CITY OF HART
407 S. STATE ST.
HART, MI 49420
REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL - COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
February 25th, 2025
MINUTES – Approved

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

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager – Rob Splane City Clerk – Karla Swihart, BioPure Superintendent – Paul Cutter, DPW Superintendent – Brad Whitney, Economic Director – Nichole Kleiner, Sharon Hallack, Christina Juska, Rolando Salgado, Emily Sigler, and Mike Stevens

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- C. Burillo motioned to approve the agenda and was supported by B. Root
  - Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- None

CORRESPONDENCE, EVENTS, PRESENTATIONS:

- New residents to the City of Hart whom retired to here last summer have enjoyed discovering the City of Hart, and thankful for a Two page flier they picked up when visiting City Hall, while we visited Hart City Hall Office a couple of times and were warmly greeted and received helpful explanations to our questions also holds true for our nearly weekly visits to the Hart Library. We are glad to be Hart and appericate the kindness and helpfulness we have recived by City of Hart Staff.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Approval of minutes from February 11th, 2025
- Bills, Claims, Payroll
- Reports of Boards, Commissions, and Committees
- Department Reports – Police/BioPure/Public Works/Energy/C&E Dvlp
  - C. Burillo motioned to approve Consent Agenda and supported by K. Thomson
    - Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

ACTION ITEMS:

- Resolution 2025-06 Adopt Poverty Exemption Guidelines and Policy.
  This Policy was written in accordance with and governed by MCL 211.7u, as amended.
  In order to be eligible for the poverty exemption, the claimant **MUST** do all of the following *on an annual basis:*
  1. Own and occupy as your principal residence, as defined in Section 7dd of the General Property Tax Act, the property for which the exemption is requested:
  2. File a claim with the Board of Review after January 1st, but before the day prior to the last day of the Board of Review, on a form approved by the State Tax Commission (STC):
  3. Provide federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence (also referred to as "household" or "Homestead") These income tax returns are those filed in the current year or in the immediately preceding year. If you did not file a Tax Return, then you **MUST** get a statement of benefits paid from the Social Security Administration or Michigan Department of Social Services and/or file an affidavit to affirm you were not required to file a Federal or State Tax Return.
  4. Produce a valid driver's license or other forms of identification.
  5. Produce a dee, land contract, or other evidence of ownership of the property for which the exemption is being requested.
  6. Meet the federal poverty income guidelines for the household, which are updated annually in the federal register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services; and
  7. Meet the ***claimant and total household asset*** levels set by the City of Hart.

INCOME & ASSET GUIDELINES
FOR POVERTY EXEMPTIONS

If your income exceeds the amounts shown or your assets exceed the amounts shown, you are NOT eligible for a Poverty Exemption.

Income Eligibility Updated Annually by the State Tax Commission

(income levels are updated annually**)**

SIZE OF FAMILY UNIT	POVERTY GUIDELINES
1	SET ANNUALLY BY STC BULLENTIN
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
FOR EACH ADDITIONAL PERSON	

Applicants shall not have more than **$25,000** in assets to be eligible for consideration and no more cash than an amount equal to one month's gross household income. Assets do not include primary residence. Assets do not include 1 automobile per licensed driver residing in the primary residence.

GUIDELINES BY WHICH
POVERTY EXEMPTIONS ARE DETERMINED

Completed application form and all required documents and attachments MUST be filed with the Assessor's Office after January first and before the final meeting of the Board of Review in December.
Sign the form when you return it to the Assessor's Office
NOTE: The filing of a claim constitutes an appearance before the Board of Review. Also, the dates for filing will be updated annually in accordance with the State of Michigan Property Tax Calendar.

1. The Board of Review determines if Income Standards have been met.
2. The Board of Review determines if Asset Limits have been met.
3. The Board of Review has a right to inspect the property. If needed
4. The Board of Review will consider all revenue and non-revenue producing assets of the owner, co-owner and all members of the household. Any attempt to hide and/or shift assets to another person, business or corporation shall be grounds for denial.
5. Applications must be filed every year. If granted, the exemption is for one year only.
6. Applications will be reviewed by the Board of Review. The Board may ask applicants, or their authorized agents, to be physically present to answer questions. Teleconferencing for the purpose of asking questions of the applicant is allowable if the applicant is not able to attend.
7. Applicants, or their authorized agents, may have to answer questions regarding such subject as financial affairs, health and/or the status of people living in the principal residence at a meeting that is open to the public.
8. All applications will be evaluated based on data and statements given to the Board by the applicant. The Board may also use information gathered from any other source.
9. The Board of Review shall follow the policy and guidelines established herein when granting or denying an exemption.
10. Household income limits are adjusted annually to comply with the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
11. Applicants may appeal to the Board of Review decision to the Michigan Tax Tribunal Appeal information will be included with the Board of Review decision.

    - C. Burillo motioned to approve Resolution 2025-06 with $25,000 in assets and supported by J. Cunningham

- Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- MDOT Turn-Back Roadway, MDOT would like the City of Hart to take over State Street from Johnson to Polk. In doing that MDOT offered the City of Hart 1.75ml for repairs to be done. Look for more information to come March.
- AT&T Tower Lease, As mentioned in prior meeting, will offer option 2: Lump Sum Rent Payment Option: Provide a one-time lump sum payment of $625,500. In return, you will grant a **Forty (40)** year easement.
- Special Event Permit: - Pentwater-Hart- Montague Trail Celebrate Trails Day Event **(APPROVED)**
- Special Event Permit – Sauna Cold Plunge Cycling **(APPROVED)**
- Special Event Permit – Hart Mills Bike Race **(APPROVED)**
- Special Event Permit – Easter Sunrise Service **(APPROVED)**

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Updates:

- Cyber-attacks: The City of Hart, OCCOA, Visitors Bureau, and others were subject to a unique malware email. As far as IT forensic investigators have found, no critical data was lost and no breach of security has been discovered. In the news: 24% increase in attacks in the last 2 months – 25 new malware variants are created every hour up to 200% over last year – Government Entities, utility infrastructure, and elected officials are at high risk of targeted phishing. *What are we doing?*
    - IronScales – Budgeted purchase currently being implemented (already set-up to scan all cityofhart.org emails, today it scanned 640 emails of which 286 were spam and 6 were targeted phishing emails).
        - Integrated cloud email security
        - Automated threat remediation
        - Built-in simulation testing and training program
    - Network Penetration testing – Budgeted purchase, testing in progress
        - Will result in action item report
    - New Firewall was installed in 2024
- The Safe Routes to Schools Project may see some forward movement. The MDOT archeology department will allow the use of cadaver dogs to screen for graves in the right-of-way. If no graves are found, the project will be green lit for construction in 2026
- City of Hart Clean-up Day March 25th – guidelines are on the City's website.

Legacy Topics:

- Safe Routes to School trail project – work with MDOT is on-going [meeting scheduled for Wednesday February 12 with MDOT]

Upcoming Topics:

- Redevelopment Ready Community re-certification in 2025
  Adoption of 5-year Park and Rec Master Plan
  Reaffirmation of the City Master plan
  TIFA By-Laws
  Zoning Drawings – add to ordinances
  Adopt Zoning Board of Appeals By-Laws
  Review proposal to have council members serve as ZBA
- Council review of rental inspection policies, procedures, and implementation.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

- None

ADJOURN:

- There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Klotz adjourned the meeting at 8:20pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on March 11th, 2025, at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Kayla Swinhart

Karla Swihart, City Clerk