

THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO
Proceedings of the Huron City Council
Regular Meeting Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 6:30pm

Call to Order

The Mayor called to order the regular Council meeting of February 11, 2025 to order at 6:30pm. 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: **William Biddlecombe, Sam Artino, Mark Claus, Monty Tapp, Joe Dike and Joel Hagy.**

Motion by Mr. Claus to excuse Mr. Grieves' absence from the meeting. 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: Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed and Mr. Grieves' absence was excused.

Staff in attendance: City Manager Matt Lasko, Law Director Todd Schrader, Service Director Stuart Hamilton, Police Chief Terry Graham, Parks & Recreation Operations Manager Doug Steinwart and Terri Welkener, Clerk of Council.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the Council work session and regular meeting of January 28, 2025.

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

YEAS: Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino, Claus, Tapp (5)
ABSTAIN: Dike (1)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed.

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. 2025-3 (second reading)**

Motion by Mr. Artino that Ordinance No. 2025-3 (AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING SECTION 1369.04 (FEES) OF CHAPTER 1369 (TRANSIENT RENTAL PROPERTY) OF THE HURON CODIFIED ORDINANCES) be placed on its second 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: Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed, and Ordinance No. 2025-3 was placed upon its second reading. The Law Director read the Ordinance by its title only.

Mr. Lasko explained that they are simply codifying the annual transient rental registration fee and reinspection fee, which are, respectively, \$400 and \$50. These dollar amounts have not changed compared to prior years; they are just codifying them. Based on recommendations from some Council members, they will work toward a singular zoning fee schedule similar to what they have for their building fees. They wanted to at least codify the existing transient rental fee in the interim.

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

New Business**Ordinance No. 2025-4**

Motion by Mr. Hagy that Ordinance No. 2025-4 (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) 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: Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed, and Ordinance No. 2025-4 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Ordinance by its title only.

Mr. Lasko stated that they are doing two things in this appropriations ordinance:

- (1) Because they are without a Finance Director, that salary held in multiple funds under Personnel Services is being moved into Other Expenses, which can help them pay for their two contracted individuals helping in the Finance Department. They are moving approximately \$21,000-\$22,000. There is zero impact on the overall budget.

- (2) They are increasing the appropriation in the health care plan under Personal Services of \$100,000. This is due to several HRA claims that were in the budget that came in after the first of the year (claims dated in 2024). They must appropriate for those HRA claims to close out 2024. There are sufficient dollars in the Healthcare Account to increase that appropriation. This will close out the HRA entirely, as they have now moved to an HSA. The HSA is much more predictable. With the HRA they never knew how much they were going to spend, while the HSA is predictable from a budgetary standpoint. The HSAs were frontloaded for employees in 2025.

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: Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being more than a majority in favor of adoption, Ordinance No. 2025-4 was adopted. The Ordinance as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Resolution No. 17-2025

Motion by Mr. Artino that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution 17-2025 (A RESOLUTION DELINEATING AN OVERLAY IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED CONAGRA INCENTIVE DISTRICT WITHIN THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO; AND ADOPTING A WRITTEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AS TO THE SAME; SETTING THE TIME AND PLACE OF A PUBLIC HEARING AND APPROVING RELATED MATTERS) 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, Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy, Biddlecombe (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being five or more votes in favor, the motion passed, and Resolution No. 17-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Lasko explained that this is one of a series of TIF legislation that will come before Council leading up to the actual TIF ordinance. They are anticipating adoption of that ordinance sometime in late spring/early summer. In 2024, Council eliminated the existing TIF because it did not allow for "for sale" residential housing. They are now starting the process to create the new TIF to allow for "for sale" residential housing. This legislation will do three things.

- (1) Create an incentive district TIF, which is the type of TIF you must do for "for sale" housing. It creates an overlay (a square or rectangle over the parcel) which fully encapsulates the City's 10-11 acres on ConAgra;
- (2) Per the Ohio Revised Code, the City must adopt an Economic Development Plan related to the parcel. This Plan is pretty basic and talks about the project in general in terms of what it is going to produce from a construction standpoint and why that is a benefit to the community.

- (3) There is an Engineer's Certification stating that there is an unequivocal need for improvements to public infrastructure on the site, as well.

If approved, this will allow the City to move forward to a series of public notifications and a public hearing prior to a TIF ordinance coming in late spring/early summer.

Mr. Hagy asked if the TIF doesn't get approved. Mr. Lasko answered that all of this is at the discretion of Council moving forward. There is no third party or other legislative body that could say that this TIF can't move forward. Barring Council not wanting it to move forward, it will. The folks that get notified of the hearing (other than the public itself) are the owners, which is the City. The City will serve notice to itself that the parcel is going to be placed in a TIF. The only way this TIF doesn't proceed is if Council does want it to. Mr. Hagy wanted to know if everything stops if the TIF isn't passed by Council. Mr. Lasko answered that if the City does not fix the sea wall and make the investment, the developer will not make their investment – the project would be dead on arrival.

