

THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO
Proceedings of the Huron City Council
Regular Meeting Tuesday, December 23, 2025 at 6:30pm

Call to Order Public Meeting

The Mayor called to order the Public Hearing on the proposed Municipal Budget for FY 2026.

Roll Call

The Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll for the Public Hearing. The following members of Council answered present: **Joe Dike, Sam Artino, William Biddlecombe, Monty Tapp and Tom Harris**. Members absent: **Mark Claus and Joel Hagy**.

Swear in Witnesses

Assistant Law Director Gary Ebert swore in witnesses testifying at the Public Hearing. All members of Council, Finance Director Isaac Phillips and Interim City Manager Stuart Hamilton were sworn in.

Witness Testimony

Mr. Hamilton testified:

This is a public hearing on the 2026 municipal budget. This year, staff have worked very hard to bring a 5-year balanced budget. They spent a lot of time with the Finance Committee and staff going through these numbers and getting them correct, instead of planning on them not looking good, which was done the last couple of years. Mr. Phillips will run you through the details. I would like to, as always, thank the Finance Committee. They spent a lot of time on this going through a lot of numbers and asking a lot of questions. Without their feedback, it would be hard for staff to make some of these decisions. Staff spent a lot of time with Isaac; Isaac joined us just as we rolled into budget season and he hit the ground running, and staff ran with him to come up with this budget. Thank you to staff and thank you to Mr. Phillips. He put so much time and energy into this to bring this back to a balanced budget. With that, I will hand this back to Mr. Phillips to run you through the details.

Mr. Phillips testified:

Thank you, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Mayor. First off, I would like to thank the department leaders and staff that helped in the construction of this budget. Every department in the City is lucky to have a great leader and every one of them was instrumental in helping me to understand their operation. Every one of them came to the table with ideas and goals and care deeply for the City. All those attributes make my job so much easier, having such great teammates. I would also like to thank the Township for their continued financial contribution to the Fire Department and the park system. Lastly, I would like to thank Finance Committee members and Council members for their hours and attention to detail poured into this budget. I am proud to work for a City that has a Council and community members with a strong sense of care and vision for their City.

Before I dive into the numbers, I want to call out one change that has been made to the appropriations from the second reading. That change adds an expense to purchase the used ladder truck for the Fire Department as discussed at the last Council meeting. With this change, total appropriations for 2026 are \$55,121,188 – an increase of \$134,000 from 2025's initial appropriations. To give some context to the \$55

million budget, \$4 million are transfers that are appropriated to be spent from the receiving fund, so appropriations of \$8 million are a true net expense of \$4 million. To further add context to this budget, 48% (or \$26 million) of the appropriations are capital projects that will be tackled by grants or low- to zero-interest loans. The large value projects included in the budget are the Water Tower, ConAgra Sea Wall, US Route 6 Phase II, and the City's Paving Program. These capital projects are budgeted but are further discussed with Council are subject to change. The appropriations left after transfers and capitals are taken into account are just shy of \$25 million of true operational budget.

If you look at the \$25 million operational budget and break it down by department, the allocations would be 26% General Fund broken down as 1/3 or 8% for Police, 14% of the General Fund is for Debt Service (equating to 4% of the \$25 million), 24% of the budget is for the Electric Fund, 13% is for Water, 12% is for Fire, 6% is for Healthcare, 5% for Parks & Recreation/Boat Basin, 4% Garbage and Recycling Collection, 4% for Streets and the remaining 6% would be various other smaller activities. Considering specific costs of the \$25 in operational expenses, 37% is personnel costs such as wages and fringe benefits. If we add healthcare to that, it would be 43% of the \$25 million. We are expecting revenue of \$6.6 million, which will result in a General Fund cash balance improvement of \$243,000. 66% of the revenue expected to be generated to the General Fund is from income tax. Income tax was budgeted to not increase in 2026. Although 2025 income tax was up 5% from 2024, it is always possible that collections could decrease in 2026. We will monitor this during the year and adjust as needed. 8% of General Fund revenue is generated from property taxes, 6.5% comes from kWh Excise Tax and Bed Tax, 6% comes from interest earnings from investment performance, and the remaining 13.5% comes from various sources, such as State and Local assistant, fees, fines permits, etc.

