

## MINUTES

### CITY OF HARTFORD, ALABAMA

### CITY COUNCIL MEETING

November 7, 2022

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**Location: John Hughes Community Center Courtroom, 405 South Third Avenue,  
Hartford, Alabama 36344**

**Start time: 6:00 pm**

- I. **Call to Order:** Mayor, Neil Strickland
- II. **Prayer and Pledge:** Councilmember, Paul Fondren
- III. **Approval of October 17, 2022, Minutes:** A motion is made by Councilmember, Paul Fondren to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2022, once the correction of the hometown farmer of the year is changed to read the correct name "Ran Can Bee Ranch." The motion is seconded by Councilmember, Ron Adams. All are in favor thereof. The minutes will pass on that change.
- IV. **Public Comments:**
  - a. Sylvia Williams asks that Avenue G be cleaned up. People are dumping trash at the end of the road as well as leaving household appliances and furniture by the road and in their front yards.
- V. **New Business:**
  - a. Citizen Ronnie Peters is nominated as candidate for the last seat available on the Zoning Board of Adjustments. There is a role call vote. Councilmember Adams, Yay; Councilmember Fondren, Yay; Councilmember Fowler, Abstains; Councilmember Thompson, Yay; Councilmember Clements, Nay. Ronnie Peters is voted in as a member of the Zoning Board of Adjustments by a majority of yes votes.
  - b. Janie Fondren discusses her meeting with the Alabama Historical Society. They walked the business district of Hartford and found the city interesting. There are various buildings that would qualify as historical based on specific standards set forth by the Alabama Historical Society. Connie Walker presented them with a collaborated booklet containing information regarding the city's history. It would take fifty percent of the town's business owners to agree to participate for the

town to be recognized. It would also allow Hartford to be considered for other grant opportunities. Ms. Fondren will remain in contact with them, and the business owners should be expecting a letter from the Alabama Historical Society with further information and instructions.

- c. Jeanna Brannon asks when the new utility rates will take effect. The mayor answered, the beginning of the new calendar year. She wants a status update of the claims against city employees. She requested a copy of all the documents that City Engineer, Ronnie Driskell presented to the council at the last meeting and is concerned because she doesn't feel like she received everything. She has concerns about the lack of transparency from the city and its council. She would like a list of all city vehicles and the copy of the insurance on those vehicles. She wants to know how much the mapping project is going to cost in total. She will continue to post on "Let's Talk Hartford" Facebook page with updates as she receives them.
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**VI. Council Comments:**

- a. Mayor- There is a seat available on the Planning Commission if anyone would like to nominate themselves or if anyone would like to nominate someone, they think would be a good candidate, please do so.
- b. Mayor- There is a zoning board meeting scheduled for November 22, 2022, to select a Chairman and Vice Chairman and to review the by-laws.
- c. Paul Fondren- I want to offer clarification that the trackers that were put on the city vehicles was not done by any city employee or department head or council member. If you see anything suspicious, please report it to the police department. Also, we're excited about the new jobs that will be coming to Hartford's Industrial Park thanks to Toby Seay, Geneva County Probate Judge. The city invested, several years ago, in purchasing four acres allowing Air Performance to expand.
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- d. Ron Adams commends the first responders in Hartford for their outstanding performance responding to the major accident on highway 167. He heard from several citizens, how pleased they were in the direction that the city is moving in and the progress we are making.

## **VII. Department Head Comments:**

- a. Chief Ward: Wiregrass Electric had some copper stolen Thursday night. We got a call about a suspicious vehicle. We now have to people in custody who provided confessions. We are unable to retrieve the stolen copper.
  - b. John Burton: The fire billing is seeing positive results.
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- c. Nick Holley: Recognizes the Recreational Football Team and Cheerleading Squads and their coaches for winning the Superbowl games and Cheerleading Competition. They had outstanding performances. He announced that the concession stand has brought in around ten thousand dollars just during football season. There have been one hundred five kids sign up to play basketball. Nick asks the council to approve new flooring to be put in the Rec Park office Space. He showed the council pictures of the old floor. He said he received a quote for three thousand dollars. Councilmember Clements makes a motion to approve new flooring for the Recreational Park office space in the amount of three thousand dollars. Councilmember Thompson seconds the motion. All are in favor thereof.
  - d. Leah Jensen: Website has been updated to include agendas and minutes. There has been a lot of requests for information. I am working to fulfill those, but I cannot give out any information without approval from the city attorney. I have located some job descriptions. I will get those out to the council. Any business owner who wants to sell alcohol in Hartford must go through the Alabama ABC Board before the city of Hartford can issue any kind of permit.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

- a. Before Mayor Strickland adjourns the meeting, Jessie, with Wiregrass Economic Development offered updates on the services they provide and announced that they have an inhouse grant writer available.
- b. And with there being no further business, Attorney, Jeff Hatcher asks the council to make a motion to go into executive session on the bases of the good character of a city employee. Councilmember Adams made a motion to go into executive session. Councilmember Thompson seconds the motion. All are in favor thereof.

- c. There is a motion made by Councilmember Adams to adjourn the executive session. The motion is seconded by Councilmember Thompson. All are in favor thereof.
- d. There is a motion made by Councilmember Fondren to adjourn the council meeting. The motion is seconded by Councilmember Clements. All are in favor thereof.

Minutes Prepared By: Leah Guseen

Presiding Officer: 