CITY OF HART
407 S. STATE ST.
HART, MI 49420
REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL - COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
JUNE 24th, 2025
MINUTES – APPROVED

PRESENT: Mayor Amanda Klotz, Councilors, Catalina Burillo, Jim Cunningham, Andrew Mullen, Betty Root and Karen Thomson

ABSENT: Dean Hodges

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager – Rob Splane, Clerk/Treasurer – Karla Swihart, BioPure Superintendent – Paul Cutter, Energy Superintendent – Mike Schiller, Hart Police Chief – Juan Salazar, Cristina Juska, Antony and Lauren (Dark Water Coffee), and Dirk Williams

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- B. Root motioned to approve the Agenda and was supported by K. Thomson
  - Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Dirk Williams, Director of Operations at Grey and Company – I am here tonight because I heard that City Manager Rob Splane is resigning and we have an ongoing issue with the City and I wanted to make sure that City Council is aware of the water supply issue with the Fire Suppression system at Grey and Company is having. With Rob still here I will just talk to him after the meeting regarding.

CORRESPONDENCE, EVENTS, PRESENTATIONS:

- Dark Water Coffee Company
  Proposal To City of Hart
  Roasting Facility Development

Introduction,

We, Lauren and Ton Dematteo, are the co-owners of Dark Water Coffee Roasters, a small batch specialty coffee roasting company proudly based in Hart, Michigan since 2018, we have been roasting and producing coffee from the Starting Block, a biral resource that has supported our early growth and operations. With deep gratitude for the foundation this space has provided, we are now preparing to take the next step in our business journey: establishing a dedicated roasting facility that allows us to grow, hire local talent, and enrich the Hart Community.

Proposal Summary,

We respectfully submit this proposal to the City of Hart to express our interest in obtaining a parcel of land on Industrial Park Drive, which we understand is city-owned. Our intent is to develop a custom roasting facility for Dark Water Coffee Roasters that will serve as:

- A full-scale production hub
- A space to employ local residents
- A community-focused destination for education and coffee appreciation

This facility represents not only a necessary operational expansion but also a long-term investment in Hart's economic and cultural fabric.

Background & Business Overview

Dark Water Coffee Roasters has operated in Hart for over six years. What began as a passion project has grown into a respected regional brand, known for quality, transparency, and craft. Our products are served in cages and homes across Michigan, and we contiue to see rising demand for both our wholesale and retail offerings.

Operating from The Starting Block has given us the tools and flexibility to incubate and refine our methods. However, our production needs are now exceeding what shared space can accommodate. We are ready to build a permanent home that supports future growth.

Vision for the Facility

The proposed facility would be designed for:

- Roasting & Packaging Operations: A modern, efficient space to handle increased production volume with room for equipment expansion.
- Training & Education: A small tasting lab and brewing education area, offering classes and experiences for locals and visitors alike – mirroring what companies in cities like Grand Rapids offer but with a distinctly Hart Identity.
- Community Employment: We anticipate hiring local team members in the first 12-18 months of operation, with roles in production, fullfillment, and education.
- Destination Appeal: The artisanal nature of specilaty coffee roasting and our open-door philosophy means the facility could serve as a micro-destination within Hart – offering bours, classes, and more.

Request from the City of Hart

We are requesting:

- Information on abailable property parcels on Industerial Park Drive
- The process and timeline for consideration of sale
- Any applicable incentives or support programs for businesses expanding or relocating within Hart

We are open to discussion on flexible arrangements and eager to work alongside City leadership to ensure our development aligns with the goals of Hart's economic and community development plans.

Conclusion

We are proud to call Hart our homes – personally and professionally. Our roots are here, and we're committed to growing in a way that honors this community. We see this facility as a milestone not just for Dark Water Coffee Roasters, but for Hart's thriving netwrok or small businesses and future workforce.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this vision further with the City of Hart and are happy to provide business plans, finanical statements, or meet in person at your convenience.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Approval of minutes from June 10th, 2025
- Bills, Claims, Payroll
- Reports of Boards, Commissions, and Committees
- Department Reports – Police/BioPure/Public Works/Energy/C&E Dvlp
    - J. Cunningham motioned to approve Consent Agenda and supported by B. Root
        - Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

ACTION ITEMS:

- Resolution 2025-19 Adopt FY25 End-of-Year Budget Amendments

  WHEREAS, the City Council may amend the annual budget to reflect changes in purchasing patterns or revised objectives; and

  WHEREAS, the City Council desires to secure the benefits of efficient self-governance and to promote and protect our common interests and welfare; and

  NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE HART CITY COUNCIL:

  Amends the FY2025 Annual Budget as follows:

Fund	GL Number	*DESCRIPTION*	Activity	Original Budget	Amended Budget
General	**101-301.000-702.900**	*OVERTIME*	$ 55,813	$ 40,000	**$56,000**
General	**101-441.000-702.800**	*WAGE Reg Employee*	$ 235,091	$ 231,000	**$241,000**
General	**101-441.000-970.000**	*Dump Truck Purchase*	$ 49,515	$ 15,000	**$21,700**
General	**101-441.000-970.000**	*Outfit Dump Truck for Salter use*	$ 15,000		
	fund 202 to fund 203	*Transfer $90,000*			
Major Streets	**202-970.000-801.000**	*West Main Resurfacing*	$ 2,172,346	$ -	**$315,555**
Local Streets	**203-970.000-801.000**	*Engineering & Contactor for Dryden proj*	$ 2,172,346	$ 18,250	**$0**
Park	**208-751.000-801.000**	*Professional Services*	$ 48,286	$ 22,500	**$34,886**
HEART	**244-728.000-818.000**	*Contractural Service*	$ 26,538	$ 4,800	**$26,538**
Energy	**580-537.300-740.000**	*Operating Supplies*	$ 410,710	$ 205,000	**$415,000**
Energy	**580-537.300-801.000**	*Professional Services*	$ 48,457	$ 20,000	**$49,000**
Energy	**580-537.300-818.000**	*Contractural Service*	$ 51,656	$ 15,000	**$52,000**
Energy	**580-537.300-818.500**	*Tree Trimming Contractual*	$ 40,000	$ 102,395	**$105,000**
Energy	**580-537.300-818.661**	*Motor Operations*	$ 158,721	$ 25,000	**$16,000**
Energy	**580-537.300-970.661**	*Vehicle/EquipPurchases*	$ 104,743	$ -	**$248,437**
BioPure	**590-527.100-801.000**	*Professional Services*	$ 334,235	$ 75,000	**$1,400**
BioPure	**590-527.100-983.200**	*Sludge Removal*	$ 752,377	$ 480,000	**$752,377**
BioPure	**590-527.400-970.598**	*SewerSystemImprovements/SRF repay*	$ 211,888	$ -	**$211,888**
	Fund 591 to 590	*Transfer 2,632,140*			
	Fund 591 to 590	*Transfer 407,185*			
Water	**591-547.400-801.002**	*2200777 - DWAM Grant expenditures*	$ 93,688	$ 20,000	**$96,500**

- A. Mullen motioned to approve Resolution 2025-19 and supported by K. Thomson
  - Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

- Resolution 2025-20 Approve TIFA Streetscape funding conditions

  WHEREAS, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) has tentatively offered grant assistance to The City of Hart to revitalize and develop public space through the Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) program; and

  WHEREAS, proposed funding for the project includes a contribution from the City of Hart Tax Increment Finance Authority in the amount of $660,000; and

  WHEREAS, the City of Hart TIFA Board has met multiple times to discuss funding the project; and

  WHEREAS, the TIFA Board has stipulated that their approval of the fund allocation will be contingent on three conditions; and

  WHEREAS, the City Council now considers the stipulations as set forth by the TIFA Board; and

  NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE HART CITY COUNCIL

  Approves and authorizes the TIFA imposed grant funding conditions as follows:

  1. The Main Street Market Chalets are to be permanently removed from the parking lot
  2. The renewed parking will become ADA compliant
  3. TIFA is to be renewed for an additional 15-year term so that TIFA can support continued downtown development.

  Authorizes and directs the City Manager or TIFA administrator to sign MEDC RAP grant documents on behalf of the City of Hart.