Mr. Phillips provided a 10-month fund balance projection from the prior year 2025 budget. This can also be found within the Budget Story on the City-Wide Summary page. These graphs show a pretty drastic improvement and trend toward a balanced budget. The General Fund stays above the City policy threshold of 15% of annual expenditures in reserve through 2031. Although improvement is shown, he said that he must exercise caution for the areas of strong concern such as the Fire Fund and the Stormwater Fund becoming dangerously low very quickly. Over the long run, Streets, Parks & Recreation and the Boat Basin funding becomes increasingly challenging as rising costs outpace revenue. He also noted that with the development budget over a 10-year period, without the addition of new revenue, capital maintenance and improvement is strategically deferred or removed, capital items such as road maintenance, parks replacements, secondary water intake and water main replacements, cannot all be accomplished within current City means. Furthermore, it must be considered that in the event the potential fire levy doesn't pass, the fire and EMS service cannot be subsidized by the General Fund over an extended period without decimating the General Fund balance. These given risks might be mitigated over time, but they should remain on our minds while considering the City's overall health.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Tapp to adopt the Municipal Budget for FY 2026, as written.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)

NAYS: None (0)

There being more than a majority in favor, the motion passed and the Municipal Budget for FY 2026 was adopted.

Adjourn Public Hearing

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe to adjourn the Public Hearing.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino (5)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor the motion passed and the Public Hearing was adjourned.

Call to Order Regular Meeting

The Mayor called to order the regular Council meeting of December 23, 2025 to order at 6:39pm. The Mayor called for a moment of silence. After the moment of silence, the Mayor led in saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call

The Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll for the regular meeting of Council. The following members of Council answered present: **Joe Dike, Sam Artino, William Biddlecombe, Monty Tapp and Tom Harris**. Members absent: **Mark Claus and Joel Hagy**.

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe to excuse the absences of Mr. Claus and Mr. Hagy.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino (5)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor,

Staff in attendance: City Manager Stuart Hamilton, Law Director Todd Schrader, Police Chief Terry Graham, Water Superintendent Jack Evans and Terri Welkener, Clerk of Council.

Committee Appointments

Motion by Mr. Tapp to reappoint Gary Boyle to the Planning Commission for a 4-year term; to reappoint Chris Harlan to the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals for a 5-year term; and to reappoint Missie Lowrey-Huntley to the Huron Joint Recreation Board for a 2-year term.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed.

Motion by Mr. Tapp to appoint Council members to various boards, commissions and committees as set forth in Exhibit "A" included in the agenda packet for this Council meeting, commencing on January 1, 2026 for a term ending on November 30, 2027.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed. A copy of Exhibit "A" referenced above is attached these minutes and incorporated herein by reference.

Approval of Minutes

Motion

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of October 14, 2025, as written.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp (3)**
ABSTAIN: **Harris (1)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the regular Council meeting of October 14, 2025 were approved, as written.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of October 28, 2025, as written.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp (3)**
ABSTAIN: **Dike, Harris (2)**

NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the regular Council meeting of October 28, 2025 were approved, as written.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of November 12, 2025, as written.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (3)**

ABSTAIN: **Tapp, Harris (2)**

NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the regular Council meeting of November 12, 2025 were approved, as written.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of November 25, 2025, as written.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp (4)**

ABSTAIN: **Harris (1)**

NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the regular Council meeting of November 25, 2025 were approved, as written.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the Council organizational meeting of December 1, 2025, as written.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris (5)**

NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the Council organizational meeting of December 1, 2025 were approved, as written.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of December 9, 2025, as written.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Dike, Artino, Tapp, Harris (4)

ABSTAIN: Biddlecombe (1)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the regular Council meeting of December 9, 2025 were approved, as written.

Audience Comments

The Mayor directed members of the audience having comments to approach the podium, state their name and address Council, and advised that they would have 3 minutes to make their comments.

None.

Old Business**Ordinance No. 2025-31 (third and final reading)**

Motion by Mr. Tapp that Ordinance No. 2025-31 (AN ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2026) be placed on its third and final reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed and Ordinance No. 2025-31 was placed upon its third and final reading. The Law Director read the Ordinance by its title only.