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: Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy, Biddlecombe (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 17-2025 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Artino to set a Public Hearing on Council's formal adoption of the proposed Incentive District TIF Ordinance for Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 6:30pm immediately preceding the regular Council meeting.

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, Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy, Biddlecombe (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed the Public Hearing was set for April 8, 2025 at 6:30pm.

Resolution No. 18-2025

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 18-2025 (A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (HSIP) RELATING TO THE SOUTH MAIN STREET STREETScape PROJECT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND AND XX/100 DOLLARS (\$500,000.00); AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ACCEPT SAID GRANT AWARD IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND AND XX/100 DOLLARS (\$500,000.00), 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, Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy (6)

NAYS: None (0)

There being five or more votes in favor, the motion passed, and Resolution No. 18-2025 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

Mr. Hamilton explained that they are trying to find more money to try and fund some of these projects. This is a new HSIP grant program. The maximum you can apply for is \$500,000, so that is what they are going to try for. In general terms, they would be able to use this money, if granted, for crosswalks, multi-use pathways – anything that improves the safety of people walking and transporting on the roads. He believes the application due on March 31, 2025.

Mayor Tapp asked where they are on the sidewalks for Cleveland Road. Mr. Hamilton answered that they are still waiting on ODOT on that project, which is also the case for the crosswalks on Route 13. Both of them are stuck at ODOT's Central Office. They have all the plans designed and the projects are ready to go as soon as they are released to go out to bid.

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, Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy (6)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 18-2025 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

City Manager's Discussion

The City Manager spoke on several topics:

ConAgra – As of Friday, February 7th, the Purchase Agreement has been signed by both parties and has been sent over to Hartung Title for escrow and closing. The due diligence period has officially commenced for the development team.

Berlin Road Park – At the last meeting, Council decided on the name for the green space to serve as an acknowledgment to the family responsible for developing the lake on site. Doug and his team are moving forward with ordering the signage so that it can be installed sometime in the spring/early summer.

Pier Renovations – The Army Corps of Engineers was awarded about \$10 million a year to two ago to do significant reconstruction of the west pier heading out to the lighthouse. They received communication today that they are anticipating their work period to be from early July through late November 2025. There are going to be a lot of logistics involved, including closures and staging. They will make sure between public service and Parks & Rec that they are keeping the public and Council aware of how that is

going to impact folks on the north end. These will be pretty significant (and needed) resources, but there are definitely going to be some growing pains as they work down there. Mr. Steinwart added that they have been proactively trying to reach out to stay in communication with them. They are waiting on a contractor before they can meet with them to find out about access. Their concern relates to access and staging areas. They will be installing sheet piling from the base of the Showboat property to the first bend near the block house. They will be placing the new sheet piling in front of the existing sheet piling. They will be working from both the water and land.

Lake Erie Scenic Vista Designations – Huron has been awarded three Lake Erie Scenic Vista locations through the Ohio Coastal Management Program (ODNR). This includes Lake Front Park, Rotary Centennial Park and the lighthouse pier. Signs will be hung with a QR code explaining what the ODNR Lake Erie Scenic Vista is all about and their locations along Lake Erie. The goal of the program is to identify through a list of standardized criteria, locations that exhibit outstanding qualities ideal for Lake Erie scenic views.

Ohio Clean Marinas Gold Level Certification – The Huron Boat Basin Marina has earned gold level certification status by Ohio Clean Marinas. This award acknowledges our team's efforts in ensuring we uphold some of the highest standards for sustainable marina management, boater education and employee training. The Ohio Clean Marinas Program was established in 2004 as a proactive partnership between ODNR and the Ohio Sea Grant College Program to provide a cleaner, safer boating experience for residents and visitors alike. By achieving the gold level certification, our staff has demonstrated our dedication to protecting Lake Erie and its surrounding environment. I would like to thank Bryan Edwards for his efforts in this certification and commitment to environmental stewardship. Thank you to Doug Steinwart, as well, for all his leadership shown with Bryan and before Bryan.

Income Tax Receipts – Although there is still a lot of work ahead, but through the end of January 2025, income tax receipts were 24% higher compared to last year (6% over budget). I want to caution that we don't really know we are going to land, nor can we anticipate where we are going to be, until about June or July. Although this is good start to the year, this is just because of 4th quarter net profits from several of our businesses. He doesn't know that he would anticipate this continuing, but it is at least a good start to the year. We have a lot of other challenges, both capital and operating, and they are going to continue to monitor.

January Finance Report – There is a link in the Manager's Report to the January Financial Report, if anyone is interested. If there are any questions, please reach out.

Huron Public Power Rate Study – The rate study has been progressing for several months. With the increasing cost of maintenance and additional debt with the installation of a third transformer, a rate increase is required. This did go before the Utilities Committee on February 5th for consideration and the committee gave staff direction to return with a final draft for review prior to coming to Council.

