



City of Hinckley

City Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 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, Firehouse Manager Phil Taggart, Fire Chief Elliot Golly, and Joel Virtue, Hinckley Area Chamber of Commerce.

1. Call to Order-Pledge of Allegiance

Zeman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Council in the pledge of allegiance.

2. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the agenda with the addition of items 3C November 18, 2025, Regular & Summary Minutes and 5B Pheasants Forever- East Central Spurs Chapter- Raffle. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

- A. October 14, 2025, Regular & Summary Minutes
- B. October 27, 2025, Special & Summary Minutes
- C. November 18, 2025 Regular & Summary Minutes

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

4. Public Hearings

- A. Final Levy and Budget (Formerly Truth in Taxation)

Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to open the public hearing for the 2026 Final Levy and Budget (formerly truth in taxation) at 7:02 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0. Staff presented the 2026 budget and property tax levy. The proposed final levy amount is \$1,214,308, down from the preliminary levy of \$1,224,149. This maintains the tax rate of 48.34% from 2025 and uses only the change in property tax capacity to increase the levy by 5.96%. Mayor Zeman called for public comments; none were heard. **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Scharpnick, to close the public hearing at 7:14 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. Resolution 54-2025 Accepting a Restricted Donation from the Hinckley Lions
 - B. Pheasants Forever- East Central Spurs Chapter Inc- Raffle- Tobies- February 2, 2026
Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, 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- None
 - D. Building Official/Inspector- None
 - E. Hinckley Fire Department
 - 1. Monthly Run Report- Runs 132-137 were included in the packet.
 - 2. Resolution 52-2025 Hiring Alexander Edstrom as Paid On-Call Firefighter and Volunteer First Responder- **Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Burkhardt, to approve Resolution 52-2025 Hiring Alexander Edstrom as Paid On-Call Firefighter and Volunteer First Responder pending successful completion of pre-employment requirements and paperwork. Voting Abstaining: Scharpnick. Motion carried 4-0.**
 - 3. Resolution 53-2025 Declaring Equipment Surplus and Authorizing the Sale- SCBA and Tires- **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Scharpnick, to approve Resolution 53-2025 Declaring Equipment Surplus and Authorizing the Sale- SCBA and Tires. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**
 - F. Firehouse Liquors - November Financials were included in the packet. A written manager's report was not provided, but Manager Taggart provided a verbal report. He believes they may be the numbers from last year. The inventory was completed yesterday, and while it was a long day, it went well.
 - G. Library-
 - 1. 2026 New Hours were included in the packet.
 - 2. November Branch Highlights- A total of three hours will be lost each week. Hours will also be adjusted to stay open a little later on one day. Councilmember Burkhardt inquired whether they can be provided with year-over-year stats; staff will ask whether this is possible.
 - H. Standing Committees
 - 1. Planning Commission- None
 - 2. Park Board- Councilmember Burkhardt reported that the final report should be wrapped up so it can be submitted within the grace period. The early application for the 2026 season was selected for funding and will include six performance dates.
 - 3. EDA- None
7. **Unfinished Business**
- A. 2025 Budget Update

The unaudited November financials were included in the packet. Administrator Jackson reported that the expenses and revenues look suitable for where we are in the year. There is still one street improvement expense that will come through in the December financials.

B. 2026 Final Budget & Levy

Staff presented the budget and levy included in the public hearing. Two options were presented for the final budget and levy. The recommended option maintained a tax rate of 48.34% and a levy increase of 5.96% over 2025. The second option was to decrease the tax rate to 45.87% and increase the levy by 3.26% over 2025. Mayor Zeman keeps thinking about Mike Bubany, from David & Drown's advice to continue with slight increases, given that projects are on the horizon. Councilmember Burkhardt thought his recommendation made sense and noted that maintaining the tax rate shows we are being responsible. Councilmember Hopkins would rather see a smaller jump each year rather than a larger one later, with Frank and Scharpnick agreeing. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the recommended 2026 budget and levy of \$1,214,308 as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

8. New Business

A. City Vision/Future Planning

9. Presentation of Claims

A. General Fund Payables- \$146,722.81

B. Firehouse Payables- \$178,703.72

C. EDA Payables- \$0.00

D. Payroll Payables- \$40,055.64

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

10. Notices and Communications

A. NLX Update- Refining its 2026 strategy from growth-phase advocacy to project readiness.

B. MNRWA Thank you for hosting a training session in Hinckley.

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

12. Closed Session

A. Union- PELRA

Close meeting per open meeting rules. "This meeting is being closed at 7:36 p.m. in the City of Hinckley Community Room, under MN Statute 13D.03, for union negotiation strategy discussions." **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Burkhardt, to open the closed session at 7:44 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried. Staff will respond as directed.**

13. Adjournment

Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Frank, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.