- B. Root motioned to approve Resolution 2025-20 and supported by A. Mullen
  - Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

- Resolution 2025-21 Approve Streetscape design and funding commitment

  VOIDED

- Resolution 2025-22 City Manager Recruitment firm selection

  WHEREAS, pursuant to the City Charter, the City of Hart operates under a Council-Manager form of Government; and

WHEREAS, resultant to a May 2025 resignation of the existing City Manager, the City must seek a new City Manager; and
WHEREAS, due to the complexities of recruiting, evaluating, screening, interviewing, and selecting a City Manager, a qualified executive search organization should be retained to assist the City through this process; and
WHEREAS, the City Council desires to secure the benefits of efficient self-governance and to promote and protect our common interests and welfare; and
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE HART CITY COUNCIL:
Accepts proposals from: Double Haul Solutions, Michigan Municipal League, and Pivot Group Municipal Services
Awards the Contract to Double Haul Solutions to provide executive recruitment services for the quoted fee of TBA
Authorizes and directs the City Manager to sign the aforementioned proposal on behalf of the City of Hart.

- A. Mullen motioned to approve Resolution 2025-22 and supported by K. Thomson
  - Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- NONE

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Updates:

- City officials met with members of the Veterans Coalition represented through the Hart-VFW "brick team." A tentative agreement was reached where the group would procure quotes to replace worn paver bricks with the City providing 50/50 matching funds and the coalition handling the procurement and installation of the replacement bricks. Funds obligated to this effort will end up being matching funds towards the pending DNR grant to reconstruct the park.
- Daupler Communication System is nearing launch in the next 1-2 weeks. That launch will be seamless in how our customers and residents notify the City of utility issues. All phone numbers remain the same, with Daupler fielding calls and triaging them to our on-call personnel. More information will be distributed to the public after the launch.
- Regarding the Water Tower lease, during title work, a property ownership issue was uncovered. The City is working to resolve that issue, more information is coming soon.
- In April, TIFA held a pitch competition seeking to convey the Congregational Church property to an entity to bring the property to a higher and better use for the community. Cindy Beth Davis-Dykema was selected for "The Monarch" project which will include wellness, rental, and community gathering space. She will be seeking grants, tax abatements/incentives, and other support from the City to be discussed in July.
- The Hart Parks and Recreation Movie Night was more strongly attended yesterday. Movie nights will continue on Mondays through the summer, weather permitting.
- The National Asparagus Festival kicked off with a concert at the fairgrounds on Friday night, attended by over 300 people. The weather was great for the weekend, seeing near record numbers at all events including the combination car show and Taste of Asparagus at the Hart Historic District.
- Paul Cutter received the Doris Van Dam Operations Professional of the Year award on June 17th at the Michigan Water Environment Association's Conference, where the MWEA also celebrated its 100th Anniversary.
- City Manager to race in the 172nd Queens Cup sailboat rave across Lake Michigan- crossing Wednesday and racing back Friday Night.

Legacy Topics:

- Safe Routes to School trail project – work with MDOT is on-going – [Cadaver Dog right-of-way search being scheduled]

Upcoming Topics:

- Redevelopment Ready Community re-certification in 2025
  Adopt Zoning Board of Appeals By-Laws (Pending Legal Review)
  Adopt two new ordinances (July 22,2025)
- Council review of rental inspection policies, procedures, and implementation.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

- J. Cunningham meeting with the VFW, I think a favorable solution will be worked out for the bricks, and I also wanted to bring up that we talked about the airplane in talks about painting it. I strongly urge them to not do that as very few of them airplanes are painted and how many thousands of lbs. of weight it would add to the plane, with it already having flat tires so we don't need to add any more weight to it, so I feel there was an agreement to not paint the plane. And I also am very pleased with the comments from the VFW about the bricks and how the City and VFW will share responsibility.
- C. Burillo just a reminder that this Thursday is the 1st music on the commons also this Saturday June 28th is Taco's and Tracs for trials which is a walk, ride or run followed by tacos in the village green. What this fundraiser is for goes towards the maintenance funds for the proposed Pentwater/hart bicycle trail. Registration is still open through Friday. You can find that online if you go to Pentwater/hart website. Also, just a thought several years ago there was talk of Hart Rotary about a splash pad. I happened to be at the ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Getty Park in Shelby and it was pretty awesome, but I wanted to remind Hart to keep going. It would be nice to have one in our town so thought id bring back that idea to the Council.

ADJOURN:

- There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Klotz adjourned the meeting at 8:53pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on July 8th, 2025, at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Karla Swihart

Karla Swihart, City Clerk