

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF HOOPESTON

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025

7:00 PM – CITY HALL

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Wise called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm following the pledge of allegiance.
- II. ROLL CALL – The following 8 alderpersons were present: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth, and Scharlach. Mayor Wise and Clerk Hardcastle were also present. Eric Eves was present on Zoom.
- III. AMENDMENT OR APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – Alderwoman K. Ferrell moved to approve the agenda as presented. Alderwoman Lawson seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0.
- IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING – Alderman Garrett moved to approve the minutes of the previous council meeting as presented. Alderman M. Ferrell seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0.
- V. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF THE BILLS – Alderman Eyrich moved to approve the payment of the city's bills. Alderman Garrett seconded the motion. Alderman Porth advised we were going to hold off on sending the \$18,900 check to Silver Brother's pending legal advice. Alderman Garrett asked why. Alderman Porth answered that the fire department failed to get bids on the repair to the fire station. Alderman McElhaney asked about an estimate he received for a new dump bed on a Street and Alley truck. He was going to investigate it but wanted to make sure a check has not been cut for it. A roll call vote was taken (Ayes: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth, Scharlach – Nays: None – Abstentions: None – Absent: None) and the bills were approved 8-0.
- VI. PRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL – None
- VII. PETITIONS TO THE COUNCIL – None
- VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - a. Mike McGuinness addressed the council about the letter all residents received about lithium levels in the city water system. Alderman Eyrich answered his questions. Mr. McGuinness also asked about the hotel project and Mayor Wise answered that it is in the investment group's hands now. Mr. McGuinness also asked about Parkview Court. Mayor Wise answered that it is slated to be demolished this summer, and the Vermilion Housing Authority would have to sell

the property to the city at market value and cannot just give it to the city.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION –

- a. Alderwoman K. Ferrell moved to go into executive session to discuss personnel. Alderman Garrett seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken (Ayes: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth, Scharlach – Nays: None – Abstentions: None – Absent: None) and the council went into executive session at 7:15 pm.
- b. Alderwoman K. Ferrell moved to come out of executive session. Alderman Garrett seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken (Ayes: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth, Scharlach – Nays: None – Abstentions: None – Absent: None) and the council came out of executive session at 7:37 pm.

X. REPORT OF OFFICERS

- a. EYRICH
 - i. VFW MEMORIAL – The work on the VFW memorial in the civic center is moving along.
 - ii. PRE-TREATMENT LAGOONS – The city has successfully shifted the responsibility of the pre-treatment lagoons to ERH. Teasdale Foods is going to be paying the fees for ERH to do this work.
- b. K. FERRELL
 - i. ORDINANCE 2025-15 – Amending the Chicken Ordinance. Alderwoman K. Ferrell presented the changes to this ordinance and moved for it's approval. Alderman M. Ferrell seconded the motion. These changes would only allow the keeping of hens and no roosters. They would also limit the amount of chickens to 6. A roll call vote was taken (Ayes: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth, Scharlach – Nays: None – Abstentions: None – Absent: None) and Ordinance 2025-15 was approved.
 - ii. ELECTRONIC RECYCLING EVENT – The spring electronic recycling event will be on April 5 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm at McFerren Park near the Lion's Club shelter.
 - iii. CONDEMNED BUILDINGS – 2 houses that have been condemned have come down in the law week and a half.

c. M. FERRELL

- i. CIVIC CENTER REMODEL – It is moving forward.

d. GARRETT –

- i. VFW MEMORIAL ROCK – The group responsible for the VFW said that the city could have the memorial rock that is outside of their building. Silver Brother's has offered to move it at cost and Lee Cox said that he would tell the city how to move it. Alderman Eyrich advised that he has already spoken with Don Stebbins about getting it moved.

e. LAWSON –

- i. ORDINANCE 2025-16 – AMENDING SECTION 10.43 – USE OF LOW-SPEED ELECTRIC AND GAS-POWERED BICYCLES AND SCOOTERS ON PUBLIC STREETS – Alderwoman Lawson outlined the changes to this ordinance. Changes include having the consent of a parental guardian for any users of low powered bicycles who are 16-18 years of age, changing the age of low-speed scooters to those 18 and above, changed the permit to an annual permit with a cost of \$5, requiring 1 person per vehicle, all vehicles have applicable safety devices, and not requiring insurance. Alderman Scharlach asked if we could revoke someone's permit. Alderwoman Lawson answered that we do have language for that. Alderwoman Lawson moved to approve this ordinance. Alderwoman K. Ferrell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken (Ayes: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth – Nays: Scharlach – Abstentions: None – Absent: None) and the ordinance was approved 7-1.

