

THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO
Proceedings of the Huron City Council
Regular Meeting Tuesday, July 8, 2025 at 6:30pm

Call to Order Public Meeting

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

Roll Call

The Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll for the Public Meeting. The following members of Council answered present: **William Biddlecombe, Sam Artino, Mark Claus, Monty Tapp, Joe Dike, Matt Grieves 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 said that he would hand things over to Mr. Phillips to run through the Tax Budget.

Mr. Phillips said that some notable assumptions on the Tax Budget include:

- Our revenue aligns with our anticipated stagnant growth, those assumptions being 3% increases in income and property tax revenue;
- Forecasting is going to remain a challenge with global supply chain issues and shifting inflation; however, this is just an initial tax budget and we will certainly adapt as we move through the budgeting process this fall.

He is happy to answer any questions or concerns.

Mr. Hagy asked if the City is still trending at 3% over budgeted income tax and do we know where that's coming from yet? Mr. Isaac answered yes. Mr. Hamilton answered that they are still anticipating the income tax to keep rising. Currently, they are looking at just under 9% ahead of last year. Again, this is just a step in the budgetary process for the County. We are only just starting to steady down with the revenue on the tax side. Until we get our second property tax in, we will probably stay around 6-8% ahead on income tax.

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

Motion

Motion by Mr. Hagy to adopt the 2026 Municipal Tax Budget as prepared and received.

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 Grieves (7)

NAYS: None (0)

There being more than a majority in favor, the motion passed and the Municipal Tax 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, Artino, Claus, Tapp, Dike, Grieves, Hagy (7)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor the motion passed and the Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:34pm.

Call to Order Regular Meeting

The Mayor called to order the regular Council meeting of July 8, 2025 to order at 6:34pm. 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, Matt Grieves and Joel Hagy.**

Staff in attendance: Interim City Manager Stuart Hamilton, Assistant Law Director Gary Ebert, Police Captain Kurt Schaefer, Police Chief Terry Graham and Terri Welkener, Clerk of Council.

Oath of Office

Interim City Manager Stuart Hamilton will administer the Oath of Office to Collin Armstrong as a full-time Firefighter/Paramedic for the Huron Fire Department. All in attendance gave a round of applause and photos were taken with Mr. Armstrong's family and Captain Schafer.

Approval of Minutes**Motion****Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of June 10, 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, Grieves, Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino, Claus, Tapp (7)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the regular Council meeting of June 10, 2025 were approved, as written.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Dike to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of June 24, 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: Grieves, Biddlecombe, Artino, Claus, Tapp (5)

ABSTAIN: Dike, Hagy (2)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the minutes of the regular Council meeting of June 24, 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

None.

New Business

None.

City Manager's Discussion

The Interim City Manager spoke on several topics:

East Side Sidewalk Project/RT 13 Pedestrian Crossings – The contracts for construction and construction inspection for both projects have now been awarded. We have pre-construction meetings next week. Once those are complete, we should be able to set the schedule and let everyone know when those projects are going to be happening.

Route 6 Phase II Project – The Stage 3 plans were submitted to ODOT on July 3rd. We will await final comments from ODOT before we can put that project out to bid.

Code Amendments – The Planning & Zoning Department continues to document code sections that are antiquated, contradictory, absent and/or unclear as currently written. Staff have reached out to a consultant to provide a proposal and to update the existing sign ordinances. They are very old, complicated and spread all the way through the ordinances. We received a proposal for \$8,100 to rewrite/update those and create new sections where needed. A PO has been issued for that and we will keep Council updated.

US Fish & Wildlife Boating Infrastructure Grant - ODNR Parks & Watercraft has received notification from the US Fish & Wildlife Services that our project has been awarded a Boating Infrastructure Grant in the amount of \$300,000. We intend to use that \$300,000, with the additional \$200,000 grant being a local match (total of \$500,000) to replace a couple sets of docks in the Boat Basin.

Fabens Park Restroom and Concession Stand Painting – The Fabens Park restroom and concessions stands were painted by Akzo-Nobel employees, who donated their time and materials to paint those buildings. We truly appreciate their commitment to the community and their hard work.

Red, White & Blues BANG! – This event was well-attended and was a great success last weekend. Thank you to all our staff, volunteers and attendees for supporting the local community.

River Fest – River Fest is on its way. It is an annual summer festival held in Huron celebrating community and its waterfront along the Huron River. This multi-day event features a lively mix of family-friendly activities, parades, live music, food vendors, carnival rides, craft booths and firework displays over the river. SAVE THE DATE for Friday, July 11th from 5:30pm to fireworks at 10:15pm, and on Saturday, July 12th from 8:30am (River Run 5K Relay & Fun Run) through 10:00pm at night. The Huron Lions Club River Fest Parade will take place on Saturday, July 12th at 11am.

