

**Hillsboro City Council Meeting
November 21, 2023**

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

Roll call was taken and those present were Mayor Don Downs and Commissioners Kendra Wright, Fred Butler, Tommy Justison, and Patrick Ward.

The “Pledge of Allegiance” was recited.

Minutes of the previous meetings were approved.

Commissioners’ reports:

Commissioner Butler presented his report to the council. He stated the spillway looks good. He also reported snowflakes have been installed downtown, and they look good. He said he likes the work being done at the lake, which includes rip rap along the lake shore. Butler reported they have also been working on tearing down a house on Taylorville Road.

Commissioner Justison presented his report to the council. He stated the fire department responded to nine calls since last meeting. He also reported hydrant flushing is underway. Justison reported on the police side, he stated they received a letter on continual dog barking occurring on Tillson Street. He also said Police Chief Randy Leetham is reminding residents to collect packages that are delivered.

Commissioner Wright presented her report to the council. She stated the water quality from Glenn Shoals remains steady. She also reported the USDA has given final specs and plans for the wastewater treatment plant.

Commissioner Ward presented his report to the council.

Mayor Downs presented his report to the council. He thanked Imagine Hillsboro and the Hillsboro Area Hospital Junior Board for hosting the annual Rake-and-Run event.

Economic Development and Community Planner Sarah McConnell presented her report to the council. She stated she is still working with the DCEO grant manager on updates to the Energy grant.

City Engineer Jeremy Conner was not present for the engineer’s report.

Public Comment: None.

Paying Bills for the Month of November: Commissioner Ward reported bills for the month totaled \$475,989.21. **Motion by Ward and second by Butler to pay bills for the month of November. Motion carries with a 5-0 vote in favor.**

Request from the Orpheum Theatre for Street Closure on December 23, 2023: Orpheum Theatre Manager Cary Eisentraut stated they are planning a Christmas Vacation party for the evening of December 23, 2023. He informed the council he would like to close Main Street from Wood to Water Streets. Downs said they would need to get with Leetham and Mike Lee. Leetham stated he did not know start times or end times of the event. Eisentraut said he would like to close the street starting at 4 p.m. and the plan would be to reopen at 11 p.m. **Motion by Butler and second by Justison to close approve closing Main Street from Wood Street to Water Street from 4 to 11 p.m. on December 23, 2023. Motion carries with a 5-0 vote in favor.**

New Energy Contract for Street Lighting: Downs reported new energy contract proposals came in last week. He said he would be hesitant to approve a deal as long as four years based on what is going on now. He said the Homefield Energy bid is still a bit higher, and his recommendation would be to go with Constellation. Ward asked if it would be better to approve a longer term deal in order to lock in a lower rate. Butler stated he would recommend going at least 24 months. Downs said Homefield Energy, in the past, always had the lowest rates; however, Constellation is now the lowest. Ward stated for budgeting purposes he would prefer a set rate. **Motion by Ward and second by Justison to approve a 24-month contract with whichever provider is cheaper between Homefield and Constellation. Motion carries with a 5-0 vote in favor.**

Annual Insurance Renewal: Ward reported the insurance policy he is recommending is from ICRMT again, adding that rates increased slightly but they are still cheaper than everyone else. He stated McConnell did a lot of work with other departments to get the equipment list cleaned up. He stated once the new clerk starts, the insurance representative said he would meet with him to get everything settled. **Motion by Ward and second by Wright to approve the annual insurance renewal with ICRMT. Motion carries with a 5-0 vote in favor.**

Purchase of a replacement storm drain ring and lid for storm sewer inlet on Northwest Quadrant of Summer and Jefferson Streets: Butler reported the amount is for \$2,848.78, and it is in the budget. **Motion by Butler and second by Wright to approve purchasing a replacement storm drain ring and lid for the storm sewer inlet on the northwest quadrant of Summer and Jefferson Streets. Motion carries with a 5-0 vote in favor.**

Purchase of a snow plow for the fire department: Justison reported the invoice is for a Kubota blade for the fire department. He stated they budgeted \$7500, and the quote

with installation came in at \$4,195. **Motion by Justison and second by Butler to approve the purchase of a snow plow for the fire department.**

Façade Grant reimbursement for Tim and Jill Ulrici for work completed at 309 South Main Street: Downs reported the total bill is \$6,207.58, and the grant will be for \$3,000. **Motion by Wright and second by Ward to approve the façade grant reimbursement for Tim and Jill Ulrici for work completed at 309 South Main Street. Motion carries with a 5-0 vote in favor.**

Residency requirements for labor union employees: Downs stated the council will not make a decision tonight, but a couple suggestions he found was for 15-mile and 30-mile radii. The current requirement is a 6-mile radius. Downs stated the goal behind expanding the requirement is to get a bigger range of the population. Ward stated 30 miles could potentially get someone all the way to Edwardsville. Butler suggested limiting it to the school district. Wright noted if they limit it to the school district, that would eliminate potential prospects on the other side of WSMI. She asked about the possibility of putting someone on call so that employee must be within the range at the time they are needed in case of an emergency. Ward asked how short the city is on employees because, based on what he has heard tonight, police is almost fully-staffed and the fire department is currently full. Butler stated the last time they had open applications, they received very few applicants. He said he would be happy with a 20-mile limit, which would reach the communities he desires. Wright stated Nokomis is 15 miles and Raymond is 12. Ward said this has to be collectively bargained anyway.

Brush pickup policy: Butler reported the current brush pickup policy can be a huge waste of time sometimes, while other times it is a necessity. He said the one thing he doesn't like with the policy is that the city gates are only open Mondays through Fridays at normal working hours when most people are working. He said at some point in the future, he would like to see the facility opened for four hours on a Saturday so those who cannot drop off during the week will have an opportunity on the weekend. Butler said this does not count damage from storms. The weekend drop-off was not part of the new policy being addressed. **Motion by Butler and second by Wright to adopt the new brush pickup policy. Motion carries with a 5-0 vote in favor.**

Closing Central Park Pool for 2024 Season: Butler reported the city needs to either put a bunch of money into the pool or close it. He said he does not want to be the one who closes Central Park Pool, but the city loses money every year and the eye opener for him was when the pumps were turned off and it drained three feet in three days. He also stated Jim May, who has advocated for the pool to stay open for eternity, is on board with closing it, adding that if he can't keep it open, he doesn't think anyone can. Butler reported they have a design for a splash pad to go down there, but the decision they make affects what happens at the marina. Justison stated he believes it is still worth going out and getting a few bids. Butler said the city saves money by not having the pool. He said he doesn't mind getting options, but they don't even have enough money for the

splash pad, let alone the pool. He said the pool is not holding up anymore. Ward stated the other way to pay for it would be to issue bonds, but he doesn't know if the budget would even support that. He said he would like to look into that and address it at the next meeting. May said they have known for at least a decade this was coming.

Fiber project between Hillsboro Fire and Police Departments and Montgomery County: Justison reported he received an email from Montgomery County Information Services Manager Curt Watkins about an opportunity to partner with the county to get internet down a little bit. He said the county would ask the city to pay \$100 per month for connectivity. He said he is waiting to hear back from Fire Chief Joe Lyerla. Leetham said it would save the city money. Ward said the way he reads the email is the cost would be in addition to the regular internet. Butler said that's the way he reads the email too. Ward said he would like clarification before voting on this.

Motion to Adjourn was made at 7:56 p.m. by Commissioner Justison and seconded by Commissioner Ward. Motion carried with a 5-0 vote in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
David Jenkins, City Clerk