3,301.35, Leise Lawn Care 250.00, Nebraska Public Power District 93.43, NP Mart 24 59.82.

Recreation: Nebraska Public Power District 63.16.

Pool: Black Hills Energy 40.19, Nebraska Public Power District 47.37.

Parks: Nebraska Public Power District 900.07.

Complex: Nebraska Public Power District 230.76.

Library: Black Hills Energy 102.03, Coldtype Publishing 29.96, Follett Software, LLC 1,171.44, Ingram 744.18, Nebraska Public Power District 308.72, Oriental Trading Co. Inc. 38.94, South Dakota Magazine 29.00, Usable Life 29.00.

City Hall: Black Hills Energy 50.44, Eakes Office Solutions 688.39, Hartelco Computers 34.58, Nebraska Public Power District 167.27, Usable Life 29.00.

Auditorium: Black Hills Energy 160.56, Douglas Sports Equipment 399.00, Nebraska Public Power District 64.48.

Economic Development: Usable Life 14.50.

Transfer Station: Cedar-Knox Public Power District 143.45, League Association of Risk Management 5,023.78, Olson's Pest Technicians 80.00.

Vets Memorial: Nebraska Public Power District 73.24.

October, 2024 payroll was \$76,340.04.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck- yes. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes, Sudbeck- yes. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 P.M. The next scheduled meeting is December 9th, 2024, and will be the only meeting for the month of December, 2024. There will be no regular meeting on December 23rd, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittini Bencoter
City Clerk-Treasurer