

## **HILLSBORO CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**September 11, 2025**

At 7:00 p.m. Council President Tom Eichinger called the Hillsboro City Council meeting to order. The following were present for the meeting: Acting Safety and Service Director Shawn Adkins, Clerk Lauren Walker, Megan Blackburn, and Chief Daniels.

### **ROLL CALL**

Dan Baucher, Jason Brown, Kathryn Hapner, Greg Maurer, Mary Stanforth, were present. Don Storer and Adam Wilkin were absent. Mr. Maurer moved to excuse absences for Mr. Storer and Mr. Wilkin, seconded by Ms. Hapner. Vote: Mr. Baucher-yes, Mr. Brown-yes, Ms. Hapner-yes, Mr. Maurer-yes, Ms. Stanforth-yes.

Mr. Eichinger led the Council in prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

### **MINUTES**

There was one correction to the August 14, 2025 regular council minutes. Stanforth was incorrectly spelled and will be corrected prior to signing. Mr. Eichinger stated they will be considered approved as presented with the change being made.

### **MONTHLY REPORTS**

The August monthly reports were read by title only: Income Tax Bureau, Police Department, Public Utilities (includes street, water/sewer maintenance), Treasurers, Water Meter Department, Water Office (Water/Sewer Sales), Water Treatment Plant, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Code Enforcement and Auditor. No questions, no comments.

### **PUBLIC REQUESTS**

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

- Teresa Covert – no comments
- Liquor Permit – Aldi's
  - No objections – Mr. Eichinger stated it will be forwarded back to the state for processing.

### **CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

Keith Sonner 216 Crestview Ave addressed council with a code enforcement issue. Mr. Sonner explained the situation regarding his son and his camper being parked with slide-outs out. Mr. Sonner stated his issue was that a notice was put on the door without anyone talking to them first and the understanding of when people camp, the slide-outs need to be extended in order to clean, walk-through, or load/unload the camper. Mr. Sonner at length gave examples of similar situations and understood it was written with good intent but would prefer the code enforcement official talk to residents versus taping notices to the door.

### **COMMUNICATION FROM THE MAYOR**

Mr. Eichinger read a statement from the mayor, “

It has been brought to my attention that there is a residency requirement for a Safety Director through the Ohio Revised Code. I have been told this has been waived by

council in the past. This position in the City of Hillsboro is a Safety & Service combined position and I think it is covered in our employee handbook for residency which states the employee must live in the State of Ohio. However, to be safe I ask for your approval & waive the residency requirement for Shawn Adkins. Shawn brings a wealth of knowledge from his years of service to the City and I couldn't think of a better person to fill this position." Mr. Eichinger also added while bringing up the code, "The director shall be appointed by the mayor, and need not be a resident of the city at the time of the appointment, but shall become a resident thereof within six months after this appointment, unless such residency requirement is waived by ordinance." "Our salary ordinance/pay ordinance does have a statement in there that says city employees need be a residence of the state of Ohio not residence of Hillsboro. The SSD position is an employee position in the city, so I believe that covers the section in here about unless the residency requirement is waived by ordinance, because that is our pay ordinance we have in place." Mr. Eichinger asked if anyone has a problem with approving the mayors' appointment, Shawn Adkins as the Safety and Service Director, and does council feel there is a need for a specific ordinance to waive that requirement? Mr. Adkins stated he will not be moving into the city. A couple council members asked questions about what exactly was being asked of them to vote on. Mr. Brown asked Ms. Hapner for her opinion. Ms. Hapner explained to council her opinion in what was being asked and stated "I don't think, the pay ordinance does not, the pay ordinance does not prevent us from waiving the residency requirement but the ORC requires that it has to be waived, if we are going to waive it. If that's what we choose to do, we have to actually..." Mr. Eichinger stated, "put an ordinance together." Ms. Hapner replied, "correct, correct." Mr. Eichinger continued, "and since the residency issue has six months, we have time to do that, over the next three months." Mr. Eichinger gave clarification to council, that he is asking for a voice vote to approve the mayors' appointment. Mr. Brown-yes, Mr. Maurer-yes, Mr. Hapner-yes, Mr. Baucher-yes, Ms. Hapner-yes. Mr. Eichinger stated, the other piece of it can be covered separately, and possibly bring legislation concerning the formal waiver of the residency requirement for that position. Mr. Eichinger also explained the mayor wasn't aware of this until late last month, the law director found it and communicated it with them in late August. That is the reason why we are just now discussing.