K96 Summer Jam – Also coming up is the K96 Summer Jam. Come on down to the Boat Basin on July 19th for some fun food, live music, vendors and more.

Water Department – The Water Department staff recently attended a training in Toledo through the AWWA on June 25th. They received contact hours to keep up to date with our Ohio EPA licensure. Seasonal sampling has begun for microcystin this month. The harmful algal bloom forecast is predicted to be about the same as last year, which was labeled as mild to moderate.

HPP – We would like to welcome the first new customer since Mucci in 2021 – PRI+ is scheduled to join us next Thursday, when they will be switching over from FirstEnergy to Huron Public Power. Hopefully, that is the first of many to come.

Upcoming Meetings – BZA on Monday, July 14th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers; Planning Commission on Wednesday, July 16th at 5:00pm in Council Chambers; and the final Council Meeting on Tuesday, July 22nd at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

Mr. Dike said he had another resident in Forest Hills reach out to him regarding cracking of concrete relating to installation of the new water lines and road maintenance. He will be passing that information on to the City Manager. He will be passing another one on to him, as well. Mr. Hamilton said Mr. Fridrich will be going out to walk through to have a look at the ones that have not been reported to see if they can notice a pattern. If they need to get the contractor back out to rectify any issues, they will do so.

Mayor Tapp asked about the Sidewalk Program, and the ordinance stating that it is a misdemeanor if the work isn't completed. The Clerk confirmed that while that language is included in the ordinance, these letters are going out as part of the Sidewalk Maintenance Program, and residents are given 3 choices to rectify the problem, one of which is certification to the auditor.

Mr. Artino asked Mr. Hamilton to clarify the issue with use of the former Oster's Mobile Home Park property. Mr. Hamilton explained that the City took bonds out, which were non-taxable bonds. To be non-

taxable bonds, they must be for public use. The stipulation is that the minimum amount of time that parcel has to stay as public use is 3 years. After those 3 years, those bonds are called, which means the City can pay them off if they want to. At that point, they can go ahead and do something with that site. The City doesn't have any plans for that site at this point. There will be public engagement and public outreach involved. This is not a decision the City is just going to randomly make itself. They will keep the public fully informed as they move through the process. Mr. Claus said he recalls reaching out to the Rye Beach neighborhood after the land was cleared to ask them if they wanted to come and have some specific dialogue or answer questions as a Board Meeting of their Property Owners' Association. They have not yet taken us up on that offer. We don't have to wait 3 years to start having some discussion about what some options could be for the site. Mr. Biddlecombe agreed that it would probably make sense to start talking about the site now so that the public can be engaged. Therefore, when the 3 years are up we can actually move on something instead of starting the process and taking another 3 years to talk about it.

Councilmembers Claus and Biddlecombe discussed the status of the US 6 Phase II Project with Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Hamilton explained that after the most recent round is approved by ODOT, they will then start the public outreach portion. The estimated start of construction would ideally be this year, with completion next year. What they really don't want to do is start drifting into the US Connectivity Project timeline, which would end up with construction through Route 6 and all the way down Cleveland Road. Our funding (\$1,000,000+) must be spent by the end of 2026. They need to get things going to get those funds spent. ODOT is well aware of the timeline involved and knows that they must act quickly on Huron's project to get it out of the way before they start their project.

Asked about the home-rule pieces of legislation pending in Columbus, Mr. Hamilton said a lot of them are still moving through the House. There was a ballot measure that was going to remove property taxes for the State of Ohio, but they did not obtain enough signatures so that they will not move forward. They believe the Governor will line-item veto quite a few portions of the budget bill. The marijuana sales tax has stalled yet again in the House and was not included in the budget bill. It has been tabled until probably the fall.

Mr. Hagy asked if we received any feedback from our representatives about how they feel and are they supportive of our point of view, or did we just not hear from them? They did receive 2 or 3 letters back from DJ Swearingen and Sen. Gavarone. Neither could make it but asked if we had other dates. We provided them with the dates of future Council meetings. They do not seem to be in support of the City's position.

Mr. Hagy asked the Clerk to invite them again and he is willing to meet them whenever they are available.

Mr. Grieves said he had a resident on Riverside Dr. ask if they would ever have sidewalks installed. With the neighborhood growing and more houses going back there, more people are walking. They feel like it is an accident waiting to happen when everyone is walking in the streets. Mr. Hamilton answered that it is not currently on the plan, but they are always looking for new places to apply for grants for. Berlin Road is one of those locations, and they will add Riverside Drive to the list.

