

The Hartington City Council met for their regular meeting on January 13th, 2025 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, and Kathol; City Clerk-Treasurer Bencoter, Deputy Clerk Schulte, and Legal Counsel Brandt. Councilman Sudbeck was absent.

Mayor Becker opened the public hearing for the request by Carly Christensen of the review of Final Plat of Lots 7A & 7B, Block 49, Original Town of Hartington, Cedar County, Nebraska at 5:00 PM. Councilman Christensen explained that Carly Christensen was going to appeal the decision of the Board of Adjustments and wanted to table the issue with Council currently. There were no other comments so Mayor Becker closed the public hearing at 5:01 PM.

Mayor Becker called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM., followed by all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the minutes from the December 9th, 2024 meeting and December, 2024 Treasurer's report was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Ambulance President Dirk Dailey presented to City Council that the Ambulance would like to see the Ambulance Officers receive pay. He stated the Ambulance committee voted for a blanket number across the board for all three officers. He stated they would also like to see Katie Lammers receive compensation for all the billing work she does for the Ambulance as well. Mayor Becker asked if that will come out of the Ambulance budget and President Dailey stated yes. Councilman Christensen asked if the number they are presenting will still fall within their budget this year and President Dailey stated it should. Clerk Bencoter stated they are only asking for \$1,800 a year for all three officers and with Katie's billing, looking at maybe around \$4,000 per year total. Councilman Bartling stated there was excess from last year budget, so as long as they don't do anything excessive, it should be ok. A motion to approve the Ambulance Officer wages and wages for Katie Lammers billing was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Clint Simmons with LARM met with City Council to review recommendations of changes on insurance evaluations. He stated he sat down at the Fire Hall with Ambulance President Dirk Dailey, and Fire Chief Ryan Marsh today and they made a lot of changes to their vehicles and equipment to bring up the values to what they need. He stated he met with City Utility Superintendent Corey Kramer as well to review his equipment. He recommended changing all the vehicle deductibles to \$2,500 instead of the varying amounts currently to be able to adjust the value of insuring vehicles and offset the costs. He stated that for every 1 million in additional coverage we add it is an estimated \$3,900 in additional premiums. He discussed with City Council that the Rural Fire Board currently insures the Fire Hall and the City insures the vehicles and contents which causes the Rural Fire Board and the City to have two separate deductibles; \$10,000 deductible for the Rural Fire Board policy and \$2,500 deductible with the City policy. If something catastrophic should happen to the building, he stated the Rural Fire Board and the City would have the two deductibles to pay and it makes more sense to put everything under one policy with LARM, add the Rural Fire Board as an additional insured, and have one \$2,500 deductible then. He stated he has spoken with Karl Koch and Chief Marsh stated he has also been in talks with the Rural Fire Board regarding this.

Clint Simmons reviewed all the buildings and structures the City insures and the recommended insurance levels LARM is recommending. They are recommending to move some buildings to replacement cost instead of actual cash value. They discussed doing a functional replacement cost for the Auditorium as rebuilding it like it is if a catastrophic event occurred, is very costly and Council agreed. He stated all of our content was previously being insured at actual cash value, but it does not cost anything more to move that to replacement cost with LARM, so they moved all the content to replacement cost already. With building a new shop, he recommends decreasing the coverage level on the current shop to 500,000 at actual cost value just to cover the debris removal in case there is a catastrophic event. They discussed the City Library which was previously insured as two separate buildings; the old library and the new library part. Councilman Bartling asked why they can't make that one building because if something happens to the building more than likely both buildings will be impacted with damage. Clint Simmons stated LARM did it that way because that was how it was previously insured by the other carrier, but it could be combined to be insured as one building. Council agreed it would be best to insure the City Library and contents as one building. They reviewed all other structures making adjustments to coverage amounts, replacement costs, or removing insurance coverage. A motion was made to approve the changes City Council reviewed with LARM by Councilman Christensen and

seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Dan Kathol presented the annual easement payment with Bill Yates to Council. A motion was made to approve the annual easement payment to Bill Yates for \$870.69 by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Councilman Christensen introduced Resolution 20250113 – Adoption of the Colonial Life Cafeteria Plan. A motion to approve Resolution 20250113 was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

