

The Hartington City Council met for their regular meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 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, and Kathol; City Clerk-Treasurer Bencoter, Deputy Clerk Schulte, and Legal Counsel Brandt arrived at 5:05 PM. Councilman Christensen and Sudbeck were absent.

Mayor Becker called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM., followed by all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the minutes from the March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting and March, 2025 Treasurer's report was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Council reviewed two building permits from Hartington Ace Hardware. One for a vestibule on the front of the store and the second for a propane filling station. Clerk Bencoter stated they told her they would be putting the propane filling station in the second parking space in the southwest corner of the parking lot and there would be a cement bollard every 4 feet. She stated the State Fire Marshall will have to do a final inspection of approval of the propane filling station. A motion to approve the building permit for Hartington Ace Hardware vestibule and the propane filling station contingent with the final approval by the State Fire Marshal was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Clerk Bencoter presented the conditional use permit for Hartington Ace Hardware to be able to have fuel sales in C2 zoning. She stated in a C2 zoning, they need a conditional use permit in order to have the propane fuel sales. Mayor Becker asked if Planning and Zoning had any issues or concerns and she stated she doesn't believe they did and their minutes show they approved their recommendation to council contingent on the approval of the final inspection by the State Fire Marshal. A motion to approve the conditional use permit for Hartington Ace Hardware to have fuel sales in a C2 zoning contingent upon the final inspection approval by the State Fire Marshal was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Clerk Bencoter presented three sign permits for Hartington Tree for the three signs up on their buildings. A motion to approve the three sign permits for Hartington Tree was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker presented the Complex Maintenance Agreement with X-Pert Lawn & Landscaping for the Complex. Clerk Bencoter stated this was the same amount of \$10,200 from June 1, 2025 to November 1, 2025 as last year. A motion to approve the Complex Maintenance Agreement with X-Pert Lawn & Landscaping was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker presented the City Cemetery Agreement for mowing with Maverick Heine and Toby Heine for \$1,900 per month from May 1<sup>st</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>. Clerk Bencoter stated this was the same amount as last year. A motion to approve the City Cemetery Agreement for mowing with Maverick Heine and Toby Heine was made by Councilman Bartling and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker presented the LB840 drawdown request in the amount of \$2,650 for JEO engineering to Industrial Park. A motion to approve the LB840 drawdown request for JEO engineering to Industrial Park was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Bartling. A roll call vote was taken. Bartling – yes, Kathol – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker opened the discussion for the sale of the old firehall building. He stated Councilman Bartling spoke with the fire department and they are good with selling the building and splitting the proceeds 50/50 between the City and the Rural Fire Board with no specific allocation on where funds go. Mayor Becker stated he spoke with Jim Potts with the Rural Fire Board and they are ok with whichever way the City chooses to sell it. He stated they have had lots of interest from various people and businesses regarding the lot. He wants to let the public know they are going to be selling it with information on the specific date and more later. He just wants to get the word out to the public.

Mayor Becker presented the nomination for Ben Beckman to the Tree Board. A motion to approve the nomination for Ben Beckman to the Tree Board was made by Councilman Bartling and

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

Mayor Becker introduced the Annual TIF Report. Clerk Bencoter stated this was prepared each year by Brandon Baller. The report shows the Westfield Acres TIF was paid in full 05/13/22 and the current TIF project is Cobblestone. There are no redevelopment projects paid in full or approved by the governing body in the previous calendar year and 16% of the city has been designated as blighted.

The March, 2025 Cedar County Sheriff's Report was reviewed. There were 425 ½ hours patrolled. School traffic was 1 ¾ hours. Calls of service were 2 Welfare Checks, 3 Disturbance. Traffic stops were 0 Verbal Warning, 0 Written Warning, and 0 Citations. 1 Arrest was made.

Mayor Becker introduced and signed the Arbor Day Proclamation which declared April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 as Arbor Day in the City of Hartington.