## **REPORT OF THE SAFETY & SERVICE DIRECTOR/HILLSBORO PLANNING COMMISSION**

Mr. Adkins asked for clarification first, is he considered SSD full time or will legislation be presented in six months? Mr. Eichinger explained he is the SSD, but council needs to decide if they want to prepare an ordinance to waive the residency issue so it is more directly focused on ORC. Mr. Adkins asked, "So it is fine now, but in six months it may not be fine?" Mr. Eichinger, responded, "Its possible." Mr. Adkins reported the city received 34 building permits, 9 commercial and 25 residential, for the month of August. On going city project included; Crossroads Park which should be breaking ground this month, Beech Street & Railroad re-construction. There was a walk through and punch-list meeting yesterday. The parking lot construction on N High is still on-going, Harry Sauner Rd paving which is still scheduled for September, and Rails to Trails will begin after the parking lot project. Mr. Adkins listed the private developments as Aldi's, Amazon, Marriot Hotel and Glo Fiber. Planning Commission approved one variance and

one re-plat address assignment. Mr. Adkins asked that a couple ordinances be placed into committee for review; ORD.51.076 (G), 51.078, 51.079 and he will give packets to the committee members. No questions, no comments.

**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**FINANCE**

Mary

Stanforth, Chair

- Wage & Pay Scale review/recommendations for Elected Officials (annual review)
- Wage & Pay Scale review/recommendations for employees (annual review)
  - Meeting 8-28-2025 at 2:30pm – Ms. Stanforth read minutes as follows,

“The Finance Committee met on August 28, 2025 at 2:30 in the city building. Committee members in attendance were Adam Wilkin and myself. Shawn Adkins, Tom Eichinger and Sherry Davis were also present. The purpose of the meeting was to further review the compensation study the city had done. The study compared the City’s current pay ranges to comparable markets. According to the study, a good baseline is being within 90% to 110% of the market. The study also concluded that it would cost the city \$22,279.05 to bring employees up to the minimum. Pay grades 7 and 8 were changed from hourly to salaried positions. These positions receive no overtime or comp time. The pay rates will take effect after January 1, 2026. According to the ORC, the only elected official eligible for a raise during their current tenure is the Auditor. The Auditor’s salary, according to the survey results, show that it is at 78.86%. Which puts it below the baseline of 90%. Adam made a motion to send the Ordinance to Adjust Compensation for Non-Union City Employees to Council for their approval and to adjust the Auditor’s salary to align with the minimum wage variance. Motion passed Resolution 95-8, which was passed in 1995 to create an Office of Victims Services needs to be brought up to date. Shawn will meet with the Law Director to make the necessary changes. The meeting was adjourned at 3:20. Respectfully submitted,

Mary Stanforth Finance Chair No questions, no comments.

**PARKS**

Don Storer, Chair

No meeting – no questions, no comments

**CIVIL SERVICE-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

Dan Baucher, Chair

- Personal / Vacation Handbook

No meeting – Mr. Baucher stated he is going to schedule one hopefully next week.

**STREET AND SAFETY**

Adam Wilkin, Chair

- Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA)
- 3 Hour Parking

No meeting – no questions, no comments

## **UTILITIES**

Greg Maurer, Chair

- Waste Collection
- Water Rates (annual review)

No meeting – no questions, no comments

## **ZONING & ANNEXATION**

Jason Brown, Chair

No meeting – no questions, no comments

## **COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE**

Kathryn Hapner, Chair

- National Fitness Campaign

No meeting – no questions, no comments

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS (THIRD READING)**
- **SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS**
- **FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution 25-16 A Resolution certifying nuisance abatement invoices to the auditor of Highland County, State of Ohio, for placement on the Highland County tax duplicate, and declaring an emergency

Resolution 25-17 A Resolution certifying delinquent water and sewer bills to the auditor of Highland County, State of Ohio, for placement on the Highland County tax duplicate, and declaring an emergency

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Eichinger stated since there is only 5 council members and we need 6 to suspend the three-reading rule, the first two Ordinances cannot be acted one. Due to the time critical nature for the timeline of the first two ordinances, we may need to have a special meeting. The clerk will be in touch about setting up a meeting.