A motion to table Resolution 20250113A – Approve Final Plat of Lots 7A & 7B, Block 49, Original Town of Hartington, Cedar County, Nebraska was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Councilman Christensen introduced Resolution 20250113B – Bank Authorization for Katie Lammers for Ambulance Checking. A motion to approve Resolution 20250113B was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Councilman Christensen introduced Ordinance 906 – Vacating the alley between Portland Avenue and Nordby Avenue. A motion to suspend the three readings of Ordinance 906 was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried. A motion to approve Ordinance 906 was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Councilman Christensen introduced Ordinance 907 – Hartington Helps Program. A motion to suspend the three readings of Ordinance 907 was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried. A motion to approve Ordinance 907 was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker appointed himself, City Clerk Bencoter and Councilman Bartling to the Hartington Helps Committee. A motion to approve the Hartington Helps Committee appointments by Mayor Becker was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Clerk Bencoter explained a new savings account with the Bank of Hartington needs to be opened to put the funds for Hartington Helps into. Signers would be the same as the current City accounts. A motion to approve the new savings account with the Bank of Hartington was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Clerk Bencoter explained to Council that Karl Koch with the Rural Fire Board had discussed with her that they signed up the Fordyce fire department with new life insurance and saved some money so the City may want to look into. She asked Mayor Becker about looking into it and he approved. She stated we currently have Dearborn Group for our fire department life insurance policy and the new quote provided with Code 3 Fire & Rescue Life Insurance Program was more by about \$20 per month than we currently pay for the \$10,000 life and \$10,000 AD&D with Dearborn Group. She explained with Code 3 insurance, they could look at \$15,000 or \$20,000 life and AD&D, this policy could cover board members, and city employees. She stated at this time Mayor Becker said to only look into fire department and we already have 2 life insurance policies on our full-time employees. A motion to keep our current fire department insurance with Dearborn Group was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the Nebraska Department of Transportation Certificate of Compliance and Clerk Bencoter explained this is our annual document to verify the DOT complied with the Maintenance Agreement for 2024. A motion to approve the Nebraska DOT Certificate of Compliance was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the LB840 Drawdown Request for payment to Sudbeck Underground for Industrial Park in the amount of \$4,576. A motion to approve the LB840 Drawdown Request in the amount of \$4,576 was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the termination of the current garage bay agreement with Kruse True Value, explaining that they have sold the business so they have a new owner. A motion to terminate the garage bay agreement with Kruse True Value was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the new garage bay agreement with Hartington Ace Hardware for the same amount of \$150 per month that Kruse True Value was paying. A motion to approve the garage bay agreement with Hartington Ace Hardware for \$150 per month was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Christensen. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