f. MCELHANEY – Nothing to report.

g. PORTH

- i. BUDGET – We have made some progress on working the budget out. Still waiting on 2 department's numbers. Once those numbers are received, he will send final numbers out to everyone.

h. SCHARLACH

- i. AMBULANCE CONTRACT – Alderman Scharlach presented the ambulance agreement for approval. Alderman Garrett asked if we need to change the terms so that it starts with a 1 year agreement and then go to a 5 year agreement since there is a lot of change and it would be easier to make changes after 1 year than 5 years. The council was in agreement to that.

Clerk Hardcastle had some comments about the protocols that Vermilion County 9-1-1 uses to prioritize medical calls. The contract has in it protocols used by Priority Dispatch. Vermilion County uses Powerfone. Mayor Wise said that we can make those changes, and this would be tabled until the next meeting when the language can be clarified.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COUNCIL – None

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NOne

XIII. NEW BUSINESS – None

XIV. MAYOR COMMENTS

- a. RESOLUTION 2025-30 – FIREWORKS AGREEMENT – Mayor Wise presented this resolution for approval. \$5,000 comes out of the city general fund and the other \$15,000 has to be raised. The fireworks show will be on July 3, 2025. Alderman Scharlach moved to approve the resolution. Alderman McElhaney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken (Ayes: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth, Scharlach – Nays: None – Abstentions: None – Absent: None) and resolution 2025-30 was approved.
- b. CONSENT OF THE COUNCIL FOR PERSONNEL CHANGES – Mayor Wise advised that he would like language to codify any personnel changes would need to be approved by the city council. This will be brought up at the next meeting.
- c. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – Mayor Wise presented the draft ordinance to create the Public Works department. This department would be the consolidation of the street and alley, parks, and cemetery departments. There would be a lead worker in each section and one person overseeing the entire department. This ordinance will be brought up for a vote at the next meeting.
- d. APPOINTMENT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS MANAGER – As mentioned above, the Public Works department would be headed by a manager. This position is mayor appointed and will be brought up at the next meeting.
- e. ORDINANCE 2025-17 – CHANGING THE MEETING AFTER AN ELECTION – Mayor Wise advised that Clerk Hardcastle found that in the ordinances it states that we must have a regular council meeting the Tuesday after a city election. This is something that is not currently followed and the re-organization meeting after the election is held in May. Alderman Garrett moved to approve the ordinance. Alderwoman K. Ferrell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken (Ayes: Eyrich, K. Ferrell, M. Ferrell, Garrett, Lawson, McElhaney, Porth, Scharlach – Nays: None –

Abstentions: None – Absent: None) and Ordinance 2025-17 was approved 8-0.

- f. SEMI-TRACTORS PARKED IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS – There is an issue with semi-tractors parking in residential neighborhoods. Mayor Wise has asked Chief Kelnhofer to investigate this. There are a few guidelines about vehicles being parked in certain areas. Tractor trailers cannot be kept in neighborhoods. Mayor Wise said that he is not making a proposal today, but that this is something to think about.

XV. COMMENTS FROM THE ATTORNEY

- a. GARRISON CASE – Eric Eves advised that the judge has issued a default judgement in this case and it will be moved to collections.
- b. FIFTH ST PROPERTY – There is a hearing on this case in 1 week.
- c. ESSEX BUILDING – The owner of the property has not filed an answer to the city's case and there will be a motion to default in 2 weeks. Alderman Garrett asked what that does for the city. Eric advised that since the owner did not answer the suit and if he is found in default, the contract would be undone, and ownership would go back to the city.

- XVI. ADJOURNMENT – There being no further action to come before the council Alderwoman K. Ferrell moved to adjourn the meeting. Alderman McElhaney seconded the motion. Motion was carried 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bradley Hardcastle
City Clerk