Mr. Phillips stated that he had nothing to add to what was provided at the Public Hearing.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll for final adoption of Ordinance No. 2025-31. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Ordinance No. 2025-31 was adopted. The Ordinance as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

New Business**Resolution No. 94-2025**

Motion by Mr. Tapp that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 94-2025 (A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF KEVIN McGRAW AS FIRE CHIEF OF THE CITY OF HURON FIRE DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 5, 2026) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived, and Resolution No. 94-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Hamilton stated that a Fire Chief Advisory Board was created to go through all of resumes, conduct the first-round interviews, and pass on two (2) candidates to him for a final review. Soon-to-be Chief McGraw brought some extra stuff to the table – some passion and skill set that made him stand out. He would like to thank the Advisory Committee for taking the amount of time they did and the professionalism the showed as they went through the resume review and interview processes to get them to this point. He thanked everyone who applied for this position – it was an extremely strong field to pick from. They are excited to welcome Chief McGraw into the fold.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 94-2025 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Oath of Office

City Manager Stuart Hamilton administered the Oath of Office to the City of Huron Fire Department's new Fire Chief Kevin McGraw, effective January 5, 2025. A copy of the Oath of Office is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

Photos were taken with various staff and family members.

New Business (Continued)**Resolution No. 91-2025**

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 91-2025 (A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING REA & ASSOCIATES, INC. TO COMMENCE THE GAAP

CONVERSION FOR THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO AT A TOTAL COST OF EIGHTY-ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FOUR AND 30/100 DOLLARS (\$81,174.30) FOR THE FISCAL PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2024 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2026) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived, and Resolution No. 91-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Phillips explained that this agreement will take the place of the previous agreement with Charles E. Harris & Associations, as that contractor was unable to fulfill the terms of the agreement in a timely manner. This was the only vendor willing to take us on with such short notice. The other quotes received were all in the same price range. Although it is an increase, a lot of the GAAP standards are more detailed and it takes a lot more work. Because we are so close to the 2025 audit period, it made sense to lock this provider in for 2025 and 2026, as well. After that 3-year period, we can quote out again. This provider comes strongly recommended by municipalities in the area.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 91-2025 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Resolution No. 92-2025 (first reading)

Motion by Mr. Artino that Resolution No. 92-2025 (A RESOLUTION PURSUANT TO SECTION 5705.19(I) OF THE REVISED CODE SUBMITTING TO THE ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF HURON THE QUESTION OF THE PLACEMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL TAX LEVY ON A CONTINUING BASIS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING AND MAINTAINING FIRE APPARATUS, MECHANICAL RESUSCITATORS, UNDERWATER RESCUE AND RECOVERY EQUIPMENT, OR OTHER FIRE EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES, BUILDINGS AND SITES THEREFOR, OR SOURCES OF WATER SUPPLY AND MATERIALS THEREFOR, FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF LINES OF FIRE-ALARM COMMUNICATIONS, FOR THE PAYMENT OF FIREFIGHTING COMPANIES OR PERMANENT, PART-TIME, OR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTING, EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE, ADMINISTRATIVE, OR COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL TO OPERATE THE SAME, INCLUDING THE PAYMENT OF ANY EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED FOR SUCH PERSONNEL UNDER SECTION 145.48 OR 742.34 OF THE REVISED CODE, FOR THE PURCHASE OF AMBULANCE EQUIPMENT, FOR THE PROVISION OF AMBULANCE, PARAMEDIC, OR OTHER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES OPERATED BY A FIRE DEPARTMENT OR FIREFIGHTING COMPANY, OR FOR THE PAYMENT OF OTHER RELATED COSTS) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike (5)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 92-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Hamilton said that this is the first reading of a resolution to place a fire levy on the ballot for May of 2026. As they went through the budget, it was glaringly clear that they can't just keep doing what they are currently doing. They still receive the same amount of money they did over 20 years ago when they passed the existing levy, and as everyone knows, the expenses did not stay at the same level they were 20+ years ago. They have been managing it up to now, but the time is now to go back to our residents to let them know that we are doing way more with way less funding, and we can't keep doing it. This is an additional 1.5 mill levy. The existing levy will remain in place. This will add an additional \$53 to every \$100,000 of house value for our residents within the City. This will be a continuing levy similar to the one currently in place. What they receive in year 1 will be the same they receive in 20 years.

Mr. Harris asked why the cost per thousand is \$53 when 1.5 mills should be \$150. Mr. Hamilton explained that millage works differently – it isn't a percentage. This should result in just over \$500,000/year in income to the City. Mr. Harris said the property tax is a pretty big deal right now and he's not sure our constituents will vote for it. Mr. Dike asked if the schools are also putting a levy on the ballot. Mr. Hamilton advised that in talking to the schools he learned that they have no intention of placing anything on the ballot for next year. Huron Township will be doing their own levy (mirroring ours) in May to help to cover their ½ of their share of our fire service. They are facing the same situation the City is – they don't bring in enough revenue to cover the cost of fire service. The levies are not tied to each other – one passing does not affect the other.