A motion to table the Ambulance resignation for Clay Kleinschmit was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Councilman Christensen made a motion to move into Executive Session at 6:14 P.M. to discuss the Skylon Event Management candidates and to prevent needless injury to the reputation of any person. Councilman Kathol seconded the motion. Mayor Becker asked if there was any discussion and there was none. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Councilman Christensen made a motion to adjourn the Executive session at 6:27 P.M. and reconvene Open Session. Councilman Bartling seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Christensen – yes, Kathol – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the discussion regarding possible garbage rate increases. It was presented that our tipping fee rates with Gill Hauling will be increasing \$1 per ton last month. He asked Clerk Benscoter on how that affects us financially and she stated when she looked at the 2023-2024 fiscal year tons we were charged and compared to new rates it was around \$2,800 increase for the year. Councilman Kathol asked how much current garbage rates were and she stated our current residential garbage rate is \$19 per month and we have varying dumpster rates depending on how many pickups per week. She stated we have roughly 850 active utility accounts. Councilman Bartling stated Council maybe needed to look at what comes across the scale and Clerk Benscoter stated the Transfer Station rates have been at \$10.50 for quite a while and those are low rates comparing in what we charge for residential garbage. Mayor Becker stated he would not mind seeing different rates for Hartington residents and out of town residents and Councilman Christensen agreed. Clerk Benscoter explained that it is difficult in collecting in billing for out-of-town residents and all the write-offs for Transfer Station that we had last month were out of town people and would like to see payment for out of town people collected at the Transfer Station. She explained for in town people that we add the Transfer Station to their bills. Councilman Bartling asked an estimate on how many people were out of town and Deputy Schulte stated at least half. Mayor Becker asked Clerk Benscoter for a spreadsheet of all of our costs and estimates of pickups, dumpsters, and transfer station information. Councilman Bartling asked how we would collect out at the dump and Clerk Benscoter explained that we now have the ability to collect credit/debit card payments out at the Transfer Station and they can pay by check. Council discussed having out of town people paying at the Transfer Station by credit/debit or check instead of billing out at a later date to try to collect. Council discussed they do not want cash payments at the dump.

Hartelco provided their rate increases to Council.

The December, 2024 Cedar County Sheriff's Report was reviewed. There were 262 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours patrolled. School traffic was 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours. Calls of service were 1 EMS Assist, 1 Welfare Check, 1 Disturbance, 1 Suspicious Activity. Traffic stops were 5 Verbal Warning, 0 Written Warning, and 0 Citations. 0 Arrests were made.

Department Reports:

Park – Councilman Kathol: The baseball equipment is still left outside.

Pool – Councilman Bartling: The Pool Board has requested to have the City provide reimbursements to their life guards for their required certifications as they are having problems getting enough lifeguards. He stated the Pool Board made a recommendation to pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of the costs for the first year and if they return for the second year to pay the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$. Council agreed that would be fine.

Complex/Auditorium – Councilman Sudbeck: Absent.

Fire/Ambulance– Councilman Christensen: Nothing.

General – Mayor Becker: Nothing.

Legal Counsel Nikki Brandt: Nothing.

Clerk Benscoter: The flag pole on the side of City Hall does not hold up in the wind and has broken many times within the last year. City Utility Superintendent Corey Kramer has asked if we could put a flag pole in the ground instead. Council agreed that was ok. She informed Council that when comparing the 2023 camper court revenue to the 2024 camper court revenue after getting the online camper court reservation system, we have made an additional revenue of \$2,896. She stated we already have people reserving for this upcoming spring and summer.

Deputy Clerk Schulte: Nothing.

Public Comments: None.

The following bills were presented for payments:

General: Cedar County Clerk 100.00, FP Finance Program 115.98, Hartelco 305.27, Hartington Shopper 170.00, Kennedy, Pier, Loftus, Reynolds & Brandt 500.00, Northeast Nebraska News Company 590.15, TextMyGov 1,500.00.

Streets: Black Hills Energy 1,054.51, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 1,774.68, Bank of Hartington 2,620.22, Bomgaars 97.59, Colonial Life 27.22, Farmers Union Coop Gas Oil 1,693.60, Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC 939.91, Grossenburg Implement 607.10, Hartington Auto & Truck Parts, Inc. 276.86, Kruse True Value 55.99, Leise Concrete 24,753.10, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Nebraska Public Power District 3,316.84, Peitz Service 133.38, U.S. Cellular 171.93, Usable Life 29.00.

Water: Cedar-Knox Public Power District 1,912.95, R. Jones 36.88, Nebraska Public Health Environment Laboratory 945.00, Nebraska Public Power District 595.99, One Call Concepts, Inc 4.76, Peitz Service 64.46, Plumbing & Electric 7,517.07.

Sewer: Black Hills Energy 150.63, Hartelco 66.60, Midwest Laboratories, Inc. 1,161.80, Nebraska Public Power District 3,009.14, One Call Concepts, Inc 4.76.