Ordinance 2025-30 An Ordinance amending section 39.35 of the codified ordinances of the City of Hillsboro pertaining to the disposition of human remains

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Adkins stated the legislation is to repeal the amount of \$750 we pay now. The states reimbursement exceeds that amount, the auditor will pick the lowest amount of all providers for their services. Ordinance 2025-30 will move to a second reading.

Ordinance 2025-31 An Ordinance to adjust compensation for non-union city employees

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Stanforth stated, "As I said in our minutes, this ordinance will adjust the non-union employees to bring to the minimum within the new scale and paygrade recommended by compensation study the city had done. The implementation cost is \$22,2079.05 to make it minimum, will take effect January 1, 2026. Mr. Brown asked regarding the study, that the firm contacted 17 jurisdictions to get data from them? Mr. Stanforth responded, "that is correct." Mr. Brown continued to seek an understanding that where it shows responses, most of this is 4 or 5 responded? Mr. Adkins, explained that not all job descriptions matched ours, so the responses are the only ones out of the 17

jurisdictions that matched certain job descriptions. Mr. Brown asked if there was access to know which municipalities responded? Mr. Adkins said he believe he did have that information. Mr. Brown also mentioned to council that out of 31 employees listed, 18 jobs we are already paying over the maximum amount allowed or at least the max amount that's in the ordinance. And I am guessing that's because of the way it is setup that everyone that is maxed out gets a 3% pay raise every year. Ms. Stanforth confirmed. Mr. Brown recommended giving a one time 3% bonus every year to prevent inflation from continuing to pay someone, more and more over the max. Mr. Brown stated, he thinks that how a lot of places are doing it now, but we've got some people making over what the max is supposed to be. A lot of businesses or governments are doing this now, yearly bonuses so it doesn't continue to climb up. Mr. Brown gave an example of someone making \$100,000, year two would go to \$103,000, \$106,000, \$109,000, \$112,000, \$115,000, so in four years it would cost the city \$43,000 whereas if you gave a \$3,000 one-year bonus. Ms. Hapner stated it would be more than \$43,000, because the first year is \$100,000 next year \$103,000, then the 3% is based off the \$103,000. Mr. Brown stated, "right, it would save the city but wouldn't be as nice for the employees, but I think that's the whole point of putting a cap so there is a cap. Just in that example the city would save over \$30,000, I would like to see that changed. Just a thought." Ms. Stanforth replied, that is why it isn't presented as an emergency. They want to have the three-readings to dissect it and make adjustments. Ordinance 2025-31 will move to a second-reading.

Ordinance 2025-32 An Ordinance to adjust the salary of the city auditor

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Stanforth read, "According to the wage compensation study the auditor's salary is at 78.86% as compared to the market study. Since the auditor is the only elected official that can have a salary adjustment during their term, this ordinance will allow the auditor salary to be brought up the minimum on the proposed wage scale." No questions, no comments. Ordinance 2025-32 will move to a second-reading.

Ordinance 2025-33 An Ordinance making supplemental appropriations for the City of Hillsboro, Highland County, Ohio

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Eichinger read, "This legislation authorizes the appropriation of funds previously transferred under the transfer resolution for a range of park-related improvement." Mr. Brown said, "This is for \$700,000, correct? What exactly is this?" Mr. Adkins replied, "This was put in the approved budget it just needs to be appropriated." Mr. Adkins also mentioned they are starting to work on Rails to Trails, a few minor equipment purchases are needed for mowers, electrical upgrades at Shafer Park. The main chunk being Rails to Trails with part of that \$700,000 for reimbursements. We had to pay up front to get the money back. All that \$700,000 isn't just for the projects.

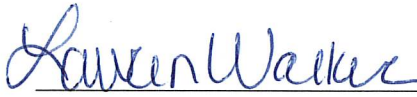
**MOTION:** Mr. Brown moved to approve and adopt Ordinance 2025-33, seconded by Mr. Maurer. Vote: Mr. Maurer-yes, Mr. Brown-yes, Mr. Baucher-yes, Ms. Hapner-yes Ms. Stanforth-yes. Ordinance 2025-33 is approved and adopted.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ADJOURN**

Council adjourned at 7:33pm. The next scheduled meeting of the Hillsboro City Council is Thursday October 16, 2025 at 7:00p.m. at City Hall, 130 N High Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

  
Tom Eichinger, President

  
Lauren Walker, Clerk