

**CITY COMMON COUNCIL
OF HARTFORD CITY, INDIANA
FEBRUARY 5, 2024
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME: Mayor Eckstein called to order a meeting of the Common Council of the City of Hartford City at 6:00pm February 5, 2024.

ROLL CALL: Members of the council present were Michael Wolfe, Tracey Witt, Tony Scaggs, Bill Aspy, and Ron Dudelston. Mayor Eckstein, and Clerk-Treasurer Dana Whatley were also present. Attorney Murphy was absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Dudelston made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR JANUARY 2, 2024: Mr. Aspy made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Witt seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

A.) DR. LEE – HERITAGE DAYS: Dr. Lee came to Council to request funding for Heritage Days that will be held 5/8 – 5/11/24 (with the possibility of Sunday 5/12/24 that is still to be determined.) Due to the courthouse renovation, they have a plan in place to re-map the festival. Mr. Scaggs made a motion to fund \$5,500.00 to Heritage Days for 2024. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

B.) MR. BRUCE WARREN, NEGOTIATIONS INC. – CENTERPOINT ENERGY PIPELINE EASEMENT R-O-W REQUEST: Mr. Warren presented a right-of-way request to secure an easement on South Jefferson Street at King Park on behalf of CenterPoint Energy. He explained that this easement will impact 5 lots that are all owned by the City of Hartford City. Mr. Dudelston made a motion to approve granting the right-of-way easement. Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

C.) MR. BILL SMITH – BLACKFORD COUNTY EMA: Mr. Smith presented a document that was approved by the Blackford County Commissioners and all 1st responders that provides a basic plan for the solar eclipse on April 8, 2024. This was for informational purposes.

D.) CHIEF CODY CROUSE – PERMISSION TO SPEND OVER \$10,000 TO UPGRADE SERVICE WEAPONS: Chief Crouse explained that he is requesting permission to spend over \$10,000. They are upgrading firearms for the entire department. These new firearms will cost between \$22,000 - \$35,000 depending on the actual model decided upon. He did state these firearms do have a lifetime warranty. Mr. Scaggs made a

motion to permit this expenditure. Mr. Dudelston seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

E.) FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2024-01 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING

SECTION 155 OF THE CITY CODE: After some discussion, it was decided to table this topic until the March meeting. Mr. Dudelston made a motion to table this. Mr. Aspy seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

F.) MAYOR ECKSTEIN – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDING AGREEMENT

FOR 2024: Mayor Eckstein explained that the Board of Works approved the 2024 contract with the Blackford Economic Development Corporation. He is asking Council to determine the funding for this contract. Mr. Scaggs made a motion to approve \$30,000 for the 2024 funding. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

G.) MS. DANA WHATLEY – BEEKEEPING WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS: Ms.

Whatley explained that she had a request for the city's beekeeping ordinance. After some research, she determined that the city does not have one. She wanted Council to think about it and see if they want to put an ordinance in place. There was no vote, but she was asked to put it on the March agenda.

H.) DISCUSSION OF THE FOLLOWING BOARD/COMMITTEES: Mr. Dudelston

explained that Council has 3 boards that they have responsibility for some of the board appointments and oversight responsibilities on one.

- 1.) **ARTS COUNCIL** – Mr. Dudelston explained that the ordinance for the Arts Council states that the committee can consist of 4 or 5 people. The mayor has 4 appointments, and the Council has 1 appointment (if desired). Mayor Eckstein explained that he spoke with the head of this committee, and they are content with their current board of 4 unless the Council wanted to exercise their appointment authority.
- 2.) **GREENSCAPE** – Mr. Dudelston presented the ordinance for the Greenscape Commission. He stated this ordinance was approved in 2009 and states that there is a committee of 7 members. The mayor has 3 appointments, the Council has 3 appointments, and the Parks Board has one 1 appointment. The ordinance has no funding mechanism mentioned in it. It calls for regular meetings and minutes to be kept. He stated that the Greenscape Commission has done wonderful work that we need to continue. He requested that we start following the ordinance more closely and maybe consider amending it to allow for funding. Ms. Tracey Witt is one of the Council's appointees. They will be working over the next month to flesh out the remainder of this committee.
- 3.) **HISTORIC PRESERVATION** – Mr. Dudelston explained that the Historic Preservation Committee has a board of 5 members. All appointments for this board are to be made by the mayor. Each member has a 3-year term.

4.) REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION – Mr. Dudelston explained that the Redevelopment Commission has a 5-person board. The mayor has 3 appointments, the Council has 2 appointments and 1 advisory, non-voting member to be appointed by the School Board. Mr. Dudelston is one of the Council’s appointments. Mr. Dudelston made a motion to affirm Ms. Dana Whatley as the Council’s second appointment to this board. Mr. Scaggs seconded the motion. The vote to support Ms. Whatley was 5-0.

I.) INDEPENDENCE PARKWAY – QUIT-CLAIM DEED: Mr. Dudelston made a motion to table this topic. Ms. Witt seconded the motion. The vote to table was 5-0.

MAYOR’S COMMENTS: Mayor Eckstein stated that he had received a call regarding a parcel of land at 608 W. Main Street where a constituent would like to build a new home. The homeowner needs a larger lot, and the adjoining lot is owned by the city. Mayor Eckstein asked for permission to move forward in contacting Attorney Murphy about going through all the steps to sell this property. Mr. Scaggs made a motion to move forward. Ms. Witt seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 5-0.

CLERK-TREASURER COMMENTS: NONE

COUNCIL COMMENT: NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT:

MS. CHERI BROWN:

A.) ECLIPSE: Ms. Brown explained that they have developed a committee to prepare for the upcoming Eclipse on April 8, 2024. This committee is trying to inform the public about the possibility of an influx of traffic through Hartford City during this time. She invited everyone to attend their next meeting on February 12, 2024.

B.) TRAVIS HOLDMAN & J.D. PRESCOTT: Ms. Brown stated that she is collaborating with these gentlemen about coming to Blackford County to talk about financing ideas for our area. Mr. Holdman is the Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee Chairperson, and he also sits on the Appropriations Committee with the Indiana State Senate. Mr. Prescott sits on the Indiana House of Representatives, Ways, and Means Committee.

ADJOURNMENT: With there being no further business, Mr. Scaggs made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.

FOLDER 2/REC 171125_002