



City of Hinckley

City Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 09, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Council Chambers (Community Room)

106 First Street SE, P. O. Box 366 | Tel: (320) 384.7491 | Fax: (320) 384.7492 | www.hinckleymn.gov

***Mayor and Councilmembers: Mayor Don Zeman | Councilmember Tim Burkhardt
Councilmember John Frank | Councilmember Judy Hopkins | Councilmember Jace Scharpnick***

PRESENT: Mayor Donald Zeman, Tim Burkhardt, John Frank, Judy Hopkins, Jace Scharpnick. ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: City Administrator Leaha Jackson, Administrative Assistant Kristy Hosler, Firehouse Manager Phil Taggart, Fire Chief Elliot Golly, Joel Virtue, Hinckley Area Chamber of Commerce, and Sierra Kingen, North Pine County News.

1. Call to Order-Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Scharpnick, to approve the agenda with the additions of 8F Continue Meeting with Fire Marshall's Office, Sandstone, and Pine City, and 8G Physician Assistants Week Proclamation Request. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

- A. June 10, 2025, Regular & Summary Minutes
- B. July 8, 2025, Regular & Summary Minutes
- C. August 22, 2025 Budget Work Session Minutes
- D. August 28, 2025, Special Meeting & Summary Minutes

Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Burkhardt, to approve the minutes as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Public Hearings

- A. Past Due City Services

Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Frank, to open the public hearing for Past Due City Services at 7:01 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0. Mayor Zeman called for public comments none were heard. The public hearing will stay open until before item 8D. Mayor Zeman called for any public comments again at 7:41 p.m., but none were heard. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to close the public hearing at 7:41 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

5. **Consent Agenda** (Those items listed under Consent Agenda are considered routine by the City Council and will be acted upon by one motion under this agenda item. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless the Mayor or a Councilmember so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered under New Business.)
- A. Fire Service Permit- Special Event- PYrotek FX - Grand Casino Amphitheater September 20, 2025
 - B. Hinckley Pine City Flames Snowmobile Club- Sign & Display on City Property
Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.
6. **Reports of Officers, Council Committees, & Citizens Committees**
- A. Pine County Sheriff - Calls were included in the packet.
 - B. Bolton & Menk- None
 - C. PeopleService-
 - 1. Operating & Maintenance Report- May
 - 2. Operating & Maintenance Report- June
 - 3. Operating & Maintenance Report- July
 - 4. Work Order Report- May
 - 5. Work Order Report- June
 - 6. Work Order Report- July
 - 7. Annual CPI Contract Adjustment Notice- The CPI Adjustment for the contract is 2.7%, effective December 1, 2025.
 - D. Building Official/Inspector - None
 - E. Hinckley Fire Department
 - 1. Monthly Run Report- Runs 97-109 were included in the packet.
 - 2. Enbridge Grant- \$2,500 - **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve accepting the Enbridge Grant for \$2,500 for the Hinckley Fire & Rescue. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**
 - F. Firehouse Liquors - Manager's Reports (no financials at this time) - Manager's Report was included in the packet. Financials will be available at a later meeting. There will be some events for the Vikings' games. They will be working on reducing their inventory in preparation for the December count.
 - G. Library- July & August Highlights - Highlights from July and August were included in the packet. Councilmember Burkhardt noticed that there appears to be increased visibility for programs happening in the Library, with the consensus of other members appreciating the reports.
 - H. Standing Committees
 - 1. Planning Commission- None
 - 2. Park Board - Councilmember Burkhardt is working on the grant application for October 1, 2025, deadline for next year's Sweet Summer Sounds. He is also working on the summary report for last year. Administrator Jackson reported that a group from First Lutheran Church helped with some repairs on the bandshell ramp at Westside Park. It has improved significantly, but will require further work in the future.
 - 3. EDA- None
7. **Unfinished Business**
- A. 2025 Budget Update

Financials were not available at this time. These will be provided at a later meeting. With the work done during the budget work session, staff did not identify any concerning charges or trends in August.

B. Schooley Mitchel Savings Evaluation

Nick Vetrano was presented at a previous meeting about the service his company offers to municipalities. Council wanted some time to consider the information and have a contract submitted. The 36-month contract and information were included in the packet.