Sanitation: Avera Medical Group 150.00, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 887.34, Bank of Hartington 55,123.56, Colonial Life 129.66, Frankling Templeton Investor Services, LLC 453.43, M. Kramer 59.92, L.P. Gill, Inc. 8,590.77, Mutual of Omaha 7.20, NP Mart 24 1,120.37, U.S. Cellular 83.26, Usable Life 14.50.

Fire: Black Hills Energy 153.73, Bullseye Fire Sprinkler, Inc. 350.00, Dearborn National Life Insurance 113.52, Dixie Fischer 75.00, Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil 69.01, Fischer Feed & Supply 629.70, Hartington Volunteer Fire Department 800.00, Hartelco 46.28, Hartelco Computers 499.23, Nebraska Public Power District 121.89.

Police: Cedar County Sheriff 13,941.22.

Ambulance: Ambill Associates, LLC 525.00, Black Hills Energy 153.74, Bound Tree Medical, LLC 161.05, Burnell's Foodtown 15.37, Dixie Fischer 75.00, Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil 107.86, Hartelco 46.28, Hartelco Computers 499.23, Heiman, Inc. 4,340.00, Katelyn Fischer 901.15, Kruse True Value 53.96, Matheson Tri-Gas Inc 258.90, Nebraska Public Power District 90.32, Steffen Drug Store 27.14, U.S. Cellular 139.36.

Cemetery: Cedar Knox Rural Water 57.60.

Recreation: Nebraska Public Power District 63.16

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

Parks: Hartington Tree 4,500.00, Jerry's Service 35.99, Nebraska Public Power District 829.52, Pomp's Tire Service, Inc. 58.00.

Complex: Nebraska Public Power District 121.69, X-Pert Lawn and Landscaping 7,442.50.

Library: Tami Anderson 300.00, Black Hills Energy 505.17, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 2,573.29, Bank of Hartington 333.34, Burnell's Foodtown 4.25, Demco 545.59, Eakes Office Solutions 55.00, Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC 464.88, Hartelco 161.78, Hometown Leasing 102.80, Ingram 336.51, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Nebraska Public Power District 241.15, Three Rivers Library System 10.00, Usable Life 29.00, X-Pert Lawn and Landscaping 705.00, Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan 235.14.

City Hall: Black Hills Energy 108.66, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 3,638.10, Bank of Hartington 166.67, Colonial Life 140.18, Dixie Fischer 50.00, Eakes Office Solutions 11.99, Fischer Feed & Supply 32.00, Frankling Templeton Investor Services, LLC 500.55, Hometown Leasing 62.05, Kruse True Value 8.28, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Nebraska Public Power District 172.92, Premier Lawn & Landscaping 55.00, Usable Life 29.00.

Auditorium: Appeara 156.12, Art Kathol Appliance Inc. 689.04, Black Hills Energy 801.17, DSN Security 345.00, Feilmeier Electric 75.00, Nebraska Public Power District 65.38.

Economic Development: Frankling Templeton Investor Services, LLC 257.54, Hartelco 52.33, Hometown Leasing 31.02, Mutual of Omaha 7.20, Usable Life 14.50.

Transfer Station: Cedar-Knox Public Power District 1,905.50, Deere Credit Inc. 2,920.08, Eakes Office Solutions 10.70, Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil 287.90, Gill Hauling, Inc. 1,531.76, Hartelco 47.43, Jerry's Service 296.81, Midwest Ready Mix & Equipment Inc. 2,400.00, Olson's Pest Technicians 80.00.

Skylon Event Center: Hartington Shopper 340.00, Northeast Nebraska News Company 142.88.

Hi-Fi: BOKF, NA 4,746.25.

Vets Memorial: Nebraska Public Power District 50.02.

City Shop: Bomgaars 50.94, Carhart Lumber Co. 79.98, RaDec Construction Co., Inc. 212,583.57, UFG Insurance 130.16, Wiechelman's Repair Shop 1,463.89.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:41 PM. The next scheduled meeting is January 27th, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittni Benscoter
City Clerk-Treasurer