Mr. Hamilton clarified that this levy will affect all entities and residents who pay property taxes (including businesses) in response to a question from Mr. Harris. Mr. Harris said we do have quite a few people who are on fixed incomes and this would be an average of \$375,000/household, which would be just under \$200/year added to their property taxes. That's not small to come people. He thinks it is okay to put it before the electorate to make the decision, but we are adding more to the property tax. Mr. Hamilton wanted to clarify that this is not something the administration takes lightly. They have gone over 20 years not asking for any more and figuring out a way to do this while doing more runs every run with the same amount of money. There aren't many places that could have done this for this long without asking for more. They are very aware of the strain that this will put on people. When they went the different route with the income tax levy last year, the majority of that revenue would have come from people who don't live within the City, but it wasn't the right time and it wasn't the right mix for people to vote for. Therefore, they have had to pivot and look for different ways to fund individual departments. He wants everyone to be aware that this is not something they do lightly – they do understand it is painful. Mr. Harris said it is less painful than he thought it was. He voted for the income tax – he would much rather have it on the income than the property taxes.

Mr. Artino said the City has gone 20 years and our fire department has done a tremendous job with what they had to work with. Let's be honest, it's better than the alternative of reducing services, especially not in the safety departments. We don't do these kinds of things willy-nilly. We really struggle with any kind of an increase but this is one where there's isn't much choice. We need to keep the quality of or service where it is today.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There were none.

Resolution No. 93-2025

Motion by Mr. Tapp that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 93-2025 (A RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE CITY MANAGER'S EXECUTION OF A PURCHASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF HURON AND FTR&R, INC. DBA HERB FIRE EQUIPMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF A USED SPH 100 SUTPHEN AERIAL PLATFORM LADDER TRUCK AND VITAL TRENDS LLC BATTALION WARRANTY FOR THE HURON FIRE DEPARTMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF FOUR HUNDRED SEVENTY-EIGHT THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED NINETY-EIGHT AND XX/100 DOLLARS (\$478,598.00)) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived, and Resolution No. 93-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Hamilton reminded Council that at the last meeting the administration requested a motion to proceed should they decide to move ahead with the purchase of the used ladder truck. It ended up being the right thing to move ahead so they proceeded with execution of a purchase agreement with Herb Fire Equipment. This legislation ratifies that purchase.

Our ladder truck went out of service several months ago. Our staff has done everything to try and repair the ladder. They have shopped around to try to find a replacement part for the broken obsolete part. They have even tried to find people to manufacture the part because they can't find the part. It got to the point where it was glaringly apparent that our truck is obsolete and we could spend \$50,000-\$80,000 on this part and the next part could be obsolete and we would have to go through the same thing. The fire department then pivoted and took a look at what else if available. They looked at a lot of different ladder trucks and landed on this one. It is a local truck with a full service record. It was fully serviced by the manufacturer so we know this is in good shape. The total cost for this 2007 ladder truck was \$475,000 and it comes with a 1-year warranty at a cost of just over \$3,000. He reminded Council that the total cost of this ladder truck is paid ½ by Huron Township. This truck wasn't due to be replaced until 2030 so we didn't have anything in the budget for this. What Mr. Phillips suggested doing was we will advance the money for this truck from the General Fund to the Fire Fund, and that will give them an interest-free loan (for all intents and purposes) and they can pay the General Fund back over 5 years. We are doing everything we can to keep the cost of running this fire department down. A new ladder truck starts at \$2.2 million and goes up from there, and it would take 2-3 years to get it here. With the amount of time

and investigation that has gone into this, we all feel comfortable that this truck can get us through the next 10 years at what he believes is a very good price.

Captain Nash added that the company that manufactured the current ladder truck, Seagrave, was contacted to see if they could get the truck refurbished. They came in to look at it, but they couldn't even give us a price or an idea for 7-9 months. It would take that long to get the engineering department to design it, put a ladder on top of the current truck chassis, and then it is another 7-9 months to build. They have explored all of the options out there to try to make this work for us. The committee did a hard search of all kinds of used vehicles to replace the ladder truck, and they were going as quickly as they could find them. Chief McGraw added that he is familiar with this company and this specific truck. He knows how it operates and was able to talk to people who actually used it. They all said it was solid and had a good history. It is not being refurbished for them. The timing was right, the product was right and they are going to be very happy with having it here.

