

The Hartington City Council met for their regular meeting on April 28th, 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 Kathol, and Sudbeck; City Clerk-Treasurer Benscoter, Deputy Clerk Schulte, and Legal Counsel Nikki Brandt. Councilman Bartling and Christensen were absent.

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

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 14th, 2025 meeting was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Kyle Overturf with AMGL presented the 2024 Audit to Council. He stated there were no material misstatements. Governmental fund sources of revenues make up 80% of the City's revenues. There was a deficit in unassigned funds mainly due to many repairs throughout the year. Utility funds were good, but need to watch sewer funds as we had an operating loss there. Mayor Becker stated there were quite a few sewer repairs last fiscal year. There is one TIF project left with the Cobblestone Hotel with 5 years left before it comes back onto the tax rolls. Within the comparisons across the state, the City of Hartington is at about \$70,000 per person for valuation and the peer group is around \$74,000. We had a 4% valuation increases which is low compared to across the state, which is dependent on the valuations by the county so that is where economic development helps with bringing in growth, and when the Cobblestone TIF cycle is over, that will be 1.5 million back on the tax rolls. Franchise fees were down a little bit, but that was commonly seen across the Eastern side of Nebraska possibly due to a milder winter. Operating income in sewer has gone back and forth and sanitation has a positive operative income for the first time.

Mayor Becker opened up the discussion into selling the old firehall located at 102 E. Centre Street and the City Shop located at 124 E Main St. He stated Chris Miller has come to him and would like the opportunity to sell the buildings at 5% commission buyers premium and sell the properties through online and chant auction. He stated the City would not pay anything and the 5% would be on the buyer. He would advertise the sale and has asked for up to \$1,500 to cover costs for the legal publications the City would need. He stated the City can put a reserve on the buildings and they would conduct the auction through Creamer Auction. He stated either they could do the purchase agreement or the City Attorney could whichever the City Attorney preferred. Council discussed that they were ready to start the process for selling the old firehall, but they were still hesitant on selling the City Shop due to the shape of the building and believe it may be a beneficial lot for the City to have down the road. They agreed at this time, to only sell the old firehall. They discussed the advertising costs Chris Miller presented and asked Clerk Benscoter on what the costs would be for the necessary legal publications. She stated it depends on the length of the notice as the paper charges by line, but the last time the City sold a lot, it only cost a couple hundred dollars in publication costs for the 3-week publication. She stated the legal notices have to be put into the public notice section of the paper and not as an ad. Council discussed that the City would handle the posting and costs of the legal notices required. They agreed on a \$200,000 reserve for the old firehall. A motion to approve selling the old firehall located at 102 E. Centre St through Don Miller Land Company through online and chant auction with a 5% buyer commission, Don Miller Land Company completing the purchase agreement, closing costs being split between the City and purchaser, and the City taking care of the legal notice publications, was made by Councilman Sudbeck and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the commercial lease agreement with Skylon Ballroom, LLC for the Skylon Ballroom located at 56281 Hwy 84. He stated Corey Kramer is the owner of Skylon Ballroom, LLC and they have reached an agreement with him to where Corey Kramer will cover the necessary liability insurance coverage and the City will cover the insurance for the building. He stated the City will cover utilities and the City will share in half of the revenue with Skylon Ballroom, LLC to help recover some of those costs. The lease is until December 2026 giving him a full season to assess and then will reevaluate. Councilman Kathol asked with bookings for that venue often being done a year or longer in advance how does that work if Corey Kramer books events outside his contract. Legal Counsel stated they would probably have to do a short lease to accommodate those bookings and would not just be able to cut them off. She stated Council will know within the first 6 months if this contract is going to work out. Councilman Kathol stated when he was on the school board, they would do 2 year contracts with superintendents, but then each year review the contract for another 2 years. A motion to approve the Skylon Ballroom commercial agreement with Skylon Ballroom LLC until December 2026 was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the LB840 loan application request for Hiralal, LLC to purchase the Cobblestone Hotel. The loan would be for \$50,000, payable for 15 years at 0% interest. Funds for this loan will not be available until June 1st, 2025. A motion to approve the LB840 loan for Hiralal, LLC for \$50,000 over 15 years, at 0% interest, with funds available June 1st, 2025 was made by Councilman Kathol and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. A roll call vote was taken. Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced the LB840 loan application request for Pearson Motor Co. for Ray Sukovaty to purchase the remaining business shares. The loan would be for \$50,000 payable in 10 years at 0% interest. A motion to approve the LB840 to Pearson Motor Co. for \$50,000 payable in 10 years at 0% interest was made by Councilman Sudbeck and seconded by Councilman Kathol. A roll call vote was taken. Kathol – yes, Sudbeck – yes, Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Department Reports:

Park – Councilman Kathol: He received an estimate of approximately \$3,000 to fix the plastic matting on the tennis courts and an additional \$300-500 to paint pickleball lines on it if we want. He received only one bid back for the siding of the shelter from Randy Kathol. He said it would be for 8” lap siding and in doing that you would not be able to replace windows so maybe if want to wait and budget to get new windows first, which are 12, we could do all that at one time.

Pool – Councilman Bartling: absent.

Complex/Auditorium – Councilman Sudbeck: There was a water main break up at the Complex that was fixed today. He has received estimates from 2 different companies for fixing the track, both which are very interested. He would like to send out notice for bids so we can move forward with getting a contract signed with a contractor. The theatre group was a success and the Auditorium is back open to the public until May 30th when it will close for the season.

Fire/Ambulance – Councilman Christensen: absent.

General – Mayor Becker: HBM publication did a large article in the magazine, which is a nationwide magazine, on the moving of the Skylon. Progress is being made on the front of the Skylon this week. The Cedar County Transit has reached out to him regarding the driveway and road to the Complex intersection. He has recommended we put up some caution or yield signage.

Legal Counsel Nikki Brandt: none.

Clerk Benscoter: none.

Deputy Clerk Schulte: none.

Public Comments: none.

The following bills were presented for payments:

General:	Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District 2,032.78, SHIFTR 15.30.
Streets:	Bank of Hartington 2,703.56, Bomgaars 503.48, Leise Concrete 28,716.00, League Association of Risk Management 110.92, Menards, Inc. 137.88, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Usable Life 29.00.
Water:	C. Brummels 70.25, A. DeBlauw 100.00, Nebraska Public Health Environment Laboratory 626.00, M. & B. Steffen 61.86, USA Blue Book 761.89, J. Wiebelhaus 56.62.
Sewer:	Bomgaars 352.07, Menards, Inc. 435.90, Wied-N-Ridge 3,252.00.
Sanitation:	Bomgaars 24.99, C. Brummels 70.00, Mutual of Omaha 7.20, M. & B. Steffen 140.00, Usable Life 14.50, J. Wiebelhaus 70.00.
Fire:	Dearborn National Life Insurance Co. 176.56.
Ambulance:	Fischer Feed & Supply 64.50, K. Fischer 801.50.
Pool:	J. Eickhoff 150.00.

Parks: Bluegrass Playgrounds, Inc. 331.00, Bomgaars 401.77, Hartington Tree 200.00, Yankton Janitorial Supply, Inc. 458.45.

Library: Tami Anderson 350.00, Black Hills Energy 271.82, Hometown Leasing 48.90, Ingram Library Services 818.25, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Tim Gilloon/Dr. Oxygen 450.00, Tri-State Turf & Irrigation, LLC 147.00, Usable Life 29.00, X-Pert Lawn and Landscaping 317.00.

City Hall: Eakes Office Solutions 31.97, Dixie Fischer 100.00, Hartelco Computers 55.00, International Institute MC. 330.00, Mutual of Omaha 14.40, Usable Life 29.00.

Economic Development: Mutual of Omaha 7.20, NEDA 225.00, Usable Life 14.50.

Transfer Station: Olson's Pest Technicians 80.00.

City Shop: Nebraska Public Power District 87.40.

March 2025 Payroll: \$63,985.11.

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 P.M. The next scheduled meeting is May 12th, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittni Benscoter
City Clerk-Treasurer