#### Department Reports:

Park – Councilman Kathol: The Park Board did their inspection of the parks and Traci Baller presented a report to him. There is some painting that needs to be done and some play equipment needs replaced, but not a lot of work needs to be done. They are working on the road repair at Felber Park currently. He stated the tennis court plastic top has been shifting to the East and needs repaired and while they are repairing it, he things they should paint pickleball lines to be able to use it as a pickleball court as well. He asked Clerk Bencoter to put out some information on the City social media accounts to ask for bids for siding of the Shelter House and doors.

Pool – Councilman Bartling: The pool is getting closer to being opened and dates will be announced soon.

Complex/Auditorium – Councilman Sudbeck: Absent.

Fire/Ambulance– Councilman Christensen: Absent.

General – Mayor Becker: Paving has been going on at the park and he has had lots of positive comments from people visiting that there is a lot going on in Hartington. He stated the Skylon is moving along and the floors have been poured in the old ballroom and the new edition and are looking to try to open by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Legal Counsel Nikki Brandt: How much was the project for the siding of the shelter house and doors. Councilman Kathol stated the total project is under \$30,000, but he wanted to open it to the public and let them know about the project if they wanted to bid.

Clerk Bencoter: The LIGHT program where we have our employee health insurance has notified the City that their board has approved a different company for the additional life insurance policy we are required to have. Currently that insurance is through Mutual of Omaha and beginning July 1, 2025 it will be through Guardian Life Insurance Company.

Right now is the gas choice period and normally we stay with Black Hills Energy; however, ACE has changed how they are going to do their revenue return program this year so she wanted to present that to Council to decide if they wanted to stay with Black Hills Energy or switch to ACE. She stated currently the revenue return program divides 45% of the revenue return to those cities that do not chose ACE for their own city gas accounts, but beginning this year, they will divide only 5% of the revenue return to cities that do not choose ACE for their city gas accounts. She stated this year we received a revenue return check of \$2,068 and ACE informed her that with those same numbers at the new percentage, we would only receive \$100. She stated ACE does have good customer service and provides funding for multiple community programs we do. She stated she received quotes that day from Black Hills Energy and ACE and Black Hills Energy is .038/therm cheaper than ACE. Councilman Bartling stated it would come down to whether we wanted a revenue return check each year from ACE or not. He stated Black Hills Energy has been a part of our community for a long time. Councilman Kathol stated he thinks if we haven't had any issues with Black Hills Energy then we stay with them. Council agreed to stay with Black Hills Energy this year for the city gas accounts.

Deputy Clerk Schulte: Nothing.

Public Comments: None.

The following bills were presented for payments:

General: AMGL 9,740.00, EMC Insurance Companies 1,349.00, Eakes Office Solutions 34.98, FP Finance Program 115.98, Franklin Templeton Investor Services LLC 149.96, Hartelco 305.48, Kennedy, Pier, Loftus, Reynolds & Brandt 500.00, Northeast Nebraska News Company 795.17, One Office Solution 229.99.

Streets: Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 1,774.68, Bank of Hartington 266.66, Black Hills Energy 911.45, Carhart Lumber Co. 17.98, Colonial Life 40.83, Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil 1,407.19, Folkers Brothers Garage 164.42, Franklin Templeton Investor Services LLC 418.05, Grossenburg Implement 16,600.00, Hartington Auto & Truck Parts, Inc. 984.18, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Nebraska Public Power District 3,647.02, U.S. Cellular 172.63, Usable Life 29.00, Wiechelman's Repair Shop 225.92.

Water: Cedar-Kox Public Power District 1,713.72, Family First Dental Ass. Hartington 1.21, Franklin Templeton Investor Services LLC 443.48, Hartington Auto & Truck Parts, Inc. 56.28, Hartington Shopper 88.96, Municipal Supply, Inc. 4,085.97, Nebraska Public Power District 377.12, One Call Concepts, Inc. 19.38, Peitz Service 88.80, Plumbing & Electric 10.47, Amanda Rogers 73.88, USA Blue Book 2,431.27.