Mayor's Discussion

Mayor Tapp said:

Welcome Isaac Phillips to your first Council meetings. Welcome to Firefighter Armstrong. He got good comments on the Red, White and Blues BANG! River Fest is this weekend – enjoy, spend some money, have fun and be safe. It is always a festive weekend. Akzo-Nobel, thank you for the painting. It is always great when our businesses help out.

For the Good of the Order

Sam Artino – I would just like to welcome Isaac and Collin, also, to our great City. See you all down at River Fest! Have a good weekend.

Mark Claus – I also want to welcome Isaac – you just finished your first week. Lucky for you, Stu was gone for a portion of it; you got broken in easily. Welcome Collin Armstrong as a Fire Department Firefighter/Paramedic – they are a great group of guys over there. We had a good and safe 4th of July last week. I didn't hear of any major incidents. I thought that the fireworks in terms of kids running around throwing stuff seemed to be down. I didn't hear a lot of random stuff going off. On the night of the 4th of July, there were a lot of festivities and people doing stuff locally, but that was safe and I think everything went pretty well. We are looking for another big weekend with River Fest. Good luck to William and his crew – I hope you have another good, safe summer holiday weekend.

Joe Dike – I would like to welcome Mr. Phillips. Congratulations and welcome to the City of Huron. I would also like to say congratulations to Collin Armstrong – it's always neat to see that take place, especially when anybody comes to join Huron. We had a meeting before this about e-scooters and e-bikes. I just want to put it on the record that it is scary out there. I tell my kids they are not allowed to ride them. Mr. Grieves told me he saw my son riding on the back of one, so I do plan on telling him very strongly how he should not be doing that. These kids have no commonsense knowledge of simple safety laws. I can't believe how some of them ride. I just saw it the other day – I saw one kid pulling another on a skateboard. If he hits a small pebble, the kid is gone. If he goes headfirst, he is going to have a traumatic brain injury. I just want to say, kids, parents, be safe out there. I don't want you guys to come in here blaming us because our hands are really tied with a lot of different things. I just hope we don't ever have to hear about a kid that gets injured by those e-bikes, because they do fly through the City. Ave a great River Fest weekend. William, I know you are leading that charge and that's always a fun weekend. I hope everybody is safe and we have a great weekend.

Matt Grieves – I've got nothing to follow that up.

Joel Hagy – I wanted to share an experience that I had this past week, which is that I had three residents reach out to me. I got back to 2 of them the same day, and 1 of the next day, and was able to resolve their problems. I only bring this up because it might be a demonstration of what somebody who represents people ought to be doing – listening to them, reacting to them, accepting their invitations to come and talk. I don't know, there are other representatives out there that have no interest in talking to the people they represent, so I thought I'd throw that out there just as a fun story.

William Biddlecombe – Thanks, staff for your hard work. Welcome Isaac, and congratulations and welcome to Collin Armstrong. Don't forget, there will be a special meeting of the Scott Cemetery Board tomorrow night, Wednesday, July 9th at 5:00pm - be there, it's going to be good. This should be the last meeting ever. We are looking forward to River Fest. One question that I get, and I will mention it tonight because there is a slight chance of rain in the forecast – assume the fireworks will happen. That is Friday at 10:15pm. Next weekend is the K-96 Summer Jam at 5pm on July 19th and the 20th starts the Sundays with the Vermilion Community Concert Band at 7pm. Please come out and support our local events, programs, student athletes and GO TIGERS!

Executive Session

Motion

Motion by Mr. Claus to enter into two (2) executive sessions:

- (1) to consider the sale of City-owned real property; and**
- (2) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a public employee or official.**

and to invite Mr. Ebert and Mr. Hamilton, and I don't believe we will have any legislation after this 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, Grieves, Hagy, Biddlecombe, Artino (7)
NAYS: None (0)

There being five or more votes in favor, the motion passed and Council moved into executive session at 7:08pm.

Return to Regular Session

Council returned to regular session at 7:31pm.

Adjournment

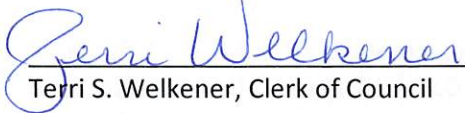
Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.

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, Grieves, Hagy (7)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor of the motion, the regular Council meeting of July 8, 2025, was adjourned at 7:31pm.

Adopted: 22 JUL 2025


Terri S. Welkener, Clerk of Council