



City of Hinckley

City Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 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, Fire Chief Elliot Golly, Lezlie Sauter, Pine County Economic Development Coordinator, Kristy Hosler, Hinckley CVB, Sierra Kingen, North Pine County News, and Jacob Crispo, Bolton & Menk.

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, to approve the agenda with the addition of 3B January 13, 2026, Regular and Summary Minutes. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

A. February 10, 2026, Regular & Summary Minutes

B. January 13, 2026, 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. SMALL CITIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION – Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation

Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to open the Public Hearing at 7:03 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

Administrator Jackson presented that the public hearing is being held as one of the requirements for the City's application to MN DEED's Small Cities Development Program. The goal of the hearing is to gather public input on the City's application. The application includes a request for funds to rehabilitate 20 units of owner-occupied housing within the City of Hinckley, benefiting low- to moderate-income persons, and to sustain affordable housing. The total request is \$575,000, of which \$ 500,000 will be used for rehabilitation and \$75,000 for the administration of the grant. Homeowners will be required to match the funds and provide a minimum of 10% for their individual projects. Mayor Zeman called for public comments;

none were heard. The public hearing was left open until later in the meeting. After agenda item 7B. Mayor Zeman called for public comments for a final time at 7:24 p.m.; none were heard. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Frank, to close the public hearing at 7:24 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 10-2026 Accepting Restricted Donation from Northern Natural Gas for Hinckley Fire Department- \$2,000
 - B. Hinckley Athletic Association- Temporary Liquor License- July 17 & 18, 2026
 - C. Hinckley Lions Club- Raffle Permit- Hinckley Community Center- April 20, 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
 1. Lead & Copper Line Replacement PPL Application MN Department of Health- Jacob Crispo was present to answer questions on the Lead & Copper Line Replacement PPL Application. There are currently 7 services that are identified as either lead or galvanized that are eligible for replacement. The replacements would happen in 2027. The application is due March 13, 2026. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the City's application for the MN Department of Health 2027 Lead Service Line Replacement Project Priority List. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**
 - C. PeopleService- None
 - D. Building Official/Inspector - None
 - E. Hinckley Fire Department
 1. Monthly Run Report- Calls 11-21
 2. Resolution 11-2026 Hiring Hannah Collier as Fire Department Employee and Heather Liss as Unpaid Volunteer First Responder- **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to approve Resolution 11-2026 Hiring Hannah Collier as Fire Department Employee and Heather Liss as Unpaid Volunteer First Responder. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**
 3. February Grant and Donation Request- **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to approve the Fire Department's February grant application request to Rural HealthCare, unknown amount, Representative Jeff Dotseth, unknown amount, Representative Nathan Nelson, unknown amount, Senator Rarick, unknown amount, Walmart Pine City, unknown amount. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**
 - F. Firehouse Liquors
 1. January Monthly Report- The unaudited financials were included in the packet.
 2. February Monthly Report & Manager's Report- The February unaudited financials and Manager's Report were also included in the packet.

G. Library-

1. February Highlights- February Highlights included: 472 visitors to the library, 399 reference questions answered, 49 library program attendees, and 65 passive program participants.
2. Library Volunteer Reading Program
3. Historical Stats- Council had previously asked about historical stats: 6,883 visits, 4,335 reference interactions, 940 public computer uses, and 587 Wi-Fi sessions in 2024, and 6,556 visits, 4,209 reference interactions, 751 public computer uses, and 489 Wi-Fi sessions in 2023.

H. Standing Committees

1. Planning Commission- None
2. Park Board- None
3. EDA- February 2, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes were included in the packet. Councilmember Burkhardt reported on the EDA meeting held earlier that day, which included updates on the USDOT Thriving Communities Program, the 2026 Small Cities Development Program application, the City's Housing Study, and rolling over maturing CDs.

7. Unfinished Business

A. 2025 Budget Update

The unaudited financials for January and February were included in the packet. Revenues and expenses looked routine, except for the water leak expenses at City Hall, a grant received, and the purchase of associated items for the Fire Department. The water fund will collect and pay the fees associated with processing credit cards. At the end of the year, any remaining balance will be allocated between water and sewer. In the liquor fund, off-sale beer sales are down compared to last year, and in the on-sale, the food sales are also down.

B. USDOT Thriving Communities Program Update

Staff continues to work with the technical advisors through the USDOT Thriving Communities Program. One part of the USDOT Thriving Communities program is holding a Stakeholder meeting; this was held on February 6, 2026. The goal of this meeting is to introduce our efforts to our State and Federal legislators, funders, and other stakeholders. While there, we took the stakeholders on a tour of Main Street and showed them the trail from Westside Park to Hwy 61. Attached is a summary of the meeting.

The subaward was used to work with an engineering firm to complete the attached Scope of Work developed by the group. As part of that work, with the assistance of Bollig Engineering, we held an open-house-style community engagement event on February 24th to gather feedback from our community. Attached is a summary of the exercise. Before the final document is completed, there will be opportunities for the City Council, EDA, and the public to provide feedback and help shape the final report that the City will receive. This final report will inform future projects and support financial opportunity applications.