Mayor Tapp said that these are expenses that they didn't know were going to come up. Unfortunately, it is a reality that has to be taken care of. Like Mr. Artino said, the service we receive from our safety services is second to none. I have been over at the fire department and watched what these guys have done for the past months trying to find a part for this thing – it's crazy. The old truck was purchased in 1998 for \$750,000 – now it's \$2.2 million for the same truck. This is not a truck that you will see go out every day, but it does get used quite a bit. He doesn't believe we want to reduce our services for the City in any form or shape. I applaud the department for all of the hard work they did trying to get this taken care of.

Mr. Biddlecombe asked if there would be a trade-in on the old truck or would it be sold on GovDeals? Mr. Hamilton answered that, unfortunately, unless someone is in the position that we are in that they need spare parts, the truck is not much use to anybody. It will be sold on GovDeals and there is a chance they could get more scrapping it than using GovDeals. They don't expect to make much money from it – they may get more for the tires than anything else. Captain Nash added that the truck is currently used to haul the ground ladders. The aerial operation cannot be used at all.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 93-2025 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Resolution No. 95-2025

Motion by Mr. Harris that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 95-2025 (A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 FROM NIAGARA POWER TRANSFORMER CORPORATION FOR THE PROVISION OF MOVING AND STORAGE SERVICES RELATED TO THE HURON PUBLIC POWER EXPANSION PROJECT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED AND XX/100 DOLLARS (\$36,600.00)) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived, and Resolution No. 95-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Hamilton explained that in 2023 Council legislated the purchase of the third transformer for Huron Public Power. When it was ready to ship earlier this year, the site was still having issues with standing water and they couldn't pour and construct the base to set the transformer on at that time. Therefore, they had to deliver and store the transformer until the work was completed. The transformer ended up being stored for 4 months. This change order is for that moving and storage. This included mobilization of crane crews at both ends of the moves, the transport and storage fees. This change order will be appropriated in the final appropriations for 2025 at it was unbudgeted.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 95-2025 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Resolution No. 96-2025

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 96-2025 (A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) ABBREVIATED HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (HSIP) RELATING TO THE JIM CAMPBELL BOULEVARD CROSSWALK PROJECT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND XX/100 DOLLARS (\$123,300.00); AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ACCEPT SAID GRANT AWARD IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND XX/100 DOLLARS (\$123,300.00), SHOULD THE APPLICATION BE SUCCESSFUL) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived, and Resolution No. 96-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Hamilton explained that they received a request for a crossing at the high school. When they looked at the crossing, they thought it would be a good candidate for ODOT Safety grant funding. They want to make this a multi-modal crossing instead of just a pedestrian crossing so they can start extending the Lake Erie Electric Trail down Jim Campbell. The design and construction are a little more complicated as the crossing is on a bend in the road. This leads to a total project cost of over \$137,000. This grant application comes with a 10% local match (that's where the \$123,300 comes from). The Schools are on board with this and come construction time, if we get the grant award, they will remove the trees that need to be removed to clear lines of sight to the crossing. If we do get this funding, it will be ODOT 2027 financial year, which starts in July of 2026, so they should be able to get this construction completed this year (should find out in January). It can be designed, bid out and constructed over the summer.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino (5)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 96-2025 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Ordinance No. 2025-36

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe that the three-reading rule be waived and Ordinance No. 2025-36 (AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2024-58, ADOPTED ON DECEMBER 18, 2024, TO PROVIDE FOR SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE GENERAL FUND AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES AND TO PROVIDE FOR CASH TRANSFERS) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Biddlecombe, Harris, Dike, Artino, Tapp (5)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived and Ordinance No. 2025-36 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Ordinance by its title only.

Mr. Phillips stated this legislation sets forth the final 2025 appropriations. Current appropriations with all of the amendments made throughout 2025 total \$59,544,906. This legislation will reduce the 2025 budget to \$35,202,656. That reduction of \$24 million is pretty much all capital – a lot of the capital project timing has been moved into 2026. Of the \$24 million, half of that is for the Water Tower Project. ConAgra was slated for this year – that didn't happen. US Route 6 Phase II also didn't happen this year. Considering this year, it really is pretty close to the budget passed for 2026 from an operational standpoint.