Councilmember Hopkins noted it seems like a win-win. Councilmember Scharpnick clarified that after the three years, the City would keep all the savings. **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Scharpnick. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Voting Nay: Burkhardt. Motion carried 4-1.**

C. 2026 Preliminary Budget & Levy

The Preliminary Summary Budget and Levy were included in the packet. Jackson presented the highlights for the different funds. The overall Preliminary Budget was \$6,652,162, with the Levy being \$1,224,149. As in previous years, the levy includes a 2.5-percentage-point cushion from the discussion in the August 22, 2025, work session meeting. Also included were the notes from the Capital Project & Financial Planning meeting with Mike Bubany of David & Drown held on August 28, 2025. Councilmember Burkhardt clarified that we are including that the cushion was not dedicated to anything specific and could be allocated if needed. Jackson responded that it could. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the Preliminary Budget and Levy as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

8. New Business

A. City Vision/Future Planning

First Lutheran Church is helping to repair the ramp on the bandshell at Westside Park on September 7, 2025. Mayor Zeman expressed his concern with the big picture of streets, especially regarding the balance between existing and new infrastructure, and how that would fit within the adopted standards. Councilmember Scharpnick restated their willingness to have some flowers and a sign on the edge of their property as part of the area's beautification.

B. Coalition of Greater MN Cities 2025 City Visit, Darrin Lee

Darrin Lee, with Flaherty & Hood on behalf of the Coalition of Greater MN Cities, presented on the work they did in relation to the 2025 Legislative session recap and what they anticipate in the next legislative session.

C. Fire Call Billing Jane Burnes

A request was received from Janes Burnes to request forgiveness for the remaining \$300.00 after insurance paid for their fire call bill from February 23, 2025. Councilmembers were not in favor of forgiving the bill, but do understand the strain it can put on a fixed income. They would like staff to offer an extended payment plan for the balance. It may be beneficial to remind homeowners to consider increasing their coverage, as it might be insufficient compared to the amount of coverage they need.

D. Resolution 39-2025 Certifying Assessment of Unpaid Charges- City Services

Notices were sent to those on the list. No comments were received at City Hall or during the public hearing. **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to approve Resolution 39-2025**

Certifying Assessment of Unpaid Charges- City Services. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

E. Polling Place Accessibility Grant

The Office of the Secretary of State has a grant available to support accessibility improvements to polling places for individuals with disabilities. Funds of up to \$20,000 are available for each jurisdiction, with no matching requirement. Administrator Jackson proposes applying for a grant to upgrade voting booths to include handicap-accessible units, install a curbside call system, and enhance signage for handicap and curbside voting. **Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Hopkins, to authorize staff to apply for the Polling Place Accessibility Grant. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

- F. Request to Continue Meeting with Fire Marshall's Office, Sandstone, Pine City, and Hinckley**
At a Pine County Administrator's meeting this spring, discussion turned to our individual fire services. Similar challenges/concerns were identified by Sandstone, Hinckley, and Pine City. It was suggested that we, as a group, look into a study through the State Fire Marshal's Office. Although no funding was available for a study at present, the Fire Marshal's Office has been willing to meet with us to discuss alternative options, including utilizing their personnel as a facilitator to explore our Fire Departments, their challenges, and potential solutions. All who have been attending feel that it is beneficial to be proactive and continue in the process, with approval from our individual councils. We have determined that the sustainability of the departments is why we are exploring this process. Fire Chief Golly sees how this process could benefit our communities in the future by examining the options for working together. Councilmember Burkhardt appreciates that the Fire Marshal's Office is involved, providing a broader perspective. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to continue meeting with the Fire Marshall's Office, Sandstone, and Pine City. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

G. Physician Assistants Week Proclamation Request

Aleathea Anderson, a practicing physician associate/assistant (PA) working in Hinckley, is reaching out to respectfully request a proclamation recognizing Physician Assistant Week, which takes place nationally from October 6–12. PAs are proud to provide high-quality, patient-centered care in every clinical setting, including right here in our community. A proclamation from your office would mean a great deal—not only to me and my colleagues, but also to the patients we serve every day. **Motion made by Burkhardt, seconded by Frank, to proclaim October 6-12 as Physician Assistant Week. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

9. Presentation of Claims

- A. General Fund Payables - \$152,602.32
- B. Firehouse Payables - \$273,379.49
- C. EDA Payables - None
- D. Payroll Payables - \$49,095.00

Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the claims as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

10. Notices and Communications

- A. Coalition of Greater MN Cities Newsletter
- B. Public Meeting for 2026 Levy (Formerly Truth in Taxation) is scheduled for December 9, 2025

C. Firehouse Liquor Inventory Scheduled for December 8, 2025

11. Presentation of Petitions, Complaints, and Requests (3 minutes each)

12. Closed Session - None

13. Adjournment

Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Hopkins, to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.