Huron Public Power Expansion – They started the first expansion of HPP to get under the railroad tracks. Unfortunately, the contractor has run into an issue with a main federal fiber line that runs under the tracks. After weeks of searching for this line, they know it is there, they have been unable to locate it. Without being able to find it, they are not allowed to bore. They have to wait until that fiber line is located. Mr. Hamilton advised that they have reached out to Norfolk Southern to see if they will let them move their bore path 50' to the east to the one place they know where the fiber line is. At that location, they

can go underneath it. They are waiting on Norfolk Southern's verbal blessing so they can get the contractor going. They don't want to have to go through and resubmit plans and go through the whole process again. They are hopeful on that one.

Upcoming Meetings – Planning Commission on Wednesday, February 19th at 5pm in Council Chambers; Records Commission on Thursday, February 20th at 9am in the Council Chambers; City Council Work Session on Tuesday, February 25th at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers; City Council meeting on Tuesday, February 25th at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers.

REMINDER: City administrative officers will be closed on Monday, February 17th in observance of President's Day.

Mr. Biddlecombe brought up a Talk of Huron post relating to concerns on Mill Street with safety. Now that there is a lot of extra traffic when the Gathering Grounds line goes out into the street, and if there are cars parked in front of the Post Office, it creates a head-on situation at times. Many of the people who were commenting on this think there should be no parking there in front of the Post Office (north side of Main Street west of the outlet), while there are others who don't like the idea of losing parking spaces. He suggested that we keep an eye on that situation and maybe the Safety Committee could evaluate that. There were a lot of people in agreement that it is a safety issue. Mr. Lasko said they can keep an eye on it. If they think it is warranted or if they hear more from the community, they could start at the Safety Committee. They will do some investigation on their own. Chief Graham commented that he has heard no complaints, nor have there been any crashes at that location.

Mr. Hagy asked for an update on the possibility of allowing granny flats. Mr. Lasko answered that this just came up today – SSEG has put together some preliminary information pulled from other communities. The next step would be to set another work session to digest and sift through the information. They will make sure to send that out to Council in advance – they would like Council to have time to read it in advance. Because there is already a work session scheduled for the next meeting, it would have to be in March. Mr. Schrader said there were 3 or 4 municipalities throughout the state (Cincinnati is one of them) where they have done a lot. It is already on the books.

Mayor's Discussion

Mayor Tapp said:

Congratulations to Mr. Steinwart and Parks & Rec on the Lake Erie Scenic Vista designation and the Clean Marina Designation. It is going to be a busy summer with ConAgra and River Road. He wants to say thanks to Council – you guys are there for everybody and get the word out on what we're doing, why we're doing it and how we're doing it. He is seeing things online that the City is getting blamed for when the City has no say on. If someone has questions, just reach out and ask a Council member. If we don't know the answer, we will find out for you. We will hold some executive meetings this evening.

For the Good of the Order

Sam Artino – I agree. Thanks, Doug to you and your whole crew. I think if you talk to anybody that comes here to visit, that is one of the first things they talk about. It is definitely a jewel for the City.

Mark Claus – Congratulations to Bryan and Doug and his team. Parks & Rec has always been a big jewel for us. We appreciate all of the efforts, and keep it up.

Joe Dike – Congratulations on all of your efforts and thank you.

Joel Hagy – I just wanted to say congratulations, Doug, to you and your team, and it sounds like Bryan, especially. This is certainly not the first third-party accolade for the work you guys do. That is really spectacular, and we all appreciate it.

William Biddlecombe – Thanks, staff for all of your hard work. I would also like to congratulate the Boat Basin on their clean marina certification. I would also like to congratulate the Huron Yacht, who was also awarded their recertification for a clean marina. Huron Lagoons and Holiday Harbor were also awarded their certifications back in September. That bodes very well for everyone along the river.

The next School Board meeting will be held on Monday, February 24th at 6pm. There is a Dine-to-Donate that benefits the Huron Student Council this Saturday, February 15th, from 11am to 4pm at Costa Azul.

I would like to congratulate Rylie Towns, Leah Cozzens, Beren Dennis, Scott Allen, Nick Rager, Izaiah Polak, Carter Schlessman, TJ Murray, Parker Bertke and Jason Lenczyk, who all qualified to advance at the District Swim Meet that is coming up.

There are no home games, but the tournaments are going to be announced soon. Please come out and support our local events, programs and student athletes, and GO TIGERS!

Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Claus to enter into three separate executive sessions:

- (1) To consider the purchase of property for public purposes, the sale of property at competitive bidding, or the sale or other disposition of unneeded, obsolete or unfit-for-use property, and to invite Mr. Lasko, Mr. Schrader and Mr. Hamilton.**
- (2) To consider confidential information relating to marketing plans, business strategies, production techniques, trade secrets, personal financial statements for applications for economic development assistance, and to invite Mr. Lasko, Mr. Schrader and Mr. Hamilton.**
- (3) To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee, and to invite Mr. Schrader.**

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: Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being five or more votes in favor, the motion passed, and Council moved into executive session at 7:00pm.

Return to Regular Session

Council returned to regular session at 7:33pm.

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, Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike, Hagy (6)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor of the motion, the regular Council meeting of February 11, 2025, was adjourned at 7:33pm.



Terri S. Welkener, Clerk of Council

Adopted: 25 FEB 2025