The few things he wanted to point out are specific increases to the police budget of \$22,000 for wages and healthcare, a cash transfer of \$250,000 from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Fund to cover some of the ConAgra design and engineering costs incurred to date and to support the Paving Program for next year, a cash transfer advance from the General Fund to the Fire Fund to support the

purchase of the ladder truck, and an increase of \$835,000 to the Electric Fund for the purchase of electricity. Mr. Phillips reminded Council that electricity purchased by the City is distributed to HPP's customers and then billed to the consumer. That increase in expense will be offset by the additional revenue received this year. They weren't planning to do this much business in 2025 – that expense increase will be offset by additional revenue.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption of Ordinance No. 2025-4. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Biddlecombe, Harris, Dike, Artino, Tapp (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being more than a majority in favor of adoption, Ordinance No. 2025-36 was adopted. The Ordinance as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Tapp to give the City Manager a one-time performance cash bonus in the amount of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00).

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed.

City Manager's Discussion

The City Manager spoke on several topics:

Donations – The now-defunct Laguna Yacht Club donated \$250 to the Huron Rescue Squad Development Fund.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Tapp to accept a donation of \$250 to the Huron Rescue Squad Development Fund from the former Laguna Yacht Club.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**
NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed.

Mr. Hamilton advised that the City also received a \$250 donation from Margaret Barbour for the K-9 Fund.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Tapp to accept the donation of \$250 to the Huron Police K-9 Fund by Margaret Barbour.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (5)**

NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed.

Utilities Committee – I am starting to get a little bit offended that no one want to join my Utilities Committee. We still have an opening. If anyone you know would like to join the Utilities Committee, please reach out to Terri Welkener (419-433-5000 ext 1102).

Safety Services – Officer Keith Lobsinger will officially retire from the Police Department on January 24th. Officer Lobsinger proudly served 30 years for the City of Huron. To this date, he is the only member of the Police Department to ever receive the Medal of Valor Award. This Medal of Valor is the highest award attainable by the Department and was awarded when Officer Lobsinger in 2022 decided to run into the lake, putting his own life in jeopardy, to save some potential drowning. We congratulate Officer Lobsinger on this accomplishment for 30 years of service and a job well done. We are excited that he gets to go off into the sunset in retirement.

Finance – Just a reminder that come January 1, 2026, the City will start passing on credit card transaction fees to our customers. Any time after the turn of the year, expect a 3% increase if you use a credit card. There are plenty of other ways to pay if you don't want incur that expense, and the Finance Department will help you through it.

Water – We had our first needle ice event last week. To have one in December is shocking. Usually, this is an end of January/February thing. For those of use who don't know, needle ice is when the ice hasn't formed, but it needles under the surface. That needle ice blocks our intake by creating an iceberg at the end of it. About 4-5pm they had to shut the intake down and the guys set up the usual 6" trash pump and dropped some fire hoses in the lake to try to keep putting water in the wet well. I would like to thank the Fire Department – these guys have always been willing to put on their suits and jump in there. The Streets Department came in to help and the County came in to help the next morning by dropping off another trash pump. We eventually got the plant back operating at full capacity at about 7am the next morning, but at 5am they did have to ask our large users to please slow down (the County, Mucci, Ardagh, etc.). As they are good partners, they did what they could to reduce their usage. When they are drawing more water than we can pull in, we start draining our water towers. When those towers start draining, we start creating a reverse vacuum on our water lines, which are over 100 years old – that's not a good place to be. We dodged a bullet this time, but he has a feeling it won't be the last time we see needle ice this year. This is where the secondary intake project came from – this is the reason we need it.

Upcoming Meetings – HJRD on Tuesday, January 6th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers; Utilities Committee on Wednesday, January 7th at 5pm in Council Chambers; BZA on Monday, January 12th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers; City Council Meeting on Tuesday, January 13th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers; Planning Commission on Wednesday, January 21st at 5pm in Council Chambers; and City Council Meeting on Tuesday, January 28th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

REMINDER: CITY HALL WILL CLOSE AT NOON ON CHRISTMAS EVE AND WILL BE CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS DAY. IN ADDITION, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED AT NOON ON NEW YEAR'S EVE AND ALL OF NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Mr. Harris asked how deep the current water intake is and where it is located. Mr. Hamilton answered that the intake, because it goes out into the bay, is extremely shallow. The complicating factor with the needle ice was the southerly wind that blew the water even farther out.

