

**CITY OF HARTFORD  
COMMON COUNCIL  
September 13, 2022**

The Common Council of the City of Hartford, Washington and Dodge Counties, Wisconsin, met for its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2022 7:00 p.m., in the Common Council Chambers of Hartford City Hall, 109 North Main Street, Mayor Timothy Michalak presiding.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Michalak led the Common Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

The Mayor and all Alderpersons were present; Alderpersons Carroll and Turchi were absent and excused.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION by Alderperson Hegy, seconded by Alderperson Sikora approving the following items:

1. The Common Council minutes of August 23, 2022.
2. The purchase of 100 utility poles from Bell Lumber and Pole Company at a cost not to exceed \$80,485.80.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**APPEARANCES/CITIZEN COMMENTS**

1. Patrick Rich appeared for a transient merchant license for Edward Jones. He will be going door to door to inform residents of the financial services Edward Jones offers.
2. Executive Director Leif Erickson and Development Specialist Gene McDaniel from Flight for Life spoke about opening a base of operations at the Hartford Airport. He explained that there would be three staff members stationed at the airport 24/7, and that Hartford was an ideal location due to the many improvements at the airport. They are hoping to be open November 1<sup>st</sup>, but are waiting on internet to be available at the hangar they will be leasing.
3. County Executive Josh Schoemann and Sheriff Marty Schulteis from Washington County spoke about the public safety referendum that is being proposed on the November ballot. Sheriff Schulteis explained the referendum is strictly for personnel; a roughly 15% increase in personnel across all divisions within the sheriff's department. He further explained that staffing within the sheriff's department has not kept up with the population growth of the county, which is forcing the sheriff's department into more of a reactionary response rather than a preventative or deterring response. He then shared data from a per capita study that shows Washington County has less officers per 1,000 residents than a comparable county, Ozaukee County. Sheriff Schulteis then explained what his plan is for those additional personnel, which included having teams of officers and social workers available to respond to mental health calls in the county and also working in a proactive manner by checking in on individuals who may have known problems. This approach would be more advantageous than the current model because the "mobile crisis team" would be readily available to conduct an in-person assessment, where in the current model the in-person assessment is sometimes substituted with a phone consult. He also stated that jail staff would be increased with the funds from the referendum. Alderperson Fulop asked if there was going to be a place that residents could get more information about what went into the decision to propose the referendum; Sheriff Schulteis mentioned there may be a website constructed, direct mailings will be sent out, and a White Paper will be compiled to accompany several listening sessions throughout the county. Alderperson Kohler asked if there was a timeline for the release of the White Paper. County Executive Josh Schoemann advised it

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should be out later this week or early next week. He then went on to explain that traditionally he speaks about keeping government small, taxes low and living within our means. This referendum represents going outside of our means, which is why he felt it was important that the constituents of Washington County make the decision. Alderperson Hegy asked if it could be considered to raise taxes in the townships to more fairly share the burden. Mr. Schoemann advised the county system is not built for something like that and it would be a difficult conversation to have, but the referendum is an important tool for these situations.

4. Ken Mikulec, 805 Willow Ln, stated he is a County Board Supervisor and is against the referendum as presented. He explained that the referendum is too big of an ask at a time when people are still dealing with financial losses from the pandemic as well as the ongoing inflation issue. He stated that this could have been done in smaller increments over time instead of asking for this large amount at one time. He also stated that proposed referendum will not solve the larger issues plaguing the county and the country; the only way to solve those problems is by citizens voting in the upcoming elections.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Michalak reminded everyone of the Buckskinner's Encampment going on this weekend at Woodlawn Union Park.

### **ALDERMANIC REQUESTS**

Alderperson Hegy advised the Mid-Moraine Legislative Committee is meeting on Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup> at the Jackson Village Hall. Washington County Town's Association and those in attendance will be discussing the possibility of Washington County sharing any increase in sales tax revenue with the municipalities. He also advised residents to make sure grass clippings are not being blown out into the road.