C. 2026 Small Cities Development Program Application

The City's preliminary proposal was determined to be marginally competitive. Lezlie Sauter, Pine County Economic Development Coordinator, followed up with the local DEED representative to see if there were any suggestions or notes from our preliminary proposal to help strengthen our final application. Using that feedback, the application includes a request for funds to rehabilitate 20 units of owner-occupied housing within the City of Hinckley, benefiting low- to moderate-income persons, and to sustain affordable housing. The total request is \$575,000, of which \$ 500,000 will be used for rehabilitation and \$75,000 for

the administration of the grant. Homeowners will be required to match the funds and provide a minimum of 10% for their individual projects. A public hearing was held earlier in the meeting to gather feedback on the City's proposal. **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to approve the City's full application to the 2026 Small Cities Development Program. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0. Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve Resolution 09-2026 Authorizing the City of Hinckley to Act as Legal Sponsor and Assign Authorized Officials to Apply for Funding to the Mayor and City Administrator. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

D. Old City Shop Repair

Two bids were included in the packet: ServePro of Sandstone, \$17,951.59, and Monson Construction, \$26,093.00. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the bid from ServePro of Sandstone for \$17,951.59. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

E. Park & Recreation Board

The packet contained information on reforming the Park & Recreation board into a more advisory body. This would need to be done through an ordinance update. Councilmember Burkhardt expressed wariness about voting on items at the board level and then again at the council level. If there were good public participation on the board, that might help. Council asked to bring this back at the next available meeting to give members time to think.

F. Community Center Doors

Administrator Jackson reported that one contractor came to look at putting in a quote for only the north set of doors, but they never followed through and submitted a quote. The north, west, and south double doors could all be replaced. They could be replaced with a solid center astragal to add stability. Councilmembers thought it would be more beneficial to keep the north set as a full double opening, and maybe use a removable astragal instead. Staff also added that the north and west doors should be installed with maglock capabilities for future proofing. Eventually, we should update the building's access control, and doing so now will save money in the end. Councilmember Scharpnick requested that the contractors split out the three doors so that if they come in too high, we can start on what is within budget. Council would like staff to move forward with the quote process, including discussion details.

8. New Business

A. City Vision/Future Planning

Councilmember Hopkins asked if the path from Westside Park to Highway 61 was on the radar. Mayor Zeman noted it is part of the USDOT Thriving Communities Program and will hopefully be part of a Safe Streets for All or Safe Routes to School Application.

B. Highway 23 Coalition Support Request

After discussion, the Council chose not to act.

C. Fire Department 2027 Proposed Preliminary Budget & Fire Contracts

The packet contained the proposed 2027 Fire Department Preliminary Budget, Fire Contract amounts, and proposed 3-year Fire Contract Language. The three-year contract language will provide some stability during the contract term. The proposed language includes a 3.25% increase in year two and 3.5% in year three. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to approve the proposed 2027 Budget and Fire Contract. Voting Yea: Mayor**

Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0. Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Scharpnick, to approve the 3-year contract language for the Fire Service Contracts. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0. Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Hopkins, to set the annual meeting with townships for March 12, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

D. Policies for Expenditures, Purchasing, and Contracts Update

Staff presented an update to the Policies for Expenditures, Purchasing, and Contracts to better align with current costs. The updates include increasing some purchasing limits in Section III.A.2, updating language in Section III.A.4 to include Sourcewell, updating language in Section III.A.6 to increase the purchase limits for each category, and adding language for Section III.A.2 for routine street maintenance supplies to the Public Works Supervisor exclusion. **Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Burkhardt, to approve the proposed updates to the Policies for Expenditures, Purchasing, and Contracts. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

E. Firehouse Liquors Baler Repair Quote

Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to approve the Ver-tech quote for \$2,610.74 for the repair of the cardboard baler at Firehouse Liquors. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

9. Presentation of Claims

A. General Fund Payables - \$177,480.60

B. Firehouse Payables - \$193,498.04

C. EDA Payables - \$557.65

D. Payroll Payables - \$39,755.47

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. Northern Natural Gas, Thank You for Response to Willow River Area Pipeline Incident

B. Google Review- Community Center

C. Hinckley Board of Appeal and Equalization- April 15, 2026, 8:00 AM at the Pine County Courthouse. *Council does not need to be present; the County runs this meeting. It is more like open counter hours for property owners.*

D. 2026 MS 150 Ride Change

E. Fox 9 Town Ball Tour will be in Hinckley on July 1, 2026, for the Hinckley Knights game. Live broadcast starting at 5 p.m. at Brennan Field. <https://www.fox9.com/news/town-ball-tour-schedule-2026>

11. Presentation of Petitions, Complaints, and Requests (3 minutes each)- None

12. Closed Session - None

13. Adjournment

Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Scharpnick, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.

Don Zeman, Mayor

Attest:

Leaha Jackson, City Administrator