

**Hillsboro City Council Meeting  
October 17, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll call was taken and those present were Mayor Downs and Commissioners Wright, Butler, and Ward. Commissioner Justison was absent.

The “Pledge of Allegiance” was recited.

Minutes of the previous meetings were approved.

Commissioners’ reports:

Commissioner Butler read his report and it will be included in the minutes.

Commissioner Wright read her report and it will be included in the minutes.

Commissioner Ward said he would wait until paying bills on the agenda.

Commissioner Justison was absent and his reports will be included in the minutes.

Economic Development and Community Planner’s report will be included in the minutes.

The City Engineer Jeremy Connor was absent.

Public Comments: N/A

Mayor Downs referred to ongoing investigations going on concerning some break ins in the area. He also mentioned a bad accident that had occurred on Rt 16 that week and expressed his gratitude for the equipment and trained personnel that we have for these situations.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Ward** and seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve the bills being paid for the month of October. Motion carried 4-0.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Butler** and seconded by Commissioner Ward to accept the only bid for a lot on Douglas Street in the amount of \$250.00 from Kenny Ondrey. Motion carried 4-0.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Ward** and seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve a façade grant reimbursement to The Historic Red Rooster for signage at 123 E Seward Street in the amount of \$4044.43. Commissioner Wright abstained. Motion carried 3-0.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Ward** and seconded by Commissioner Wright to approve a façade grant reimbursement to Sheldon and Sons for work completed at 213 S Main in the amount of \$2663.39. Motion carried 4-0.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Ward** and seconded by Commissioner Wright to approve a façade grant reimbursement to Caleb Reynolds for work completed at 715 S Main in the amount of \$3000.00. Motion carried 4-0.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Ward** and seconded by Commissioner Wright to approve a façade grant for work to be done at 419 S. Main S. Motion carried 4-0.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Ward** and seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve a façade grant for work to be done at 216 S. Main S. Motion carried 4-0.

Commissioner Ward mentioned that the budget for façade grants is getting close to being exhausted. He will review the account to see where they are just to be sure before making any decisions on limits to additional applications.

Agenda item 17 was pulled because the forklift forks were under the \$1000 spending threshold for the department head.

Commissioner Wright brought up the topic of City Hall being closed on the Wednesday for Old Settlers. Wright expressed concern about the office being closed due to shut offs being the day before and it would keep customers from being able to come in and pay their late bills in order to turn their water back on. Wright is confused as to why the office is closed. Mayor Downs explained that the office has always closed to allow the Old Settlers committee to conduct their business inside the building. Commissioner Butler said that the Old Settlers group uses the Challacombe House for their meetings. Commissioner Ward added that he works in a business downtown and they stay open on Wednesdays, allowing their employees the option to use their time off if they want to have that day off from work. Wright reiterated that the issue for her is that pushing off shut offs creates a problem in that the next shut off date is only a 3 week window rather than a full month to allow customers to get caught up on their water bill payments. Mayor Downs brought up the fact that the shut offs had been pushed back a week for three months in a row for July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday, Old Settlers in August, and Labor Day holiday in September. Wright added that this was an unusual situation. Wright spoke to employees in the other departments and they work on that day so she doesn't feel that it is fair for the office to get an extra day off. Wright repeated that she needs City Hall open on that Wednesday. Butler and Ward each said that this should be an easy fix. Ward added that there will be ample notice to any employee who wishes to schedule the day off.

Commissioner Wright brought to the council the question about allowing open containers on the streets when they are blocked off for special events and festivals. Mayor Downs mentioned the ordinance that prohibits open containers. Wright gave the example of Opera House closing Wood St for a band with patrons allowed to drink on

within the parameters of the closed street. Wright expressed that in this scenario she doesn't understand why this wouldn't extend to bigger events and festivals where Main St is closed and is blocked off. Wright said she has been asked this and so she is bringing it to the council for discussion because in prior conversations the mayor's only response was that it is not enforced. Mayor Downs denied saying this and stated that if people choose to walk down the street with an open container, it is at their own risk and are subject to being issued a ticket. Wright asked again that a blocked street is a different situation than a regular day. Butler raised the concern that we wouldn't want to do anything that would encourage people to bring coolers and package liquor not purchased from a local bar or restaurant. Ward said that people do this anyway and stated that during Old Settlers people are riding golf carts and side by sides with coolers in the back. Wright stated that she just wanted to bring the topic up for discussion. Butler asked Chief Leetham for his input. Leetham's concern was primarily keeping glass items off of the street but that many other communities allow open containers in plastic or paper cups during events. Leetham added that the ordinance specifies "public way" which would reference any sidewalk or street being a public way. Ward agreed that there would need to be a change to the ordinance if they decide to make revisions to the rules. Ward shared that in his hometown has a festival similar to Old Settlers where beer carts are set up and businesses are allowed to sell beer and alcohol in plastic cups. Chief Leetham added that a change might encourage the businesses in Hillsboro to accommodate the sales in plastic containers and possibly increase revenues for their businesses. Ward and Wright both agreed that the proposed change is geared toward those who come downtown to enjoy events such as the car show and maybe walk around looking at the cars with a drink in their hand from the Opera House. Mayor Downs was agreeable to the continued conversation considering allowances for open containers during events and festivals within the boundaries of the blocked streets. Butler brought up the fact that the Abbey is off of the boundaries of those closures and Ward suggested some kind of closure of the section of stairs that lead from Barb Adams' office to the Abbey backyard. All agreed that the changes to the ordinance would need to have clear specifics on what would be allowed and disallowed if they move forward. Wright asked that Mayor Downs read through her additional notes she had given to him about other liquor laws and ordinances. Ward agreed that the notes that were made needed to be reviewed and cleaned up on some of the wording.

**Motion to Adjourn was made at 7:33 pm by Commissioner Butler** and seconded by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah McConnell, Acting City Clerk