Alderperson Rusniak stated that the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center had an excellent season, and asked if the Parks and Rec Director could send an update with final numbers. City Administrator Steve Volkert advised that the information would be included in the next Weekly Memo.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

#### **Recommendation to approve a Hartford City Taxi fare increase in 2023**

Mayor Michalak declared the public hearing open at 7:44 p.m. The notice was read by City Clerk Lori Hetzel.

Parks and Recreation Director Randy Wojtasiak explained the fare increase was necessary for budgetary reasons, as ridership has decreased and gas prices have increased. The last fare increase was in 2020. City Administrator Steve Volkert mentioned that the taxi program is supported by a tax levy. That levy would only increase if costs increase but revenues do not. So, to avoid a tax increase, the user fee needs to increase. Mayor Michalak then asked if there was any type of marketing to encourage people to consider saving money by using the taxi, to which Director Wojtasiak said there isn't at this time.

There were no appearances for or against.

Alderperson Kohler said that he had used the taxi service recently and feels the program is very responsive and accommodating. He felt the cost of his ride was very reasonable, but also felt the proposed increase is not excessive.

Alderperson Rusniak agreed that while no one likes increasing fees, this is a necessary increase and it is not an excessive increase.

Alderperson Hegy asked what support level the city gives to the taxi program through taxes. Administrator Volkert advised it ranges between \$30,000 and \$60,000, depending on if a vehicle is being

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purchased. Alderperson Hegy advised it is a sizable investment and the small fare increase will help to keep that from increasing.

There being no further remarks or discussion, Mayor Michalak declared the public hearing closed at 7:52 p.m.

MOTION by Alderperson Kohler, seconded by Alderperson Fulop adopting proposed Resolution No. 3637 – A resolution to increase the 2023 Hartford City Taxi passenger fare.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **RESOLUTIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTION THEREON**

1. Resolution No. 3638 – A resolution levying special assessments for unpaid Hartford Utility accounts and assessments for special services on the 2022 tax roll.
  - a. City Administrator Steve Volkert explained that this is an annual occurrence that takes place just before tax season.

MOTION by Alderperson Hegy, seconded by Alderperson Sikora for the adoption of proposed Resolution No. 3638.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **ORDINANCES**

#### **Second Reading and Possible Action Thereon**

1. Ordinance No. 1461 – An ordinance repealing and recreating Chapter 26 of the Municipal Code.
  - a. City Attorney Ian Prust explained the ordinance as presented now includes all of the amendments that were discussed at the previous meeting.
  - b. Alderperson Rusniak asked for clarification on the total number of domestic animals, as the number was different in the executive summary than what is stated in the amended ordinance. Mr. Prust explained that the executive summary was not modified to include the amended number of animals, which is 8. He also stated that although he previously voted against allowing chickens in the city, he will support the amended ordinance as presented.
  - c. Alderperson Hegy asked if the ordinance could be separated so that the part pertaining to chickens could be voted on separately. Alderperson Rusniak stated that was not necessary as that vote occurred two weeks ago and was defeated.
  - d. Alderperson Webb commented that this ordinance, with respect to the chicken provision, is setting parameters while still allowing property owners an extra personal freedom to use their property how they would like. He also feels that the number of residents who are going to take advantage of this opportunity is probably much smaller than what some are imagining, so the perceived problem may also be smaller. He added that there is nothing preventing the council from revisiting this issue if more problems do arise.
  - e. Alderperson Garza explained that his previous voting on this issue may have been confusing because he is neither for chickens nor against them. He was hoping for some feedback from his constituents to direct his future voting on this matter, but did not receive any. He stated that he will be voting in support of this ordinance because it allows those who want chickens the opportunity to have them, and those who do not want chickens do not have to apply for the permit.

MOTION by Alderperson Fulop, seconded by Alderperson Sikora for the adoption of proposed Ordinance No. 1461.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Ordinance No. 1462 – An ordinance repealing Chapter 21 of the Municipal Code.

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- a. City Attorney Ian Prust explained that much of Chapter 21 makes reference to a City Health Officer, which the city has not had in many years. Those provisions have been removed, along with other provisions that no longer need regulation. The other pertinent provisions were moved to other appropriate chapters of the code.