Sewer: Black Hills Energy 150.33, Franklin Templeton Investor Services LLC 418.68, Hartelco 66.60, Hartington Shopper 88.97, Menards, Inc. 1,443.65, Midwest Laboratories, Inc. 1,389.35, Nebraska Public Power District 3,276.60, One Call Concepts, Inc. 19.39, Plumbing & Electric 6,154.92.

Sanitation: Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 887.34, Bank of Hartington 83.33, Colonial Life 194.49, Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil 487.95, Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC 284.84, Grossenburg Implement 4.16, Hartington Shopper 88.97, L.P. Gill, Inc. 9,002.34, Mutual of Omaha 7.20, T. Nelson 70.00, A. Rogers 70.00, U.S. Cellular 83.61, Usable Life 14.50, Wiechelman's Repair Shop 652.91.

Fire: Black Hills Energy 82.34, Deaborn National Life Insurance Company 116.96, D. Dailey 604.96, Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil 29.49, Hartelco 46.22, Hartington Ace Hardware 367.85, Hartington Shopper 251.00, Leise Lawn Care 52.50, Nebraska Public Power District 128.42, NP Mart 24 29.59, Peitz Service 896.23.

Police: Cedar County Sheriff 13,941.22.

Ambulance: Black Hills Energy 82.35, Burnell's Foodtown 123.77, Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil 146.70, Hartelco 46.21, Hartington Ace Hardware 47.98, Jerry's Service 69.11, Leise Lawn Care 52.50, Nebraska Public Power District 95.79, Peitz Service 115.02, S. Rokusek 70.00, U.S. Cellular 140.36.

Cemetery: Cedar Knox Rural Water 57.60.

Recreation: Nebraska Public Power District 65.26.

Pool: American Red Cross 300.00, Black Hills Energy 45.42, Nebraska Public Power District 48.42.

Parks: Art Kathol Appliance, Inc. 195.96, Grossenburg Implement 90.56, Hartington Tree 200.00, Jerry's Service 11.25, Nebraska Public Power District 296.01, Zimco Supply Company 1,962.50.

Complex: Kneifl Paint & Caulk 660.00, Nebraska Public Power District 81.05.

Library: Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 3,638.10, Bank of Hartington 166.67, Black Hills Energy 57.13, Burnell's Foodtown 22.48, Colonial Life 210.27, Franklin Templeton Investor Services LLC 219.70, Hometown Leasing 62.05, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Nebraska Public Power District 493.80, Usable Life 29.00.

City Hall: Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska 3,638.10, Bank of Hartington 166.67, Burnell's Foodtown 19.04, Colonial Life 140.18, Dixie Fischer 100.00, Franklin Templeton Investor Services LLC 529.75, Hartington Ace Hardware 5.49, Hometown Leasing 62.05, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Northeast Nebraska Clerks Association 20.00, Usable Life 29.00.

Auditorium: Appera 78.06, Black Hills Energy 657.30, C. Folkers 46.84, Hartington Ace Hardware 9.99, Nebraska Public Power District 84.03, X-Pert Lawn and Landscaping 132.50, Yankton Janitorial Supply Inc. 285.70.

Economic

Development: Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC 265.94, Hartelco 48.75, Hometown Leasing 31.02, Mutual of Omaha 7.20, Usable Life 14.50.

Transfer

Station: Cedar-Knox Public Power District 276.65, Deere Credit, Inc. 730.02, Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC 41.83, Grossenburg Implement 177.26, Gill Hauling, Inc. 1,575.41, Hartelco 47.47, Jerry's Service 746.00, Olson's Pest Technicians 80.00.

Veterans

Memorial: Nebraska Public Power District 55.64, X-Pert Lawn and Landscaping 132.50.

Skylon Event

Center: Doyle Stevens Construction, Inc. 23,511.00.

Hi-Fi: BOKF, NA 10,952.50.

City Shop: Mayer Sign, Inc. 1,420.00, RaDec Construction Co. Inc. 78,926.67.

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 PM. The next scheduled meeting is April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittini Bencoter  
City Clerk-Treasurer