



# City of Hinckley

## City Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 7:00 PM

Council Chambers (Community Room)

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*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, Joel Virtue, Hinckley Area Chamber of Commerce, and Sierra Kingen, North Pine County News.

**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 Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to approve the agenda with the addition of 6E3 2025 Fire Call Summary. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

**3. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

A. December 09, 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**

**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 01-2026 Accepting Restricted Donation Loren & Barbara Nelson

B. El Tucan Mexican Restaurant LLC- El Tucan Mexican Restaurant Bar & Grill- On-Sale Liquor

C. Lake Superior Chapter of Safari Club International - Raffle Permit- Grand Casino Hinckley- March 27-28, 2026

**Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Burkhardt, 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- **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to approve the 2026 Building Official Services contract with Richard Drottning. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**
- E. Hinckley Fire Department
  - 1. Monthly Run Report- Runs 138-150 were included in the packet.
  - 2. Approve Officers- **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Frank, to approve the officers to a two-year term: Assistant Fire Chief- Greg Pardun, 2<sup>nd</sup> Captain- Bill Chose, 4<sup>th</sup> Captain- Mike Defenbaugh, and Secretary- Keith Hopkins. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Scharpnick. Voting Abstaining: Hopkins. Motion carried 4-0.**
  - 3. 2025 Run Summary- Of the 31 calls dispatched and canceled, many were for traffic control on the freeway. Dispatch automatically calls out the fire department, and then the officer or state patrol on scene makes the call to cancel or keep them coming.
- F. Firehouse Liquors - Monthly Report and Manager's Reports were included in the packet. Council asked about the inventory valuation; staff replied that it is \$520,337. Council would like to see this down to \$400,000.
- G. Library- December Highlights included: 392 visitors to the library, 326 reference questions answered, 49 library program attendees, and 25 passive program participants.
- H. Standing Committees
  - 1. Planning Commission- None
  - 2. Park Board- Working on the final report for 2025 Sweet Summer Sounds and on contacts for 2026. The ice rink has been busy with skaters, hockey players, and sliders.
  - 3. EDA- None

## 7. Unfinished Business

- A. 2025 Budget Update
 

December unaudited financials were included in the packet. Permit fees were more than budgeted, but associated expenses were also higher. Windows 10 computers continue to be upgraded or replaced. There were grants in Parks, including from the Lions and ECRAC, for park improvements and Sweet Summer Sounds, respectively. The fire department allocated some of the PPE budget toward the ground fill station, which should be installed in early 2026. Water and sewer funds do not have much set aside for meter replacements (average lifespan 10 yrs) and lead and copper service line verification and replacement. Liquor revenues hit budget, except for off-sale beer.
- B. 2025 Polling Place Accessibility Grant
 

The City was partially awarded for its 2025 Polling Place Accessibility Grant application due to the number of applications; only first-priority objectives were awarded, and those were prorated. Staff believes our first-priority objectives: curbside voter notification system and additional signage are needed, and a priority even without the full grant amount. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to accept the 2025 Polling Place Accessibility Grant award of \$691.66 and approve the additional expenditure for the first-priority items. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

## 8. New Business

### A. City Vision/Future Planning

Councilmember Scharpnick asked if anyone knew whether the Corn & Clover Carnival would include any 250th United States Anniversary components. Hinckley Chamber Director Joel Virtue replied that he would ask at the next meeting.

### B. Planning Commission Membership

The Hinckley Planning Commission consists of five members, each with a three-year term. One of these members is no longer eligible due to residency. One application has been received for this position. **Motion made by Burkhardt, Seconded by Hopkins, to appoint Ann Gengel to the vacant position with the term expiring December 31, 2026. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

Commission member Ron Ausmus's term expired December 31, 2025. **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Scharpnick, to reappoint Run Ausmus to a three-year term expiring December 31, 2028. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

### C. Ordinance 01-2026 2026 Fee Schedule

The 2026 Fee Schedule included the following suggested changes: adding a convenience fee for processing utility payments and rental deposits of 4.8%, 1% increase for water charges, 2% increase for sewer charges, update the hydrant/bulk meter rental fee to include \$2 minimum, increase the community room rental fee for Sat/Sun to \$40 and add a deposit of \$50.00, final plat mapping fee to flat \$300, Street/Alley/Easment Vacation to include a minimum charge of \$100, added language for PUD's to include charges for Attorney and Engineering, and minor clarifying language updates. **Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Burkhardt, to approve Ordinance 01-2026 2026 Fee Schedule as presented and direct staff to publish the summary ordinance. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

### D. 2026 MCMA Annual Conference

The annual conference will be held in Baxter from April 29 to May 1. **Motion made by Hopkins, Seconded by Frank, to authorize the City Administrator to attend the 2026 MCMA Annual Conference. Voting Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**

## 9. Presentation of Claims

A. General Fund Payables- \$234,828.90

B. Firehouse Payables- \$295,079.19

C. EDA Payables- \$0.00

D. Payroll Payables- \$66,146.64

**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. Hinckley Finlayson Football- Thank you for Hinckley Rescue's Support of Friday Night Lights

B. US DOT Thriving Communities- City of Hinckley Stakeholder Invitation Sent to Legislators

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

Mayor Zeman wanted to take a moment to discuss the Mayor's Letter going around. He did not feel comfortable signing without the full support of the Council, as it represents all in the community, not just himself.

**12. Closed Session - None**

**13. Adjournment**

**Motion made by Frank, Seconded by Scharpnick, to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. Voting**

**Yea: Mayor Zeman, Burkhardt, Frank, Hopkins, Scharpnick. Motion carried 5-0.**