MOTION by Alderperson Fulop, seconded by Alderperson Webb for the adoption of Ordinance No. 1462.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### CITY ADMINSTRATOR'S REPORT

1. Discussion and consideration of authorizing appropriate City officials to sublease Hangar Land Lease for Hangar No. 75 at the Hartford Municipal Airport to Flight for Life, Waukesha.
  - a. City Administrator Steve Volkert explained that Flight for Life is interested in making the Hartford Municipal Airport another home base for their operations and would like a chance to make sure this is a good fit.
  - b. City Attorney Ian Prust requested that this be approved contingent upon the approval of the sublease between Flight for Life and Air Methods. They are still working on ironing out a few details.
  - c. Alderperson Kohler wanted to make sure there wouldn't be a lapse in service from Air Methods to Flight for Life. Mr. Prust pointed out that Air Methods is not currently operating and the sublease could potentially facilitate the service returning to the area more quickly than waiting for Air Methods to resolve the issues that are preventing them from operating now.

MOTION by Alderperson Webb, seconded by Alderperson Kohler authorizing appropriate City officials to sublease Hangar Land Lease for Hangar No. 75 at the Hartford Municipal Airport to Flight for Life, Waukesha subject to final approval of the sublease.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Discussion and consideration of the 2023 – 2027 CIP Budget.
  - a. Administrator Volkert explained that odd year budgets are usually simple in the fact that things are already planned and borrowed for. However, in this budget, the economy is very different and things are a lot more expensive than what was anticipated. In response to that, ARPA funding will be used to make up the anticipated difference. There is potential that some future projects may be pushed to later years or removed all together if the cost goes way over available funds.
  - b. Alderperson Fulop asked if the city has considered entering into an expense lease for the IT department to allow the city access to technological advancements as soon as they become available, rather than spending a large lump sum every few years.
    - i. Administrator Volkert explained the first issue is levy limits. As it stands, the allowable increase in levy limits for next year is not enough to cover annual employee raises. Something like what Alderperson Fulop asked about would add to the amount that is already not covered by the increase in levy limits. Alderperson Fulop proposed that the expense lease be considered in future budgets so that the city is not taking a capital impact all the time.
  - c. Alderperson Rusniak asked how the Wilson Avenue/Union Street realignment project cost increased by 93%.
    - i. Administrator Volkert explained that there was a change in plans as to how the project would need to be completed, essentially making it a brand-new project. With that amount of increase, it is unlikely that this project would go forward, unless another evaluation of how to complete the project is done.

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- d. Alderperson Rusniak then asked how a project to remove a hill is going to be completed for only \$20,000.
  - i. Director of Public Works Darryl Kranz explained this was a project initially coordinated with Washington County, and some of the funding was coming from them. He also explained that this would be a good project to get done if the funding was available, but there are other, higher priority, projects that need to be completed first.
- e. Alderperson Hegy stated that he supports all of the projects planned for 2023. He then went through and commented on various projects within the entire CIP budget.
- f. City Administrator Steve Volkert then explained there was an updated report on borrowing and debt schedule available to the council members. He then explained a different viewpoint regarding debt on levy, which is to look at debt on levy in relation to growth. As the community grows, so would the debt on levy at a proportional rate. He explained that the tax rate would not increase because the debt on levy is keeping pace with growth. Taking this viewpoint, it is predicted that the City's tax rate would not need to increase due to debt for the foreseeable future.
- g. Alderperson asked Chief Stephans about the proposed fire station being built in 2026. He suggested that the Fire and Rescue department will need more full-time personnel much before it will need a new fire station.
  - i. Chief Stephans stated that it will be inevitable that more full-time staff will be needed as funds become available for that. If those funds are not available, he suggests moving the current full-time staff out to the new proposed fire station and have paid on-call staff report to the current downtown station. This is based on current call volume and the proximity of the current station to the on-call staff. He also explained that next year's operational budget will include more paid on-premise staff, which Administrator Volkert also explained is a baby step toward more full-time staff.

MOTION by Alderperson Hegy, seconded by Alderperson Rusniak approving the 2023 – 2027 CIP Budget.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Alderperson Fulop, seconded by Alderperson Sikora for adjournment at 8:39 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lori Hetzel, City Clerk

CCSEP13.22