Mayor's Discussion

Mayor Tapp said:

I would like to thank our new Fire Chief, Kevin McGraw. I have known him since he was small since he spent all of his time at the fire station. Like Mr. Hamilton said, he brings a lot of experience and knowledge to the Fire Department. I want to thank all three Captains for the 10-11 years that they did this job. I don't believe any other department could have done what we did and I really appreciate what you guys did. Kevin is a great addition to the Huron Fire Department, I know he will do great and I wish him the best.

Keith Lobsinger – 30 years. We worked together when I was on the Fire Department. It is time for him to retire and the best wishes to Keith. I just want to say thank you and we appreciate his service.

Thank you to Mr. Phillips for taking care of the finances and actually running the Finance Committee. It was so much nicer having you there this year. Everything went smoothly and I appreciate all of your hard work, along with staff and their hard work.

I did run out to the Water Department when the needle ice happened and spoke with Mr. Evans. I believe he came in at 7pm and he was still there at 8:30-9:00am. All of the guys were out there getting it done. If this happened before, the Fire Department ran its trucks out there and sat there ran the pump for 24 hours. Luckily, they have the trash pumps now. That additional water intake would be a great asset, if we could get that taken care of. Like Mr. Hamilton said, I don't think this is the last needle ice we are going to see for the year. I just want to thank the Water and Street Departments who worked together to get it taken care of.

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Enjoy your families and be safe.

For the Good of the Order

Sam Artino – I would like to say congratulations to Officer Lobsinger – thank you for your dedicating to our community and please enjoy your retirement. Congratulations to Chief McGraw, welcome aboard. I

think you will find that you've got a great crew to work with. I want to thank the three Captains – our department really ran very smoothly and I think that is a tribute to not only you, but also the men that you work with. Merry Christmas!

Tom Harris – I just wanted to say congratulations to Mr. Kevin McGrath and thank you for your service and congratulations on your retirement, Mr. Lobsinger. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to staff.

Joe Dike – Congratulations to Chief McGraw. I would also like to say congratulations and best wishes to Officer Lobsinger. I would like to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

William Biddlecombe – Thank you, staff, for all of your hard work. Everyone at home – make sure you check your mailbox as you should have received the latest edition of The Light, mine showed up today. You will get to see Stu's picture right on the front page. Nice job, Jen, it looks good. I would like to congratulate Officer Lobsinger on his retirement. Welcome to Chief McGraw.

We have some home games: bowling on January 3rd, girls basketball on January 3rd and 10th, boys basketball on December 27th and January 9th. Please come out and support our local events, programs, student athletes, GO TIGERS and everyone have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Executive Session

None.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: **Biddlecombe, Tapp, Harris, Dike, Artino (5)**

NAYS: **None (0)**

There being a majority in favor of the motion, the regular Council meeting of December 23, 2025, was adjourned at 7:33pm.

Terri S. Welkener, Clerk of Council

Adopted: 27 JAN 2026

EXHIBIT "A"

2026 BOARDS & COMMISSIONS - COUNCIL POSITIONS

| <u>Board</u> | <u>Current</u> |
|--|--|
| Planning Commission | Sam Artino |
| Huron Joint Recreation District Board | Mark Claus |
| Finance Committee | Monty Tapp William Biddlecombe Joel Hagy |
| Safety Committee | Sam Artino Monty Tapp Tom Harris |
| Huron Rescue Squad Trust Fund | Monty Tapp (Mayor) |
| Volunteer Firefighter Dependents Fund | Monty Tapp (Mayor) Joe Dike |
| Enterprise Zone Committee | Monty Tapp (Mayor) William Biddlecombe (Vice-Mayor) |
| Sewer Monitoring Committee | Monty Tapp (Mayor) William Biddlecombe (Vice-Mayor) |
| County MPO Committee | Monty Tapp (Mayor) Joe Dike |
| AMP-Ohio Environmental Stewardship Committee | Sam Artino |
| Tax Incentive Review Committee | Tom Harris |
| Regional Water Advisory Board | Monty Tapp (Mayor) William Biddlecombe (Vice-Mayor) |
| Liaison to School Board | William Biddlecombe |
| Utilities Committee | Joel Hagy Tom Harris |